

**GUIDANCE FOR FEDERAL LAW  
ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES REGARDING  
THE USE OF RACE, ETHNICITY, GENDER,  
NATIONAL ORIGIN, RELIGION, SEXUAL  
ORIENTATION, OR GENDER IDENTITY**



December 2014

## INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Guidance supersedes the Department of Justice’s 2003 Guidance Regarding the Use of Race by Federal Law Enforcement Agencies. It builds upon and expands the framework of the 2003 Guidance, and it reaffirms the Federal government’s deep commitment to ensuring that its law enforcement agencies conduct their activities in an unbiased manner. Biased practices, as the Federal government has long recognized, are unfair, promote mistrust of law enforcement, and perpetuate negative and harmful stereotypes. Moreover—and vitally important—biased practices are ineffective. As Attorney General Eric Holder has stated, such practices are “simply not good law enforcement.”

Law enforcement practices 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 Nation safe. In other words, fair law enforcement practices are smart and effective law enforcement practices.

Even-handed law enforcement is therefore central to the integrity, legitimacy, and efficacy of all Federal 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 Federal law enforcement agencies’ core responsibilities.

This new Guidance applies to Federal law enforcement officers performing Federal law enforcement activities, including those related to national security and intelligence, and defines not only the circumstances in which Federal law enforcement officers may take into account a person’s race and ethnicity—as the 2003 Guidance did—but also when gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity may be taken into account. This new Guidance also applies to state and local law enforcement officers while participating in Federal law enforcement task forces. Finally, this Guidance promotes training and accountability, to ensure that its contents are understood and implemented appropriately.

Biased law enforcement practices, as the 2003 Guidance recognized with regard to racial profiling, have a terrible cost, not only for individuals but also for the Nation as a whole. This new Guidance reflects the Federal government’s ongoing commitment to keeping the Nation safe while upholding our dedication to the ideal of equal justice under the law.

Two standards in combination should guide use by Federal law enforcement officers of race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity in law enforcement or intelligence activities:

- In making routine or spontaneous law enforcement decisions, such as ordinary traffic stops, Federal law enforcement officers may not use race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity to any degree, except that officers may rely on the listed characteristics in a specific suspect description. This prohibition applies even where the use of a listed characteristic might otherwise be lawful.

- In conducting all activities other than routine or spontaneous law enforcement activities, Federal 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.

## DISCUSSION

The Constitution protects individuals against the invidious use of irrelevant individual characteristics. *See Whren v. United States*, 517 U.S. 806, 813 (1996). Such characteristics should never be the sole basis for a law enforcement action. This Guidance sets out requirements beyond the Constitutional minimum that shall apply to the use of race, ethnicity, gender, national origin,<sup>1</sup> religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity by Federal law enforcement officers.<sup>2</sup> This Guidance applies to such officers at all times, including when they are operating in partnership with non-Federal law enforcement agencies.

### I. GUIDANCE FOR FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

#### A. Routine or Spontaneous Activities in Domestic Law Enforcement

**In making routine or spontaneous law enforcement decisions, such as ordinary traffic stops, Federal law enforcement officers may not use race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity to any degree, except that officers may rely on the listed characteristics in a specific suspect description. This prohibition applies even where the use of a listed characteristic might otherwise be lawful.**

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<sup>1</sup> As used in this Guidance, “national origin” refers to an individual’s, or his or her ancestor’s, country of birth or origin, or an individual’s possession of the physical, cultural or linguistic characteristics commonly associated with a particular country. It does not refer to an individual’s “nationality” (*i.e.*, country of citizenship or country of which the person is deemed a national), which may be relevant to the administration and enforcement of certain statutes, regulations, and executive orders.

