

Port Lavaca Police Department

Racial Profiling Complaint Procedures



Colin Rangnow
Chief of Police

Filing a Complaint

To file a racial profiling complaint against a member of the Port Lavaca Police Department you may contact the Internal Affairs Officer in person during business hours at 361-552-3788.

You may also speak with a Supervisor by appearing in person at the police department.

Internal Affairs Officer

The Internal Affairs Officer is part of the Department's Administration Section and is responsible for receiving, processing and investigating any alleged misconduct or criminal conduct against any member of the Port Lavaca Police Department. These investigations are under the supervision of the Chief of Police who ensures that all allegations are investigated thoroughly and objectively.

Complaint Process

All complaints will be accepted by the Internal Affairs Officer. Each will be reviewed and then assigned to the Internal Affairs Officer, his designee or the employee's immediate supervisor for investigation. Following a thorough and impartial investigation, a disposition will be made based on all available facts and a totality of the circumstances.

False Complaints

Please be aware that making a false complaint against a police employee is a violation of the Texas Penal Code, section 37.02. A person convicted of making a false claim can be fined up to \$2000 and/or risk confinement in jail up to one year.

Questions or Recommendations

If you have any questions or recommendations on how the Port Lavaca Police Department can improve your police service, please call the Office of the Chief of Police at 361-552-3788 or email crangnow@portlavaca.org

Port Lavaca Police

201 N Colorado
Port Lavaca, TX 77979
Phone: 361.552.3788
Fax: 361.552.7386
Email: crangnow@portlavaca.org

About Racial Profiling

Definitions

Racial Profiling: A law enforcement – initiated action based solely on an individual’s race, ethnicity, or national origin rather than on the individual’s behavior or on information identifying the individual as having engaged in criminal activity. The term is not relevant as it pertains to witnesses, complainants, persons needing assistance, or other citizen contacts.

The prohibition against racial profiling does not preclude the use of race, ethnicity, or national origin as factors in a detention decision when used as part of a description of a suspect or witness for whom a police officer is searching.

Reasonable Suspicion: Also known as articulable 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, or is in the process of being committed, by the person or persons under suspicion. This can be based on the observations of a police officer combined with his or her training and experience, and/or reliable information received from credible outside sources.

Criminal Profiling: An investigative method in which an officer, through observation of activities and environment, identifies suspicious people and develops a legal basis to stop them for questioning

Port Lavaca Police Department’s Racial Profiling Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to unequivocally state that racial and ethnic profiling in law enforcement are totally unacceptable, to provide guidelines for officers to prevent such occurrences, and to reinforce procedures that serve to ensure public confidence and mutual trust through the provision of services in a fair and equitable fashion, and to protect our officers from unwarranted accusations when they act within the dictates of the law and Department policy.

A fundamental right guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States to all who live in this nation is to equal protection under the law. Along with this right to equal protection is the fundamental right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures by government agents. Citizens are free to walk and drive our streets, highways, and other public places without police interference so long as they obey the law. They are also entitled to be free from crime, and from depredations of criminals, and to drive and walk our public ways safe from the actions of reckless and careless drivers.

This Department is charged with protecting these rights, for all, regardless of race, color, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, physical handicap, religion, or other belief system. Officers shall conduct themselves in a dignified and respectful manner at all times when dealing with the public.

Because of the nature of their business, law enforcement officers are required to be observant, to identify unusual occurrences and law violations, and to act upon them. It is proactive enforcement that keeps our citizens free from crime, our streets and highways safe to drive upon, and that detects and apprehends criminals. Officers shall actively enforce city ordinances, state and federal laws in a responsible and professional manner, without regard to race, ethnicity, or national origin. Officers are strictly prohibited from engaging in racial profiling as defined by policy. This policy shall be applicable to all persons, whether drivers, passengers or pedestrians.

Prohibition

Police Officers of the City of Port Lavaca are strictly prohibited from engaging in racial profiling.

Complaint Process

Any person who believes that a police officer employed with the Port Lavaca Police Department has engaged in racial profiling with respect to that person may file a complaint with the Department, and no person shall be discouraged, intimidated, or coerced from filing such a complaint, or be discriminated against because they have filed such a complaint.