



TO END BIASED STOPS

Action Guide: Coalition to End Biased Stops May 11, 2022

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MEETING INFORMATION

San Francisco Police Commission

May 11, 2022 | Starting 5:30 PM

Stream at: www.sfgovtv.org

PUBLIC COMMENT CALL IN: 1 (415) 655-0001 / Access Code: **2488 890 0407**

Agenda: <https://sfgov.org/policecommission/meetings/19> - includes link for one-click dialing

Commission Acting-President: Cindy Elias

To dial in:

1. Call 1 (415) 655-0001
2. Enter the meeting ID, **2488 890 0407**, then press #
3. When asked for a participant ID number, just press # again
4. You'll hear a beep after you enter the hearing/meeting

To join the queue ("raise your hand"):

1. To speak on a particular item, press *3.
2. You'll hear an automated confirmation that "your hand has been raised to ask a question."
3. If you don't, press *3 again. If needed, hang up and call again.
4. If you're not sure whether you're in line, press ** and listen to the menu options.

To speak:

1. When you hear "your line has been unmuted," that means it's your turn to speak.
2. Your time will start *immediately*, so you should start speaking right away. (You don't need to ask if people can hear you.)

PUBLIC COMMENT TIPS | [Back to top](#)

- **You will have 2 minutes to speak**
- **Prepare your statement** by writing out what you plan to say beforehand. Use our script as a starting point, or feel free to prepare your own statement. Time yourself to see if you can share your statement within the allotted time given for public comment, which can be one to two minutes.
- **Call from a quiet location** where you have a strong internet or service connection.
- **Speak slowly and clearly.**
- **Turn down any televisions** or background sound.
- **Address the committee as a whole;** do not address individual Commissioners.
- **Be confident** in what you're saying. These are your experiences and your views. Believe in them.
- **Make your ask loud and clear:** E.g., Commissioners, I urge you to adopt a policy that ends racially-biased stops!

AGENDA ITEM | [Back to top](#)

Item #: 11

Raise your hand in the queue when Item #11 is called

COALITION TO END BIASED STOPS & OUR GOALS | [Back to top](#)

The Coalition to End Biased Stops is a community-driven initiative for a more just San Francisco. The goals of the Coalition to End Biased Stops are to:

- End racially biased pretextual traffic stops in San Francisco;
- Require more data and transparency about these stops; and,
- Achieve a decrease in officers and divestment from the San Francisco Police Department in accordance with the decrease in traffic stops.

The Coalition to End Biased Stops includes the ACLU of Northern California, Council on American-Islamic Relations, GLIDE, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area, San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, San Francisco Public Defender, Walk SF, and over 50 organizations who have [signed onto our campaign](#).

The Coalition to End Biased Stops believes that the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) should no longer conduct pretext stops because they have a disproportionate impact on San Franciscans who are Black and brown, and do not improve public safety.

The draft Department General Order that will be introduced by Commissioner Max Carter-Oberstone is a step in the right direction. To ensure we protect community members from all pretext stops, the Coalition would like to see more codes included on the list for which SFPD cannot stop drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Check out our [website](#) and [fact sheet](#) for further information.

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENT INSTRUCTIONS & TEMPLATE EMAIL | [Back to top](#)

Written Public Comment Instructions

If you are unable to call in during the public comment period, please email your comments to the Commission **prior** to the meeting. To submit written public comment:

1. Copy and paste the following **subject** and **template** into a new email.
2. Using a consistent font type and size throughout, fill in the sections highlighted in **yellow** with the associated information; **make sure that it's no longer highlighted in yellow**.
3. Send your email to sfpd.commission@sfgov.org

Subject: End Pretext Stops - SUPPORT

Template:

Dear Acting-President Elias and Commissioners, Chief Scott, and Executive Director Henderson,

My name is **NAME**, I live in **SF DISTRICT**, and I am with **ORGANIZATION**. I urge you to end pretextual stops in San Francisco.

[Optional: Share two or three sentences about why the issue is important to you.]

San Francisco mirrors the state and nation in over-policing communities of color via pretextual stops. Since 2018, SFPD has stopped Black people at least six times the rate of white people, searched Black people at least 10 times the rate of white people, and were at least 12 times more likely to use force on Black people than white people.

Research shows that enforcing pretextual infractions has little demonstrable impact on reducing crime, has significant downsides in terms of the harassment and profiling of communities of color, and is a waste of taxpayer resources. Please adopt a policy to prohibit these racially-biased traffic stops in San Francisco.

Sincerely,

NAME

PHONE SCRIPT | [Back to top](#)

Intro: Hello, Acting-President Elias and Commissioners, my name is **[name]**, I live in **[SF district, if applicable]**, and I'm part of **[organization, if applicable]**. I urge you to join the community's call to end pretextual stops in San Francisco by limiting SFPD officers' ability to conduct certain traffic stops.

Supporting story: [Share a personal story, organizational experience, or any of the below talking points that are compelling to you. Be sure to include the closing, which is immediately below this section.]