<sup>2</sup> This Guidance is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch. It is not intended to, and does not, create any right, benefit, trust, or responsibility, whether substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities, entities, officers, employees, or agents, or any person, nor does it create any right of review in an administrative, judicial, or any other proceeding. This Guidance does not apply to Federal non-law enforcement personnel, including U.S. military, intelligence, or diplomatic personnel, and their activities. In addition, this Guidance does not apply to interdiction activities in the vicinity of the border, or to protective, inspection, or screening activities. All such activities must be conducted consistent with the Constitution and applicable Federal law and policy, in a manner that respects privacy, civil rights and civil liberties, and subject to appropriate oversight.

Law enforcement agencies and officers sometimes engage in law enforcement activities, such as traffic and foot patrols, that generally do not involve either the ongoing investigation of specific criminal activities or the prevention of catastrophic events or harm to national or homeland security. Rather, their activities are typified by spontaneous action in response to the activities of individuals whom they happen to encounter in the course of their patrols and about whom they have no information other than their observations. These general enforcement responsibilities should be carried out without *any* consideration of race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

- **Example:** While parked by the side of the George Washington Parkway, a Park Police Officer notices that nearly all vehicles on the road are exceeding the posted speed limit. Although each such vehicle is committing an infraction that would legally justify a stop, the officer may not use a listed characteristic as a factor in deciding which motorists to pull over. Likewise, the officer may not use a listed characteristic in deciding which detained motorists to ask to consent to a search of their vehicles.

Some have argued that overall discrepancies in certain crime rates among certain groups could justify using a listed characteristic as a factor in general traffic enforcement activities and would produce a greater number of arrests for non-traffic offenses (*e.g.*, narcotics trafficking). We emphatically reject this view. Profiling by law enforcement based on a listed characteristic is morally wrong and inconsistent with our core values and principles of fairness and justice. Even if there were overall statistical evidence of differential rates of commission of certain offenses among individuals possessing particular characteristics, the affirmative use of such generalized notions by law enforcement officers in routine, spontaneous law enforcement activities is tantamount to stereotyping. It casts a pall of suspicion over every member of certain groups without regard to the specific circumstances of a particular law enforcement activity, and it offends the dignity of the individual improperly targeted. Whatever the motivation, it is patently unacceptable and thus prohibited under this Guidance for law enforcement officers to act on the belief that possession of a listed characteristic signals a higher risk of criminality. This is the core of invidious profiling, and it must not occur.

The situation is different when an officer has specific information, based on trustworthy sources, to “be on the lookout” for specific individuals identified at least in part by a specific listed characteristic. In such circumstances, the officer is not acting based on a generalized assumption about individuals possessing certain characteristics; rather, the officer is helping locate specific individuals previously identified as involved in crime.

- **Example:** While parked by the side of the George Washington Parkway, a Park Police Officer receives an “All Points Bulletin” to be on the lookout for a fleeing bank robbery suspect, a man of a particular race and particular hair color in his 30s driving a blue automobile. The officer may use this description, including the race and gender of the particular suspect, in deciding which speeding motorists to pull over.

## **B. All Activities Other Than Routine or Spontaneous Law Enforcement Activities**

**In conducting all activities other than routine or spontaneous law enforcement activities, Federal 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.<sup>3</sup>**

As noted above, there are circumstances in which law enforcement officers engaged in activities relating to particular identified criminal incidents, schemes, organizations, threats to national or homeland security, violations of Federal immigration law, or authorized intelligence activities may consider personal identifying characteristics of potential suspects, including race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Common sense dictates that when a victim describes the assailant as possessing a certain characteristic, law enforcement officers may properly limit their search for suspects to persons possessing that characteristic. Similarly, in conducting activities directed at a specific criminal organization or terrorist group whose membership has been identified as overwhelmingly possessing a listed characteristic, law enforcement should not be expected to disregard such facts in taking investigative or preventive steps aimed at the organization's activities.

