LOS ANGELES POLICE COMMISSION

REVIEW OF LAPD'S IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS 2022 PRETEXTUAL STOP POLICY

Conducted by the

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

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REVIEW OF LAPD'S IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS 2022 PRETEXTUAL STOP POLICY

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On March 9, 2022, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD or Department) implemented a policy governing pretextual stops.[1] The policy limits the circumstances in which officers may conduct pretext stops and establishes documentation requirements. Under the policy, a pretext stop occurs when an officer uses reasonable suspicion or probable cause of a minor traffic or code violation as a basis for investigating a separate, more serious offense unrelated to the observed violation.

The use of pretext stops has been the subject of ongoing policy discussion, including concerns regarding racial and ethnic disparities documented in California traffic stop data collected under the Racial and Identity Profiling Act of 2015 (RIPA). RIPA data have shown disparities in traffic stops and related police activity among racial and ethnic groups. These data have contributed to calls for greater restrictions on pretext stops. At the same time, law enforcement agencies have identified pretext stops as an investigative tool that may allow officers to identify illegal firearms, recover evidence, and address serious crime when the circumstances do not yet establish reasonable suspicion or probable cause for the more serious offense. Law enforcement agencies have therefore adopted differing approaches, ranging from restrictions on the circumstances in which officers may conduct pretext stops to broader prohibitions.

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) conducted this review as part of its oversight responsibilities and in response to sustained public interest in the Department's implementation of its pretext stop policy. The review examined the Department's use of pretext stops and its compliance with the existing policy. It consisted of three components: (1) comparing LAPD's policy with the policies of other law enforcement agencies; (2) analyzing Department data on pretext stops conducted from April 2022 through December 2025; and (3) reviewing a sample of 100 pretext and non-pretext traffic stops conducted in January 2026 to assess compliance with Department policy.

Key Results and Findings

LAPD's pretext stop policy differs from those of the other law enforcement agencies reviewed in two key respects. First, unlike the laws or policies in five jurisdictions that prohibit officers from initiating traffic stops based on specified minor traffic or code violations,[2] LAPD's policy permits an officer to use any observed minor traffic or code violation as the lawful basis for the

[1] The OIG previously conducted a departmentwide review of vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle stops conducted in 2019. That review identified concerns regarding the use of pretextual stops, discretionary post stop activities, searches, documentation, and racial disparities. Among other recommendations, the OIG recommended that the Department limit pretextual stops based on minor equipment and regulatory violations, focus stop practices on violations directly related to public safety, establish clearer policies governing stops and post stop activities, strengthen procedures for consensual searches, and conduct ongoing audits of stops and searches. OIG Report, "Review of Stops Conducted by the LAPD in 2019," dated October 27, 2020 (*See* https://www.oig.lacity.org/_files/ugd/b2dd23_d3e88738022547acb55f3ad9dd7a1dcb.pdf)

[2] (1) City and County of San Francisco, California; (2) City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; (3) Hennepin County, Minnesota; (4) Ramsey County, Minnesota; and (5) Commonwealth of Virginia.

pretext stop. Second, in comparison with six other large law enforcement agencies across the country, LAPD is the only agency identified as having a policy that restricts the use of pretextual stops.[3] Further, LAPD's policy imposes documentation requirements that exceed those of the six large agencies reviewed. Specifically, LAPD requires officers to (1) designate each traffic stop as either a pretext or non-pretext stop and (2) for every pretext stop, articulate on body-worn video (BWV) the reason for the stop, the citations or warnings issued, and responses to questions posed by the person stopped. Overall, LAPD's policy is less restrictive than those of the five jurisdictions that prohibit stops for specified traffic violations but is more restrictive than the six other large agencies reviewed and imposes more extensive documentation and reporting requirements.

The OIG identified the following key findings from its analysis of pretext stop data from April 2022 through December 2025.

