I.   Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to reaffirm this department's commitment to unbiased policing, clarify the circumstances in which race or affiliation can be used as a factor to establish reasonable suspicion or probable cause, and to reinforce procedures that serve to assure the public that we are providing service and enforcing laws in a fair and equitable manner.

II.   Policy

The Lynchburg Police Department is committed to preserving the peace and maintaining order in our community by practicing bias-free policing and respecting the rights and dignity of all.

III.   Procedure

A.   All investigative detentions, traffic stops, arrests, searches and seizures of property by officers will be based on a standard of reasonable suspicion or probable cause as required by the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and statutory authority. Officers must be able to articulate specific facts, circumstances and conclusions that support probable cause or reasonable suspicion for an arrest, traffic stop or investigative detention.

1.2.9 A

1.   Officers will maintain professionalism, integrity and accountability in all contacts with the public in order to continue to enhance the trust of the community. Policing based on biases alone is inconsistent with the mission of the Lynchburg Police Department, and is therefore prohibited.

2. Officers may take into account the race, ethnicity, or group affiliation of a specific suspect or suspects based on credible, reliable, locally-relevant information that links a person to a particular criminal incident or links a specific series of crimes in an area to a group of individuals based on any group affiliation.

B. In an effort to prevent inappropriate perceptions of bias-based policing, officers will utilize the following strategies when conducting pedestrian and vehicle stops:

1. Officers will be courteous, polite, and professional.

2. Officers will identify themselves (providing name and agency affiliation) and explain to the citizen the reason for the stop as soon as practical, unless providing this information will compromise the safety of officers or other persons. When conducting vehicle stops, this information will be provided before asking the driver for their license and registration.

3. Officers will ensure that the length of the detention is no longer than necessary to take appropriate action for the known or suspected offense.

4. Officers will answer any questions the citizen may have, including explaining options for the dispositions of related enforcement action.

5. Officers will provide their badge number when requested.

6. Officers will explain the credible, reliable, or locally relevant information that led to the stop or contact when no enforcement actions were taken and/or it is determined that the reasonable suspicions were unfounded (e.g., after a BOLO stop).

1.2.9 B

C. Training will be provided to all enforcement personnel in relation to cultural diversity and bias-based profiling issues including legal aspects.

1.2.9 C

D.   In our continued efforts to foster positive relationships with the community, and in our commitment to lawful and ethical behavior, any officer found to be involved in inappropriate biased-based policing will be subject to disciplinary actions based on *PD-0212* (Disciplinary System).

1.2.9 D

E.   The Deputy Chief of the Investigations and Administration Bureau will complete an annual review of agency practices involving bias-free policing. The report will be forwarded to the Chief of Police by the last day of March of each year. The review will minimally include the following information for the prior calendar year:

      1.   an analysis of citizen complaints and/or comments received regarding bias-based policing

      2.   an overview of training conducted

      3.   recommendations for any changes in procedures and practices deemed appropriate.

Original Signed

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Raul M. Diaz
Chief of Police

January 21, 2016

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Date