Closing: Please adopt a policy to end racially-biased traffic stops in San Francisco. Thank you.

TALKING POINTS | [Back to top](#)

General/Overview Talking Points:

- Almost any driver, cyclist, or pedestrian will commit a traffic infraction, if observed for long enough.
 - Police use these alleged traffic violations as a “pretext” to detain and search people, wreaking untold economic, physical, psychological, and intergenerational harm, especially against Black and brown San Franciscans.
 - Traffic stops are the most common interaction Americans have with police. On a typical day, police pull over more than 50,000 drivers — over 20 million people a year.
- Police use these alleged traffic violations as a “pretext” to detain a driver, passenger, pedestrian, or cyclist with the aim to investigate them for other criminal activity or to search them based on nothing more than a hunch. This is completely legal, and an officer can use a pretextual stop to evade scrutiny for racial profiling.
 - The Stanford Open Policing Project’s analysis found that police stop and search Black and Latinx drivers on the basis of less evidence than white drivers, and white drivers are less likely to be searched, yet more likely to be found with contraband.
- From 2016 to 2021, nationally, police officers killed at least 400 unarmed drivers and passengers who were not under pursuit for a violent crime. Many of those stops started with common, low-level traffic violations. Black drivers were overrepresented among those killed.
- Pretextual stops commonly lead to:
 - Further inquiries unrelated to the stop such as whether someone is on probation or parole, which will then give an officer a legal reason to search a person;
 - Police misconduct and unnecessary violence; and
 - The over policing of Black and brown communities
- Reducing traffic stops will reduce biased points of entry into the carceral system.
- Pretextual stops have already been banned in other jurisdictions.
- Pretextual stops are not making our streets safer for people who walk, bike, or drive.
- Pretextual stops harm community relations, waste resources, and far too often cause those already fearful of law enforcement to flee, causing more unnecessary force and violence.

- There are deep, institutional problems inherent to pretext stops. It is not a matter of which training curriculum SFPD implements or what new officers they hire. We must remove biased officer discretion from the point of harm.
- Pretext stops are not correlated with a reduction in criminal activity, do little to improve public safety, and a request to search the driver, passenger(s), vehicle, or pedestrian does not logically derive from them.
 - For too long, officers have been incentivized by the chance that pretext stops provide to investigate those whom officers deem suspicious based on subjective fears or biases.
 - The reality of unconscious or implicit bias means that officers making pretext stops may not even know they are doing it.
 - Research shows that enforcing pretext infractions has little demonstrable impact on reducing crime, has significant downsides, and is a waste of SFPD's time and resources.

Other Jurisdictions:

- Other jurisdictions have already implemented similar policies, and this would align San Francisco with best practices.
 - Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Washington, DC, Virginia, Nashville, Connecticut, and parts of Maryland and Massachusetts have all taken initial or significant steps toward ending pretext stops.
 - These efforts have been gaining momentum across the country, and it's time for San Francisco to join the movement.
 - After the Oakland Police Department stopped initiating traffic stops for some infractions, the number of stops involving Black individuals decreased by 43 percent.

Over-Policing and Racial Disparities Data for San Francisco:

- Daunte Wright, Cristian Cobian, Sandra Bland, and Philando Castile all were killed by police after pretextual stops, which disproportionately harm Black and Latinx community members due to racial bias.
- Black and Brown San Franciscans, in the Police Department's own language, "are overrepresented per capita in all interactions with SFPD." This results in disparate harms, which are well-documented and known.
- San Francisco mirrors the state and nation in over-policing communities of color via pretextual stops. In 2021, SFPD conducted 27,543 stops that resulted in 6,003 searches.
 - Black people make up less than five percent of the population of San Francisco, yet accounted for 26 percent of all stops and 36 percent of all searches.
- For every 1,000 Black adults stopped by SFPD, 42.6 received a citation for violating a local ordinance for a non-traffic stop, while white adults received just 9.5 citations for every 1,000 stops.

- More than 36 of every 1000 San Franciscans who are Black may be stopped, as compared to roughly six of every 1000 San Franciscans who are white.
- More than 11 of every 1000 San Franciscans who are Black may be searched, as compared to roughly one of every 1000 San Franciscans who are white.
- San Franciscans who are Black were over 12 times more likely to be subject to a use of force, as compared to San Franciscans who are white.
- The Bayview — which has a heavy concentration of residents who are Black — had the highest percentage of stops that resulted in searches.
- Black individuals were searched under the guise of “officer safety” 50 percent more often than white individuals.
- Since 2018, 43 percent of traffic stop arrests have come from the Bayview, Tenderloin, and Mission police districts.
- 45 percent of those arrested once, 56 percent of those arrested more than once, and 62 percent of those arrested more than three times for jaywalking are Black. Fewer than 7 percent of arrests ever get arraigned.
- 46 percent of all those arrested for “technical violations” stops are Black.