- Pretext stops accounted for 9% of all traffic stops classified in Automated Field Data Reports (AFDRs).
- Of the 66,958 pretext stop detentions, 60% involved officers assigned to various field duty assignments[4] ("field duty" officers) and 38% involved officers assigned to a Gang Enforcement Detail (GED).
- The Areas with the highest percentages of pretext stop detentions were Newton (14%), Southwest (8%), Harbor (8%), Hollenbeck (7%), and Foothill (7%). Although Newton Area had the highest number of pretext stop detentions among the Department's 21 geographic Areas, it ranked ninth in total COMPSTAT person and property crimes from 2022 through 2025.[5]
- The overall arrest rate for pretext stop detentions was 6%. The highest annual arrest rate occurred in 2023 (7.7%), and the lowest occurred in 2025 (5.2%).
- Field duty officers had an arrest rate of 6.6% for pretext detentions, compared with 3.9% for GED officers.
- The four most common arrest-code categories associated with pretext stops were Firearms (33%), Narcotics (15%), Auto Theft (15%), and Driving Under the Influence (8%).
- Pretext stops resulted in arrests for offenses in several very-violent-crime categories, including Carjacking (9), Murder (8), Kidnapping (7), and Felony Hit and Run (4).
- Individuals detained during pretext stops were primarily Hispanic (58%), Black (31%), and White (8%). The corresponding arrest rates were 5.9% for Hispanic individuals, 6% for Black individuals, and 7.3% for White individuals. Overall, 83% of pretext stop detainees

[3] (1) New York Police Department; (2) Chicago Police Department; (3) Dallas Police Department; (4) Houston Police Department; (5) Phoenix Police Department; and (6) Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

[4] Various field duties include officers primarily assigned to the 21 Office of Operations (OO) geographic patrol divisions, four bureau traffic divisions, Metropolitan Division, and Community Safety Partnership Bureau.

[5] COMPSTAT, short for "computer statistics," provides statistical data and management information for the Department's weekly COMPSTAT meetings.

were male and 17% were female. The arrest rates were 6.3% for male detainees and 4.7% for female detainees.
- Firearms were recovered in 2.2% of pretext stop detentions. Field duty officers accounted for 49% of firearm recoveries, and GED officers accounted for 46%. Hispanic, Black, and White individuals represented 58%, 31%, and 8%, respectively, of pretext stop detainees and were associated with 52%, 40%, and 6%, respectively, of firearm recoveries.

The OIG identified the following key findings from its review of a sample of January 2026 pretext and non-pretext traffic stops.

- The OIG identified deficiencies in compliance with the Department's pretext stop policy in 44% of the pretext stops reviewed.
- The most significant issue identified was officers' failure to sufficiently articulate the suspected more serious crime that prompted the initiation of the pretext stop.
- Of the pretext stops conducted in compliance with Department policy, all resulted in verbal warnings.
- Although GED officers conducted 30% of the reviewed pretext stops, they accounted for half of the stops in which deficiencies were identified.

Conclusion

During the review period, pretext stops occasionally resulted in arrests for serious violent offenses, including murder, kidnapping, carjacking, and felony hit and run. Overall, however, 6% of pretext stop detentions resulted in arrests and 2.2% resulted in firearm recoveries. Among GED officers, 3.9% of pretext stop detentions resulted in arrests.

LAPD's 2022 pretext stop policy authorizes such stops only when officers have specific, articulable information indicating possible involvement of the vehicle or its occupants in a serious crime. The OIG's review identified significant instances in which officers did not document sufficient specific, articulable information to establish the required nexus between the vehicle or its occupants and a serious crime.

Former Chief of Police Michel Moore emphasized the importance of articulation when implementing the policy, stating that "good policing has always been about articulation and avoiding random stops that seldom produce any meaningful results."[6] The OIG's review found that officers did not consistently meet this expectation.

Overall, the OIG found that the Department has not consistently implemented its 2022 pretext stop policy.

[6] Electronic communication from former Chief of Police Michel Moore to Command and Staff Officers, "Pretextual Stop Discussion Documents," dated March 6, 2022.

