



MYRTLE BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject: *Professional Enforcement*

Number: *270*

Effective Date: *January 1, 2015*

Revised Date:

Rescinds:

Dated:

Approved By:

PURPOSE

This Procedure is intended to reaffirm this department's commitment to fair and impartial policing, to clarify the circumstances in which officers can consider race/ethnicity when making law enforcement decisions, and to reinforce procedures that serve to ensure the public that we are providing service and enforcing laws in an equitable way.

DISCUSSION

The City of Myrtle Beach affirms its commitment to ensuring that its law enforcement agencies conduct their law enforcement activities in an unbiased manner. Biased practices are unfair, promote mistrust of law enforcement, and perpetuate negative and harmful stereotypes. Moreover, and vitally important, biased practices are ineffective police work. Law enforcement practices that are free from inappropriate considerations, by contrast, strengthen trust in law enforcement agencies and foster collaborative efforts between law enforcement and communities to fight crime and keep the communities safe.

Even-handed law enforcement is therefore central to the integrity, legitimacy, and efficacy of all law enforcement activities. The highest standards can and should be met across all such activities. Doing so will not hinder and, indeed, will bolster the performance of the City's law enforcement agency's responsibilities.

PROCEDURE

1. In making routine or spontaneous law enforcement decisions, such as ordinary traffic stops, routine encounters, investigatory stops and questioning, law enforcement officers may not use race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity to any degree, except that an officer may rely on the listed characteristics in a specific description. This prohibition applies even where the use of a listed characteristic might otherwise be lawful.
2. In conducting all activities other than routine or spontaneous law enforcement activities, law enforcement officers may consider race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity only to the extent that there is trustworthy information, relevant to the locality or time frame that links persons possessing a particular listed characteristic to an identified criminal incident, scheme, or organization, a threat to national or homeland security, a violation of Federal immigration law, or an authorized intelligence activity. In order to rely on a listed characteristic, law enforcement officers must also reasonably believe that the law enforcement, security, or intelligence activity to be undertaken is merited under the totality of the circumstances, such as any temporal exigency and the nature of any potential harm to be averted. This standard applies even where the use of a listed characteristic might otherwise be lawful.