



**General Order: 1301**

**Title: BIAS FREE  
POLICING**

**Effective: 08/31/2022**

**Revised: 01/02/2023;  
08/01/2025**

**LONGBOAT KEY POLICE DEPARTMENT  
Russ Mager, Chief of Police**

## 1301.01 ESTABLISHMENT

### I. **Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to state that biased policing in law enforcement is totally unacceptable, to provide guidelines to prevent such occurrences, and to protect members from unwarranted accusations when they act within the dictates of the law and policy.

### II. **Policy:**

Persons having contact with members of the Longboat Key Police Department shall be treated in a fair, impartial, equitable and objective manner, in accordance with law, and without consideration of their specified characteristics as defined and explained in this policy.

Officers of the Longboat Key Police Department are strictly prohibited from engaging in biased policing as defined and explained in this policy.

Biased policing violates the constitutional rights of citizens. It undermines legitimate law enforcement efforts and may lead to claims of civil rights violations. This type of policing also may alienate citizens; foster community distrust of the police department; and invite media scrutiny, legislative action and judicial intervention.

### III. **Definitions:**

**BIASED POLICING:** The inappropriate consideration of specified characteristics when enforcing the law or providing police services.

**REASONABLE SUSPICION:** Suspicion that is more than a mere hunch but is based on a set of articulable facts and circumstances that would warrant a person of reasonable caution in believing that an infraction of the law has been committed, is

about to be committed, or is in the process of being committed, by the person or persons under suspicion. This can be based on the observations of an officer combined with his or her training and experience, and/or reliable information received from credible outside sources.

IV. **Procedure:**

**1301.02 TRAINING**

1. All sworn members will receive initial and ongoing training in proactive enforcement tactics, including training in member safety, courtesy, cultural and human diversity, laws governing search and seizure, and interpersonal communications skills.
2. Training programs will emphasize legal aspects of biased policing, in accordance with Florida Statutes, and stress the need for each member to respect the right of all citizens to be free from unreasonable government intrusion or police action.

**1301.03 FIELD CONTACT PROCEDURES**

1. Members of the public should only be subjected to stops, seizures, or detentions upon reasonable suspicion that they have committed, are committing, or are about to commit a violation of law.
2. Agency personnel may only consider the specified characteristics when performing law enforcement duties or delivering police services when seeking one or more specific individuals who have been identified or described in part by any of the specified characteristics. In those circumstances, personnel may rely on these characteristics only in combination with other appropriate factors.
3. It is biased policing if an officer's decisions/actions are based on the fact that the individual's demographics (e.g., race, income) are different from the demographics of the majority of the residents in the area in which the individual is found.
4. Each time a motorist or pedestrian is stopped, the officer will notify dispatch of the following:
  - a. Traffic Stops – Vehicle tag, location of the stop, and vehicle description, in accordance with GO 2212, *Traffic Stops*.
  - b. Citizen Contact – Location of the stop and description of the subject to include at a minimum race and gender.
5. In order to minimize officer/subject conflict during a traffic stop, field interview, or other encounter, basic interpersonal communication protocol shall be used. The following

protocol shall be used, in the order specified, under normal circumstances:

- a. Greet the person contacted in a respectful manner and identify yourself.
  - b. Politely ask for identification and other required documents.
  - c. State the reason for the traffic stop or temporary detention, focusing on the actions of the vehicle or circumstances instead of personalizing the violation.
  - d. Ask the person if there was a reason for the violation, giving them an opportunity to establish a dialogue.
  - e. After completing any necessary paperwork, inform the person of the action being taken and what, if anything, the person must do as a result. (e.g. how to pay a fine, obtain a copy of the report, obtain a traffic court hearing, etc.)
  - f. Give a professional closing statement to end the contact.
6. Appropriate enforcement action will be completed, generally in the form of a written warning, citation, field interview, notice to appear, or arrest. The documentation will include the gender, race or ethnicity of the person stopped or contacted, if this information can reasonably be ascertained by physical appearance or from the driver's license or other documents provided by the individual.
  7. Deliberate documenting of any misleading information related to the actual or perceived race, ethnicity, gender, or other specified characteristics of a person stopped for investigative or enforcement purposes is prohibited and a cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
  8. No motorist, once cited or warned, will be detained beyond the point where there exists no reasonable suspicion of further criminal activity.
  9. No person or vehicle will be searched in the absence of a warrant, a legally recognized exception to the warrant requirement (i.e. probable cause, search incident), or the person's voluntary consent. All searches will be conducted according to the guidelines established in GO 9001, *Search and Arrest Warrants*, and GO 2206, *Motor Vehicle Searches and Inventories*.
  10. Unless exigent circumstances exist, officers shall not engage in a law enforcement matter when it involves a family member, friend, relative, or other person with whom he or she has a personal relationship, such that the officer's objectivity may be, or may appear to be, compromised. In situations where the officer is personally involved, he or she will summon other officers for assistance.

#### **1301.04 COMPLAINTS**

1. Any person may file a complaint with the Department if they feel they have been stopped or searched based on biased policing and no person will be discouraged, intimidated, or coerced from filing such a complaint, or be discriminated against because they have filed such a complaint.
2. Officers who witness or who are aware of instances of biased policing shall report the incident to a supervisor. Also, where appropriate, officers shall intervene at the time the biased policing incident occurs.
3. Supervisors shall ensure that all personnel in their command are familiar with the content of this policy and will be alert and respond to indications that biased policing is occurring.
4. Complaints of biased policing will be handled according to the guidelines established in GO 3100, *Professional Standards and Internal Affairs*.
5. Depending on the findings of each complaint, as well as the specific factors involved, corrective measures will be taken to remedy violations of this policy. Corrective measures include, but are not limited to policy review, remedial training, counseling, and discipline up to and including termination.

#### **1301.05 COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND AWARENESS**

1. The Department may provide community education and awareness through neighborhood meetings and other community functions as needed. Information explaining biased policing is also available on the Department website.

#### **1301.06 ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW**

1. The Patrol Division Captain will perform an annual administrative review of traffic stop procedures related to fair and impartial policing. This review will be forwarded via the chain of command to the Chief of Police.