Reliance upon generalized stereotypes involving the listed characteristics is absolutely forbidden. In order for law enforcement officers to rely on information about a listed characteristic, the following must be true:

- The information must be relevant to the locality or time frame of the criminal activity, threat to national or homeland security, violation of Federal immigration law, or authorized intelligence activity;
- The information must be trustworthy; and
- The information concerning identifying listed characteristics must be tied to a particular criminal incident, a particular criminal scheme, a particular criminal organization, a threat to national or homeland security, a violation of Federal immigration law, or an authorized intelligence activity.

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<sup>3</sup> This Guidance does not prohibit the accommodation of religious beliefs and practices consistent with the U.S. Constitution and federal law. The Guidance also does not prohibit officials from considering gender when "the gender classification is not invidious, but rather realistically reflects the fact that the sexes are not similarly situated." *Rostker v. Goldberg*, 453 U.S. 57, 79 (1981).

Because law enforcement and intelligence actions are necessarily context-specific, in applying each of these factors, law enforcement officers may properly account for relevant facts and circumstances, such as any temporal exigency and the nature of any potential harm to be averted. However, in all cases, law enforcement officers must reasonably believe that the law enforcement or intelligence activity to be undertaken is merited under the totality of the circumstances.

The following policy statements more fully explain these principles.

**1. *Law Enforcement Officers May Never Rely on Generalized Stereotypes, But May Rely Only on Specific Characteristic-Based Information***

This standard categorically bars the use of generalized assumptions based on listed characteristics.

- **Example:** In the course of investigating an auto theft ring in a Federal park, law enforcement officers could not properly choose to target individuals of a particular national origin as suspects, based on a generalized assumption that those individuals are more likely to commit crimes.

This bar extends to the use of pretexts as an excuse to target minorities. Officers may not use such pretexts. This prohibition extends to the use of other, facially neutral factors as a proxy for overtly targeting persons because of a listed characteristic. This concern arises most frequently when aggressive law enforcement efforts are focused on “high crime areas.” The issue is ultimately one of motivation and evidence; certain seemingly characteristic-based efforts, if properly supported by reliable, empirical data, are in fact neutral.

- **Example:** In connection with a new initiative to increase drug arrests, law enforcement officers begin aggressively enforcing speeding, traffic, and other public area laws in a neighborhood predominantly occupied by people of a single race. The choice of neighborhood was not based on the number of 911 calls, number of arrests, or other pertinent reporting data specific to that area, but only on the general assumption that more drug-related crime occurs in that neighborhood because of its racial composition. This effort would be improper because it is based on generalized stereotypes.
- **Example:** Law enforcement officers seeking to increase drug arrests use tracking software to plot out where, if anywhere, drug arrests are concentrated in a particular city, and discover that the clear majority of drug arrests occur in particular precincts that happen to be neighborhoods predominantly occupied by people of a single race. So long as they are not motivated by racial animus, officers can properly decide to enforce all laws aggressively in that area, including less serious quality of life ordinances, as a means of increasing drug-related arrests. *See, e.g., United States v Montero-Camargo*, 208 F.3d 1122, 1138 (9th Cir. 2000) (“We must be particularly careful to ensure that a ‘high crime’ area factor is not used with respect to entire neighborhoods or communities in which members of minority groups regularly go

about their daily business, but is limited to specific, circumscribed locations where particular crimes occur with unusual regularity.”).

By contrast, where law enforcement officers are investigating a crime and have received *specific information* that the suspect possesses a certain listed characteristic (*e.g.*, direct observations by the victim or other witnesses), the officers may reasonably use that information, even if it is the only descriptive information available. In such an instance, it is the victim or other witness making the classification, and officers may use reliable incident-specific identifying information to apprehend criminal suspects. Officers, however, must use caution in the rare instance in which a suspect’s possession of a listed characteristic is the only available information. Although the use of that information may not be unconstitutional, broad targeting of discrete groups always raises serious fairness concerns.

- **Example:** The victim of an assault describes her assailant as an older male of a particular race with a birthmark on his face. The investigation focuses on whether any men in the surrounding area fit the victim’s description. Here investigators are properly relying on a description given by the victim, which included the assailant’s race and gender, along with his age and identifying personal characteristic. Although the ensuing investigation affects individuals of a particular race and gender, that investigation is not undertaken with a discriminatory purpose. Thus use of race and gender as factors in the investigation, in this instance, is permissible.