Recommendations

1. The Department should develop proposed revisions to its 2022 pretext stop policy to establish clearer limits on the traffic, equipment, and registration violations that may serve as the basis for a pretext stop. The revised policy should consider:
    a. Identifying specified minor traffic, equipment, and registration violations for which officers would not initiate a traffic stop based solely on the observed violation.
    b. Establishing a narrowly tailored exception when, at the time the stop is initiated, the officer has reasonable suspicion, supported by specific and articulable facts, that the vehicle or an occupant is involved in, has committed, or is about to commit a serious crime.
    c. Establishing an exception when an immediate and specific threat to public safety exists and initiating the stop is reasonably necessary to address that threat.
    d. Requiring an officer who invokes an exception to contemporaneously document the specific and articulable facts known at the time the stop was initiated that support the exception.
    e. Requiring documentation of any additional reasonable suspicion or probable cause supporting an extension of the duration or scope of the stop beyond its original legal basis.

Within 90 days, the Department should present a draft revised policy to the BOPC for review and consideration.

2. To ensure consistent implementation of any revised policy, the Department should establish procedures for training officers, conducting supervisory review, and periodically auditing compliance with the policy.

Within 180 days of policy adoption, the Department should report publicly on implementation, including training, supervisory review procedures, and any additional steps taken to monitor compliance.

3. The BOPC and Department should evaluate whether to limit consent searches during traffic stops, including whether to require an independent lawful basis for the search beyond the individual's consent.

4. The OIG considers public input an important part of the policy development process and recommends that the BOPC consider providing an appropriate opportunity for community organizations, subject matter experts, and other interested members of the public to comment on proposed revisions before taking final action. The OIG will conduct community listening sessions and provide the BOPC and the Department with a summary of the input received. The Department is encouraged to conduct its own public outreach to explain the proposed policy revisions, the reasons for the revisions, and its response to the BOPC's direction before any policy is presented for final approval.

II. PRETEXT STOP POLICY COMPARISON

In this section, the OIG provides a summary of the LAPD's pretext stop policy and relevant California legislation, identifies U.S. jurisdictions that prohibit or restrict pretext stops, summarizes the traffic stop policies of selected large law enforcement agencies, and compares the LAPD's pretext stop policy with those of the selected agencies.[7]

A. LAPD's Pretext Stop Policy and California State Bills

The Department's pretext stop policy is outlined in Department Manual 1/240.06 - LIMITATION ON USE OF PRETEXTUAL STOPS, with the following key provisions:[8]

> ***Pretext Stops Defined***. *A pretextual or pretext stop is one where officers use reasonable suspicion or probable cause of a minor traffic or code violation (e.g., Municipal Code or Health and Safety Code) as a pretext to investigate another, more serious crime that is unrelated to that violation.*
>
> ***Use of Traffic/Pedestrian Stops - General.*** *Traffic or pedestrian stops made for the sole purpose of enforcing the Vehicle Code or other codes are intended to* ***protect public safety****. Therefore, officers should make stops for minor equipment violations or other infractions only when the officer believes that such a violation or infraction significantly interferes with public safety.*
>
> > ***Note****: The public safety reason for all traffic/pedestrian stops, citations and warnings should be articulated on body-worn video (BWV) and should include an officer's response to any questions posed by the individual stopped.*
>
> ***Pretext Stops - Restricted***. *It is the Department's policy that pretextual stops shall not be conducted* ***unless*** *officers are acting upon articulable information in addition to the traffic violation, which may or may not amount to reasonable suspicion, regarding a serious crime (i.e., a crime with potential for great bodily injury or death), such as a Part I violent crime, driving under the influence (DUI), reckless driving, street racing, street takeovers, hit and run, human or narcotics trafficking, gun violence, burglary, or another similarly serious crime. Such decisions should not be based on a mere hunch or on generalized characteristics such as a person's race, gender, age, homeless circumstance, or presence in a high-crime location.*

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[7] The OIG selected jurisdictions that provided useful points of comparison based on the size of the law enforcement agency and the existence of policies addressing pretext stops. The review included five jurisdictions with more than 1,000 officers that prohibit stops based on specified minor traffic or vehicle code violations and six large law enforcement agencies comparable in size or scope to the Department.

[8] The Department implemented this policy through a Special Order issued on March 9, 2022. *See* Appendix A for the full text of the Special Order.

Department personnel seeking one or more specific persons who have been identified or described in part by one or more of these characteristics may rely on them only in combination with other appropriate identifying factors.