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Key Hashtags

#EndBiasedStopsSF **#StopThePretext**

Sample Posts and Graphics

[Graphic Series 1: Racism on our Streets \(Access Graphics Here\)](#)

Sample Twitter Posts

Police stopping people for driving, bicycling, or walking while Black or brown is racist & unjust. When police are not using traffic stops to racially profile and escalate state violence, our streets are safer for people who walk, bike, or drive. @SFPDCommission #EndBiasedStopsSF

Pretext stops for traffic violations like tinted windows or jaywalking are a waste of public resources and have a disparate impact on Black and Brown people in San Francisco. They do not increase public safety, they just create further harm @SFPDCommission #EndBiasedStopsSF

In 2021, SFPD conducted 27,543 stops that resulted in 6,003 searches. Black people make up less than five percent of the population of San Francisco, yet accounted for 26 percent of all stops and 36 percent of all searches. #EndBiasedStopsSF

The SF Police Commission should end biased traffic stops to finally address racial disparities: more than 36 of every 1000 San Franciscans who are Black may be stopped, compared to roughly six of every 1000 San Franciscans who are white. #EndBiasedStopsSF

The SF Police Commission should end biased traffic stops to address racial disparities in policing: more than 11 of every 1000 San Franciscans who are Black may be searched, as compared to roughly one of every 1000 San Franciscans who are white. #EndBiasedStopsSF

San Franciscans who are Black were over 12 times more likely to be subject to a use of force, as compared to San Franciscans who are white. The SF Police Commission should end biased traffic stops to finally address these disparities. #EndBiasedStopsSF

Jaywalking is a racially biased pretextual stop. 45% of those arrested once, 56% of those arrested more than once, and 62% of those arrested more than three times for jaywalking are Black. The SF Police Commission should end racially biased pretext stops #EndBiasedStopsSF

Sample Instagram/Facebook Posts

Almost any driver, cyclist, or pedestrian will commit a traffic infraction, if observed for long enough. Police use these alleged traffic violations as a “pretext” to detain and search people, wreaking untold economic, physical, psychological, and intergenerational harm, especially against San Franciscans who are Black or brown. Pretext stops are not making our streets safer for people who walk, bike, or drive. Pretextual stops harm community relations, waste resources, and far too often cause those already fearful of law enforcement to flee, causing more unnecessary force and violence. There are deep, institutional problems inherent to pretext stops. It is not a matter of which training curriculum SFPD implements or what new officers they hire. We must remove biased officer discretion from the point of harm. Since 2018 in San Francisco, Black people have been six times more likely to be stopped, ten times more likely to be searched, and twelve times more likely to be subject to use of force than white people. The San Francisco Police Commission has the power to end these racially biased pretext stops. Visit <https://www.endbiasedstopssf.org/> to learn more and join the fight. #EndBiasedStopsSF

[Graphic Series 2: Stories of the Pretext \(Access Graphics Here\)](#)

Sample Twitter Posts

Daunte Wright, Cristian Cobian, and Philando Castile were killed by police after pretextual stops, which disproportionately harm Black and Latinx community members due to racial bias. End biased pretext stops to prevent deaths like these in our community #EndBiasedStopsSF

Hanging an air freshener from your rearview mirror or a broken taillight should not be a pretext for police to stop, search and potentially harass you. @SFPDCommission, we urge you to #EndBiasedStopsSF and protect Black and brown community members from state violence.

Daunte Wright, Willie McCoy, Cristian Cobian & Philando Castile should all be alive today. Instead they were stopped by police for "driving while Black" and tragically killed by police. We must prevent tragedies like these from happening in our city and #StopThePretext

Sample Instagram/Facebook Posts

Daunte Wright, Willie McCoy, Cristian Cobian, and Philando Castile should all be alive today. Instead they were stopped by police for "driving while Black" and tragically killed by police. Their "crimes" -- hanging an air freshener, sleeping in their car, driving with a broken taillight, and riding a bike without headlights. We must #StopThePretext to prevent tragedies like these from happening in our city. The Coalition to End Biased Stops believes that the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) should no longer conduct pretext stops because they have a disproportionate impact on Black and Brown San Franciscans and do not improve public safety. The San Francisco Police Commission has the power to end these racially biased pretext stops. Visit <https://www.endbiasedstopssf.org/> to learn more and join the fight. #EndBiasedStopsSF

Coalition Social Media Handles *Please make sure to tag Coalition Members!*

Coalition Partners' Twitter Handles	Coalition Partners' Instagram Handles
• @ACLU_NorCal • @CAIRCalifornia • @GLIDEsf • @lccrsf • @sfdefender • @walksf • @sfbike	• @aclu_norcal • @cair_national • @glidesf • @lccrsf • @sfpublicdefender • @walksf • @sfbike

Website

For more information please direct people to the coalition's website! Feel free to add a link in your posts as well.

[Coalition to End Biased Stops \(endbiasedstopssf.org\)](https://www.endbiasedstopssf.org/)