## ***2. The Information Must be Relevant to the Locality or Time Frame***

Any information that law enforcement officers rely upon concerning a listed characteristic possessed by persons who may be linked to specific criminal activities, a threat to national or homeland security, a violation of Federal immigration law, or an authorized intelligence activity must be locally or temporally relevant.

- **Example:** Five years ago, DEA issued an intelligence report that indicated that a drug ring whose members are known to be predominantly of a particular ethnicity is trafficking drugs in Charleston, SC. An agent operating in Los Angeles reads this intelligence report. In the absence of information establishing that this intelligence is also applicable in Southern California or at the present time, the agent may not use ethnicity as a factor in making local law enforcement decisions about individuals who are of the particular ethnicity that was predominant in the Charleston drug ring.

## ***3. The Information Must be Trustworthy***

Where the information relied upon by law enforcement officers linking a person possessing a listed characteristic to potential criminal activity, a threat to national or homeland security, a violation of Federal immigration law, or an authorized intelligence activity is unreliable or is too generalized and unspecific, reliance on that characteristic is prohibited.

- **Example:** ATF special agents receive an uncorroborated anonymous tip that a male of a particular ethnicity will purchase an illegal firearm at a Greyhound bus terminal

in an ethnically diverse North Philadelphia neighborhood. Although agents surveilling the location are free to monitor the movements of whomever they choose, the agents are prohibited from using the tip information, without more, to target any males of that ethnicity in the bus terminal. *Cf. Morgan v. Woessner*, 997 F.2d 1244, 1254 (9th Cir. 1993) (finding no reasonable basis for suspicion where tip “made all black men suspect”). The information is neither sufficiently reliable nor sufficiently specific.

In determining whether information is trustworthy, an officer should consider the totality of the circumstances, such as the reliability of the source, the specificity of the information, and the context in which it is being used.

- **Example:** ICE receives an uncorroborated anonymous tip indicating that females from a specific Eastern European country have been smuggled into Colorado and are working at bars in a certain town. Agents identify a group of women wearing t-shirts with the logo of a local bar who seem to be speaking an Eastern European language. The agents approach the group to ask them questions about their immigration status. Because the women match the specific information provided by the tipster, the information is sufficient under the circumstances to justify the agents’ actions.

**4. *Characteristic-Based Information Must Always be Specific to Particular Suspects or Incidents; Ongoing Criminal Activities, Schemes, or Enterprises; a Threat to National or Homeland Security; a Violation of Federal Immigration Law, or an Authorized Intelligence Activity***

These standards contemplate the appropriate use of both “suspect-specific” and “incident-specific” information. As noted above, where a crime has occurred and law enforcement officers have eyewitness accounts including the race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity of the perpetrator, that information may be used. Law enforcement officers may also use reliable, locally or temporally relevant information linking persons possessing a listed characteristic to a particular incident, unlawful scheme, or ongoing criminal enterprise, a threat to national or homeland security, a violation of Federal immigration law, or an authorized intelligence activity—even absent a description of any particular individual suspect. In certain cases, the circumstances surrounding an incident, ongoing criminal activity, threat to national or homeland security, or violation of Federal immigration law will point strongly to a perpetrator possessing a specific listed characteristic, even though law enforcement officers lack an eyewitness account.

- **Example:** The FBI is investigating the murder of a known gang member and has information that the shooter is a member of a rival gang. The FBI knows that the members of the rival gang are exclusively members of a certain ethnicity. This information, however, is not suspect-specific because there is no description of the particular assailant. But because law enforcement officers have reliable, locally or temporally relevant information linking a rival group with a distinctive ethnic character to the murder, the FBI could properly consider ethnicity in conjunction with other appropriate factors in the course of conducting their investigation. Agents



could properly decide to focus on persons dressed in a manner consistent with gang activity, but ignore persons dressed in that manner who do not appear to be members of that particular ethnicity.