***Note**: The reason for all pretext stops, and the citations and warnings resulting from them, should be articulated on BWV and should include an officer's response to any questions posed by the individual stopped.*

***Note**: An officer's training, experience and expertise may be used in articulating the additional information the officers used to initiate the stop.*

***Note**: A failure to sufficiently articulate the information which - in addition to the traffic violation - caused the officer to make the pretext stop, shall result in progressive discipline, beginning with counseling and retraining. Discipline shall escalate with successive violations of this mandate.*

***Duration and Scope of All Stops**. Officers' actions during all stops (e.g., questioning, searches, handcuffing, etc.) shall be limited to the original legal basis for the stop, absent articulable reasonable suspicion or probable cause of criminal activity that would justify extending the duration or expanding the scope of the detention. Officers shall not extend the duration or expand the scope of the detention without additional reasonable suspicion or probable cause (beyond the original legal basis for the stop).*

Additionally, Department Manual 4/202.02 – AUTOMATED FIELD DATA/ REPORTS/ COMPLETION AND TRACKING requires officers to document all stops in an AFDR. The related AFDR Officer Completion Guide requires officers to categorize each stop as either pretext or non-pretext:

The officer shall select "Yes" or "No" to denote whether the stop was a pretextual stop. A "pretextual" or pretext stop is one where officers use reasonable suspicion or probable cause of a minor traffic or code violation as a pretext to investigate another, more serious crime that is unrelated to that violation.

All AFDR data are entered and maintained in a Department-wide database and submitted to the California Department of Justice (CalDOJ) pursuant to California Assembly Bill 953, also known as RIPA.[9] CalDOJ compiles stop data submitted by California law enforcement agencies, and the RIPA Advisory Board publishes an annual report analyzing those data.[10]

[9] https://oag.ca.gov/ab953

[10] RIPA and LAPD use different definitions of a pretextual stop. The RIPA report provides broader context regarding traffic-stop practices and policy approaches.

The RIPA report, published on January 30, 2026, addresses pretext stops on pages 125 through 151.[11] RIPA generally uses pretext stop to describe a stop of a minor violation undertaken to investigate another offense without reasonable suspicion or probable cause, whereas LAPD's policy permits a pretextual stop when the officer has additional articulable information concerning a serious crime, which may or may not amount to reasonable suspicion.

The RIPA report highlighted reform efforts made by four California law enforcement agencies, including LAPD's 2022 policy limiting pretextual stops. Based on its analysis of RIPA data, the Board reported that LAPD's restrictions appeared to reduce officer time spent enforcing minor traffic infractions and improved the efficiency and success rates of searches.

The RIPA Board recommended reducing or eliminating pretextual stops in California. The Board cited research and data concerning the effectiveness of pretextual stops, racial and identity disparities, and potential risks associated with traffic stops. It also identified reported benefits associated with policies that limit or eliminate pretextual stops, including increased public safety and reduced racial and identity profiling.

In November 2025, the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) published a report titled "*The Current State of Traffic Enforcement.*"[12] Pages 31 through 40 discuss the benefits and drawbacks of pretext stops and describe differing perspectives among law enforcement agencies and their leaders. The report does not make formal recommendations regarding pretext stops.

In January 2023, California Senate Bill 50 was introduced to restrict the use of pretext stops. The bill failed to pass in September 2023.[13] Among the bill's opponents was the California District Attorneys Association, which stated in a letter presented at the March 29, 2023, Senate hearing:[14]

> *This bill prohibits peace officers from detaining the operator of a motor vehicle or bicycle for a low-level infraction unless a separate independent basis for the stop exists. Doing so jeopardizes public safety, undermines the rule of law, and reduces accountability for low level infractions. Most importantly, this bill's prohibition on detaining drivers for low level infractions deprives peace officers of a very effective investigative tool that is often used by law enforcement to gather information needed in an ongoing criminal investigation, apprehend a suspect who is wanted for having committed an unrelated criminal violation, or to investigate an unrelated offense.*

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[11] https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/ripa-board-report-2026.pdf

[12] PERF, "The Current State of Traffic Enforcement," November 2025 (*See* https://www.policeforum.org/assets/Traffic.pdf)

