



DATE: October 23, 2024

TO: Public Safety Advisory Committee

FROM: Garrett Glaviano, Professional Standards Lieutenant
Brian Miller, Police Chief
Jordan Green, Assistant City Attorney

SUBJECT: Receive a presentation on the Racial and Identity Profiling Act or RIPA from
Dr. Lorie Fridell

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Public Safety Advisory Committee receive a presentation on the Racial and Identity Profiling Act or RIPA from Dr. Lorie Fridell

BACKGROUND

In 2015 the California legislature passed AB 953 which required the Attorney General to establish the Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board (RIPA) in an effort to eliminate racial and identity profiling and improve diversity and racial and identity sensitivity in law enforcement. The legislation required the RIPA board to investigate and analyze state and local law enforcement agencies' racial and identity profiling policies and practices, to annually make publicly available its findings and policy recommendations, and to hold public meetings annually.

The legislation required law enforcement agencies to collect "stop" data which was required to be reported to the Attorney General on an annual basis. A "stop" as defined by the bill was any detention by a peace officer of a person, or any interaction with a person in which the peace officer conducts a search, including a consensual search, of the person's body or property in the person's control.

The data to be collected included but was not limited to the reason for the stop, the result of the stop, if an arrest was made, whether the person was searched, the justification for the search, and whether property was seized. Officers were also required to collect how they perceived the contacted person in terms of race, gender, ethnicity, and approximate age. The bill emphasized

the contacted person should not be asked this information for the purposes of the compiling the data, but it should be collected based on the officers' observations and perceptions.

The legislature required this data to begin being reported in April of 2019, and based on the size of the agency no later than April of 2023. The timetables were based on the size of the agencies with the larger agencies, those with more 1,000 employees being the first agencies to report, and those with less than 334 employees being the last to report. The Petaluma Police Department was required to begin reporting in April of 2023, however, the department was an early adopter and began collecting data in July of 2021.

Stop data is most often compared to or benchmarked against the census demographics of the jurisdiction, as this is the most readily available information. This practice almost always results in a disparity, which may not necessarily be a result of bias.

The Petaluma Police Department efforts to promote impartial policing go beyond the collection of data. Understanding the difficulty in differentiating disparity caused by legitimate or illegitimate factors, the Petaluma Police Department has worked to acknowledge and reduce the impacts of bias in various ways.

The department complies with all California Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) guidelines related to background investigations of prospective employees which require a bias assessment. The bias assessment considers behaviors, attitudes, traits, and attributes of potential candidates. This assessment is interwoven throughout a background process that includes a polygraph examination, a psychological examination, and vetting of social media.

The department sends newly hired officers to a basic police academy whose curriculum includes a sixteen-hour block on culture diversity and discrimination. The training covers topics such as cross-cultural communication, sexual orientation and gender identity, racial profiling, and implicit bias. Officers who graduate the academy receive further training in the field training program which includes a block on cultural diversity covering cultural motivations and bias, racial profiling, and focusing on behaviors rather than race.

The department has a stand-alone bias-based policing policy and bias is addressed in several other policies including, Constitutional Policing, Use of Force, Recruitment and Selection, Limited English Proficiency, Personnel Complaints, Hate Crimes, and Standards of Conduct policies. These policies collectively stress the sanctity of all human life and the goal of working with the community to produce public safety in a fair and impartial manner.

DISCUSSION

The Petaluma Police Department produces two sources of stop data or what is sometimes referred to as “disparity data.” The first source is the use-of-force data analyzed by race by the Petaluma Independent Auditor and presented in its 2023 Annual Report (and the Addendum to that report). The second source of “disparity data,” which will be presented to the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) in 2025, consists of the vehicle and pedestrian stop data collected pursuant to the California Racial & Identity Profiling Act of 2015 (RIPA). The guest presenter, Dr. Lorie Fridell, will discuss the advantages and challenges of interpreting disparity data such as these. Almost always, when police departments analyze their use-of-force and stop data, racial/ethnic disparities are indicated. That disparity can be produced by legitimate factors (e.g., differential behavior) or illegitimate factors (i.e., bias). The challenge for social scientists, such as Dr. Fridell, is determining how much of the disparity is produced by each category of factors. The presenter will suggest when and how disparity data might be used to inform policy and practice. She will highlight the importance of thinking about disparity data collection as just one tool in the toolbox for police leaders and other stakeholders who are committed to producing impartial policing.

Dr. Fridell is a retired professor of Criminology from the University of South Florida in Tampa. Her various areas of expertise are very relevant to the discussion of interpreting racial/ethnic disparities in use-of-force and vehicle/pedestrian stop data. She is a social scientist who has conducted research on law enforcement for 40 years, with her primary area of research being police use of force. She has written numerous articles, chapters, and written/edited three books on the topic. Starting in 2000, bias in policing became another of her areas of writing/research. Over those 24 years, she has written numerous articles and three books on the topic. One of those books is *By the Numbers: A Guide for Analyzing Race Data from Vehicle Stops*. This book has served as a critical resource for police agencies and social scientists analyzing disparity data. Dr. Fridell is the founder of “Fair and Impartial Policing,” which is the #1 provider of implicit bias training for law enforcement in the nation. She was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area.

CASE STUDIES

Not applicable.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Not applicable.

CITYWIDE GOALS & PRIORITIES

This effort aligns with and achieves the City Council’s goal of “A Safe Community that Thrives.”

FURTHER RECOMMENDATION

Dr. Fridell’s presentation will provide valuable insights to aid in understanding of RIPA, stop data, and how that understanding may improve police practices and policies within the Petaluma Police Department. The Public Safety Advisory Committee's review and discussion of this presentation will enhance accountability, transparency, and community trust in the department.

ATTACHMENTS

None