- **Example:** Local law enforcement arrests an individual, and in the course of custodial interrogation the individual states that he was born in a foreign country and provides other information that reasonably leads local law enforcement to question his immigration status. Criminal background checks performed by the local law enforcement agency reveal that the individual was recently released from state prison after completing a lengthy sentence for aggravated sexual assault. Local law enforcement contacts ICE to inquire as to the individual's immigration status. When ICE's database check on the immigration status of the arrestee does not locate a record of the individual's lawful immigration status, ICE sends an officer to the jail to question the individual about his immigration status, whereupon the individual states that he entered the United States without authorization and has never regularized his status. ICE assumes custody of the individual and processes him for removal from the United States. ICE properly relied on the facts presented to it, including that the arrestee was born in a foreign country, in searching its immigration database and conducting its subsequent investigation.

In addition, law enforcement officers may use a listed characteristic in connection with source recruitment, where such characteristic bears on the potential source's placement and access to information relevant 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.

- **Example:** A terrorist organization that is made up of members of a particular ethnicity sets off a bomb in a foreign country. There is no specific information that the organization is currently a threat to the United States. To gain intelligence on the evolving threat posed by the organization, and to gain insight into its intentions regarding the U.S. homeland and U.S. interests, the FBI may properly consider ethnicity when developing sources with information that could assist the FBI in mitigating any potential threat from the organization.

##### ***5. Reasonably Merited Under the Totality of the Circumstances***

Finally, when a law enforcement officer relies on a listed characteristic in undertaking an action, that officer must have a reasonable belief that the action is merited under the totality of the circumstances. This standard ensures that, under the circumstances, the officer is acting in good faith when he or she relies in part on a listed characteristic to take action.

- **Example:** A law enforcement officer who is working as part of a federal task force has received a reliable tip that an individual intends to detonate a homemade bomb in a train station during rush hour, but the tip does not provide any more information. The officer harbors stereotypical views about religion and therefore decides that investigators should focus on individuals of a particular faith. Doing so would be

impermissible because a law enforcement officer's stereotypical beliefs never provide a reasonable basis to undertake a law enforcement or intelligence action.

Note that these standards allow the use of reliable identifying information about planned future crimes, attacks, or other violations of Federal law. Where officers receive a credible tip from a reliable informant regarding a planned crime or attack that has not yet occurred, the officers may use this information under the same restrictions applying to information obtained regarding a past incident. A prohibition on the use of reliable prospective information would severely hamper law enforcement efforts by essentially compelling law enforcement officers to wait for incidents to occur, instead of taking pro-active measures to prevent them from happening.

- **Example:** While investigating a specific drug trafficking operation, DEA special agents learn that a particular methamphetamine distribution ring is manufacturing the drug in California, and plans to have couriers pick up shipments at the Sacramento, California, airport and drive the drugs back to Oklahoma for distribution. The agents also receive trustworthy information that the distribution ring has specifically chosen to hire older women of a particular race to act as the couriers. DEA agents may properly target older women of that particular race driving vehicles with indicia such as Oklahoma plates near the Sacramento airport.

## **6. National and Homeland Security and Intelligence Activities**

Since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Federal law enforcement agencies have used every legitimate tool to prevent future attacks and deter those who would cause devastating harm to our Nation and its people through the use of biological or chemical weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, suicide hijackings, or any other means. "It is 'obvious and unarguable' that no governmental interest is more compelling than the security of the Nation." *Haig v. Agee*, 453 U.S. 280, 307 (1981) (quoting *Aptheker v. Secretary of State*, 378 U.S. 500, 509 (1964)).

The years since September 11 have also demonstrated that Federal law enforcement officers can achieve this critical goal without compromising our cherished value of equal justice under the law. Every day, Federal law enforcement officers work to keep our Nation safe, and they do so without invidious profiling. The standard embodied in this Guidance thus applies to Federal law enforcement agencies' national and homeland security operations, which will continue to focus on protecting the public while upholding our values.