[13] https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB50

[14] https://spsf.senate.ca.gov/sites/spsf.senate.ca.gov/files/sb_50_analysis.pdf

B. U.S. Jurisdictions that Prohibit or Restrict Pretext Stops for Specified Violations

The OIG identified five jurisdictions, each with more than 1,000 law enforcement officers, that prohibit officers from initiating traffic stops for specified minor traffic or vehicle code violations:[15]

(1) City and County of San Francisco, California;[16]
(2) City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania;[17]
(3) Hennepin County, Minnesota;[18]
(4) Ramsey County, Minnesota;[19] and,
(5) Commonwealth of Virginia.[20]

As shown in Table 1, all five jurisdictions prohibit officers from initiating traffic stops for the following violations, although the specific restrictions vary:

a) Expired registration;

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[15] Open-source online research identified these five jurisdictions as being commonly referenced as having restrictions on the use of pretextual stops.

[16] General Order 9.07 effective July 2024 applies to all law enforcement officers working for San Francisco Police Department. Note: A SFPD officer may make a "prohibited" stop of *"a person or motor vehicle matching the description of a suspect or suspect vehicle involved in a felony offense where the risk of death or life-threatening injuries is imminent if the suspect is not immediately apprehended, including murder, attempted murder, manslaughter, armed robbery, kidnapping, forcible sex offense, a felony committed against a child."*

[17] https://phlcouncil.com/councilmember-thomas-driving-equality-is-law/. The "Driving Equality" law effective March 2022 prohibits Philadelphia Police Department officers from stopping drivers for eight specified minor/secondary vehicle code violations.

[18] Office of the Hennepin County Attorney (HCAO) issued, "Policy on Non-Public-Safety Traffic Stops," effective October 15, 2025, which applies to all municipal and county law enforcement officers working in Hennepin County. The policy states: *"The HCAO will presumptively not charge cases directly resulting from a non-public-safety traffic stop where any charges would be based principally upon an individual's unlawful possession and/or use of items discovered in the vehicle as a result of the stop."* (Note: The largest law enforcement agencies in Hennepin County are Minneapolis Police Department and Hennepin County Sheriff's Office.)

[19] Office of the Ramsey County Attorney issued "Charging Policy Regarding Non-Public-Safety Traffic Stops," effective September 8, 2021, which applies to all municipal and county law enforcement officers working in Ramsey County. The policy states: *"Our office will decline to prosecute cases when the charge is (a) solely the product of a non-public-safety traffic stop, or (b) the results of searching a vehicle based solely on consent, without any other articulable suspicion."* (Note: The largest law enforcement agencies in Ramsey County are St. Paul Police Department and Ramsey County Sheriff's Office.)

[20] Effective March 1, 2021, Virgina law (House Bill 5058 and Senate Bill 5029) transitioned several minor traffic infractions from primary to **secondary offenses**, prohibiting law enforcement officers from initiating stops based solely on these infractions. This law applies to all municipal, county, and state law enforcement officers working in Virgina.

b) Missing lights, including brake, tail, headlight, or license-plate illumination; and,
c) Mirror-related violations, including objects hanging from a rear-view mirror or a missing mirror.

In addition, two of the five jurisdictions prohibit officers from initiating traffic stops for:

a) Tinted windows; and,
b) Missing inspection stickers.

One of the five jurisdictions also prohibits officers from initiating traffic stops for one or more of the following:

a) No front license plate;
b) Failure to use a turn signal;
c) Windshield or windshield-wiper conditions;
d) Rear-bumper damage;
e) Failure to wear a seat belt;
f) The odor of marijuana;
g) A person sleeping in a vehicle
h) Excessive muffler noise; and,
i) Smoking while a child under 15 years old is present.