National security, homeland security, and intelligence activities often are national in scope and focused on prevention of attacks by both known and unknown actors, not just prosecution. For example, terrorist organizations might aim to engage in acts of catastrophic violence in any part of the country (indeed, in multiple places simultaneously, if possible). These facts do not change the applicability of the Guidance, however. In order to undertake an action based on a listed characteristic, a law enforcement officer must have trustworthy information, relevant to the locality or time frame, linking persons possessing that characteristic

to a threat to national security, homeland security, or intelligence activity, and the actions to be taken must be reasonable under the totality of the circumstances.

- **Example:** The FBI receives reliable information that persons affiliated with a foreign ethnic insurgent group intend to use suicide bombers to assassinate that country's president and his entire entourage during an official visit to the United States. Agents may appropriately focus investigative attention on identifying members of that ethnic insurgent group who may be present and active in the United States and who, based on other available information, might be involved in planning some such attack during the state visit.
- **Example:** A citizen of Country A, who was born in Country B, lawfully entered the United States on an F-1 student visa. The school that the individual was supposed to attend notifies ICE that he failed to register or attend the school once in the United States, in violation of the terms of his visa. ICE has intelligence that links individuals with ties to Country B who have registered at that school to a designated terrorist organization that has made statements about launching an attack against the United States. ICE selects the individual for investigation, identification, location, and arrest. Once taken into custody, the individual is questioned and a decision is made to place him in removal proceedings and to detain him during those proceedings. ICE's decision to prioritize this immigration status violator for investigation and arrest was proper because it was based upon a combination of the factors known about the individual, including his national origin, school affiliation, and behavior upon arrival in the United States.

Good law enforcement work also requires that officers take steps to know their surroundings even before there is a specific threat to national security. Getting to know a community and its features can be critical to building partnerships and facilitating dialogues, which can be good for communities and law enforcement alike. Law enforcement officers may not, however, target only those persons or communities possessing a specific listed characteristic without satisfying the requirements of this Guidance.

- **Example:** An FBI field office attempts to map out the features of the city within its area of responsibility in order to gain a better understanding of potential liaison contacts and outreach opportunities. In doing so, the office acquires information from public sources regarding population demographics, including concentrations of ethnic groups. This activity is permissible if it is undertaken pursuant to an authorized intelligence or investigative purpose. The activity would not be permitted without such an authorized purpose or in circumstances that do not otherwise meet the requirements of this Guidance.

## **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

In order to ensure its implementation, this Guidance finally requires that Federal law enforcement agencies take the following steps on training, data collection, and accountability.

## **Training**

Training provides agents and officers with an opportunity to dedicate their attention to a task, to learn about the factual application of theoretical concepts, and to learn from their colleagues. Training also provides an opportunity to ensure that consistent practices are applied across the agency.

Law enforcement agencies therefore must administer training on this Guidance to all agents on a regular basis, including at the beginning of each agent's tenure. Training should address both the legal authorities that govern this area and the application of this Guidance. Training will be reviewed and cleared by agency leadership to ensure consistency through the agency.

## **Data Collection**

Data collection can be a tremendously powerful tool to help managers assess the relative success or failure of policies and practices. At the same time, data collection is only useful to the extent that the collected data can be analyzed effectively and that conclusions can be drawn with confidence.

Each law enforcement agency therefore (i) will begin tracking complaints made based on the Guidance, and (ii) will study the implementation of this Guidance through targeted, data-driven research projects.

## **Accountability**

Accountability is essential to the integrity of Federal law enforcement agencies and their relationship with the citizens and communities they are sworn to protect. Therefore, all allegations of violations of this Guidance will be treated just like other allegations of misconduct and referred to the appropriate Department office that handles such allegations. Moreover, all violations will be brought to the attention of the head of the Department of which the law enforcement agency is a component.