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Table No. 1 Jurisdictions with Prohibited Traffic Stops

Jurisdiction	San Francisco	Phila-delphia	Hennepin County	Ramsey County	Commonwealth of Virginia	*Cnt*
Approx. # of Affected LE Ofcrs.	***1,500***	***5,000***	***>2,000***	***>1,500***	***20,000***	
Policy/Law Effective Date	***July 2024***	***Mar. 2022***	***Oct. 2025***	***Sept. 2021***	***July 2021***	
Traffic Stops Prohibited for:						
Expired Registration, if expired:	✓ < 1 yr.	✓ < 60 days	✓ no limit	✓ no limit	✓ < 4 mo.	**5**
A Missing Light	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**5**
Mirror Issues/Obstructions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**5**
Tinted Windows				✓	✓	**2**
Missing Inspection Stickers		✓			✓	**2**
No Front License Plate	✓					**1**
Not Using Turn Signals	✓					**1**
Windshield Conditions/Wipers			✓			**1**
Bumper Damage		✓				**1**
Not Wearing Seat Belt					✓	**1**
Odor of Marijuana					✓	**1**
Person Sleeping in Vehicle	✓					**1**
Excessive Muffler Noise				✓		**1**
Smoking w Minor <15 Present					✓	**1**

C. Traffic Stop Policies of Other Large Agencies

The OIG examined policies governing pretext stops for six large law enforcement agencies: the New York Police Department, Chicago Police Department, Dallas Police Department, Houston Police Department, Phoenix Police Department, and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. The relevant provisions of each agency's traffic stop policy are summarized below. This review found that none of the six other large law enforcement agencies reviewed impose limitations on officers' authority to conduct pretext stops.

New York Police Department (NYPD)

The NYPD policy manual does not explicitly use the term "pretextual stops" in a standalone departmental directive. However, the "NYPD Disciplinary System Penalty Guidelines"[21] and broader patrol guidelines manage these tactics by establishing strict rules regarding biased

[21] https://www.nyc.gov/assets/nypd/downloads/pdf/public_information/nypd_disciplinary_system_penalty_guidelines_effective_09-09-2024.pdf

policing, reasonable suspicion, and the recording of stops. NYPD officers are permitted to use minor traffic violations as a reason to stop a vehicle to investigate more serious offenses—provided they have probable cause for the initial violation. Under *People v. Robinson*, the New York Court of Appeals established that pretextual traffic stops are legal under Article I, Section 12 of the New York State Constitution, meaning officers may pull over a vehicle for an observed traffic violation even if their actual motivation is to investigate an entirely unrelated hunch.

Chicago Police Department (CPD)

Per CPD General Order G03-08-02,[22] officers are permitted to conduct pretext stops, provided they have a legal basis (such as a minor traffic or equipment violation) for the initial stop. Officers can pull a driver over for minor infractions—like an expired registration sticker or a broken taillight—with the intent to investigate more serious, unrelated crimes.

Note: Illinois state law has limited some specific pretexts. For example, as of January 1, 2024, officers cannot stop a vehicle solely because of a minor windshield obstruction (like an air freshener), unless it materially blocks the driver's view.[23] However, as of August 2026, CPD had not revised its written policy to reflect this state law change.

Dallas Police Department (DPD)

According to DPD General Order 302.00 Traffic Enforcement,[24] the use of pretext stops is permissible as it is not discussed in its manual. Limitations exist for citing people over age 65 for moving traffic violations. Written warnings are not utilized by the DPD officers. Verbal warnings may be used when there is a new enforcement program going into effect and the preliminary phase calls for a period of public education. Newly enacted laws or regulations may be enforced on their effective date. A verbal warning may be sufficient in certain minor violations.

Houston Police Department (HPD)

HPD does not have a stand-alone policy for traffic stops. Some guidance on traffic stops can be found in their "Effecting Arrests and Searches General Order,"[25] but pretext stop restrictions do not exist.

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[22] https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/ccpsa/pdfs/TrafficStopsPage/G03-08-02_CPD_Draft.pdf

[23] Since January 1, 2024, Illinois law (HB 2389 / Public Act 103-0032) prohibits law enforcement from stopping or searching a vehicle solely because of a minor windshield obstruction.

[24] https://www.dallaspolice.net/resources/Pages/General_Orders_300_Combined.aspx

[25] https://www.houstontx.gov/police/general_orders/500/500-01%20Effecting%20Arrests%20and%20Searches.pdf

Phoenix Police Department (PPD)

Per PPD Traffic Patrol and Enforcement Operations Order 7.5.00,[26] traffic stop restrictions or limitations are not mentioned, but "Officers are expected to enforce traffic laws in an unbiased, courteous, and professional manner, utilizing sound judgment based on Arizona State Laws. Stops must never be based on race, color, or other protected classes."

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD)

Per LASD Manual of Policy and Procedures, Chapter 5-05 – Traffic,[27] LASD does not have a policy to prohibit certain types of traffic stops or restrict pretext stops.

D. LAPD's Pretext Stop Policy Compared with Other Agencies

Unlike the laws or policies in five jurisdictions that prohibit officers from initiating traffic stops based on specified minor traffic or code violations, LAPD's policy permits an officer to use any observed minor traffic or code violation as the lawful basis for the pretext stop.

In comparison with six other large law enforcement agencies across the country, LAPD is the only agency identified as having a policy that restricts the use of pretextual stops. Additionally, LAPD's policy imposes documentation requirements that exceed those of the six large law enforcement agencies reviewed. Specifically, LAPD requires officers to (1) designate each traffic stop as either a pretext or non-pretext stop and (2) for every pretext stop, articulate on BWV the reason for the stop, the citations or warnings issued, and the officer's responses to questions posed by the person stopped.

Overall, LAPD's policy is less restrictive than those of the five jurisdictions that prohibit stops for specified traffic violations but is more restrictive than the six other large agencies reviewed and imposes more extensive documentation and reporting requirements.

III. PRETEXT STOP DATA ANALYSIS

On June 12, 2024, the Los Angeles City Council requested that the Department provide traffic stop data covering the period from April 2022, after the current pretext stop policy took effect, through December 2025. In response, the Department provided an initial report dated

[26] https://public.powerdms.com/PhoenixPD/documents/1627019

[27] https://pars.lasd.org/Viewer/Manuals/10008/Content/11980#

January 15, 2026, which the Department presented to the BOPC on February 3, 2026.[28] On March 3, 2026, the Department presented a supplemental report to the BOPC.[29]

In addition to explanatory narratives, the two reports presented the following data in tables:

Initial Report
1. All stops citywide from January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2024;
2. Traffic violation stops from April 1, 2022, through November 30, 2025; and,
3. Evidence-discovery rates for pretext stops from April 1, 2022, through November 20, 2025.

Supplemental Report
All data in the supplemental report covered April 1, 2022, through December 31, 2025, and included:
1. Pretext Stops by bureau and race;
2. Racial demographics by bureau;
3. Suspect demographics by bureau;
4. The ten most common pretext stops by violation code;
5. Search and evidence-recovery rates for ten most common pretext stops by violation code;
6. Evidence-recovery rates by bureau and race; and,
7. Pretext stops by bureau and time of day.

At the March 24, 2026, BOPC meeting, PUSH LA also presented its analysis of LAPD traffic stops, citing its February 2025 policy brief, "*Non Law Enforcement Alternatives to Traffic Safety Policy Brief."* PUSH LA recommended that LAPD prohibit traffic stops for equipment and non-moving violations and permit traffic stops only for moving violations. Immediately following PUSH LA's presentation, the Department presented its position that pretext stops and consent searches, when used appropriately and in accordance with Department policy, can be very valuable law enforcement tools.

On May 6, 2026, the Los Angeles City Council passed a motion narrowing the circumstances under which officers may initiate traffic stops for certain minor equipment or non-safety-related violations, such as a broken taillight or an object hanging from a rear-view mirror. The motion was presented to the BOPC for consideration on May 7, 2026. *See* Appendix B.

The OIG independently analyzed the underlying stop data to provide additional information and analysis not presented in the Department's two reports. The OIG's analysis includes measures and comparisons derived from the Department's AFDR and examines pretext stops conducted

[28] Department Report, "Traffic Enforcement Alternatives," dated January 15, 2026 (*See* https://www.lapdpolicecom.lacity.org/020326/BPC_26-031.pdf)

[29] Department Report, "Traffic Enforcement Alternatives - Supplemental Report," dated February 24, 2026 (*See* https://www.lapdpolicecom.lacity.org/030326/BPC_26-064.pdf)

from April 1, 2022, through December 31, 2025. The OIG presents its analysis across 14 topics, discussed in the tables and narrative that follow.

Note: The OIG's analysis is based on pretext stops identified in AFDRs. Accordingly, the analysis does not include (1) stops that officers classified in AFRDs as non-pretext, even if the stops were in fact pretextual or (2) stops for which officers did not complete an AFRD. To the extent that either occurred, the OIG's analysis may understate the number of pretext sops conducted during the review period.

Topic 1: Pretext Stops as a Percentage of Total Traffic Stops by Code Violation Types Used

During the 3.75-year period, 681,053 persons were detained (i.e., "detentions") per 595,263 total vehicle stops. Of the total 595,263 vehicle stops, 52,984 (8.9%) were classified by officers on AFDRs as pretext stops and resulted in 66,958 persons detained.

The AFDRs for these 66,958 pretext stop detentions referenced 715 unique codes as the reasons and legal basis for the stops and detentions, with the top three reasons representing 58% of all pretext stop detentions being:

(a) license plate issues (28%);
(b) expired/missing registration (15%); and,
(c) window tint/obstruction (15%).

Table No. 2

Code Violation Type per AFDR	Total Pretext Stop Detentions	% of 66,958
License Plate Issues	18,704	28%
Expired or Missing Registration	9,861	15%
Window Tint/Obstruction	9,826	15%
Parking on Street where Disallowed	4,127	6%
Failure to Stop when/as Required	3,623	5%
Vehicle Lights Issues	2,969	4%
subtotal	49,110	73%
All Other Violation Types each with less than 2,000	17,848	27%
total	**66,958**	**100%**

Topic 2: Pretext Stop Detentions per Officer Assignment

Of the 66,958 pretext stop detentions, 60% were made by field duty officers, 38% by GED officers, and 2% by officers in all other assignments.[30] GED officers made a disproportionate share of all pretext stop detentions, as they represent less than 5% of all non-administrative sworn officers.

Table No. 3

Officer Assignment	Total Pretext Stop Detentions	% per Officer Assignment
Field Duty	39,958*	59.68%
GED	25,208	37.65%
Task Force	751	1.12%
Narcotics/Vice	650	0.97%
Other	193	0.29%
Investigative/Detective	134	0.20%
Roadblock/Checkpoint	40	0.06%
Special Events	19	0.03%
K-12 Public Schools	4	0.01%
total	**66,958**	**100%**

* The 21 OO geographic patrol Areas accounted for 96% of these 39,958 detentions.

Topic 3: Comparing Pretext Stop Detentions to Total Sworn Officers by Organization

Geographic Areas with the highest number of sworn officers did not necessarily have the highest number of pretext stop detentions. For example, Central and 77th Street ranked 1 and 2 in the highest number of sworn officers, but they ranked 9 and 6 in total pretext stop detentions.

Likewise, geographic Areas with the highest number of pretext stop detentions did not necessarily have the highest number of sworn officers. For example, Newton, Harbor, Hollenbeck, and Foothill ranked 1, 3, 4, and 5, respectively, in the total number of pretext stop detentions; but they ranked 4, 14, 9, and 13, respectively, in the highest number of sworn officers.

[30] "Field duty" officers are primarily assigned to the 21 OO geographic patrol divisions, four bureau traffic divisions, Metropolitan Division, and Community Safety Partnership Bureau.

Table No. 4

Rank	Area	Field Duty	GED	Narc./ Vice	Task Force	Other Assign.	Total Detentions	%	Total # of Ofc.	*Total Sworn Officer Rank #*
1	NEWT	4,782	4,521	16	25	33	9,377	**14.0 %**	294	*4*
2	SW	3,226	1,857	76	183	78	5,420	**8.1%**	308	*3*
3	HARB	1,840	3,553	-	5	16	5,414	**8.1%**	244	*14*
4	HOBK	1,670	2,968	10	4	9	4,661	**7.0%**	260	*9*
5	FTHL	2,871	1,518	14	9	18	4,430	**6.6%**	249	*13*
6	77th St.	2,456	1,601	123	41	3	4,224	**6.3%**	328	*2*
7	RAMP	1,005	2,524	20	56	4	3,609	**5.4%**	242	*15*
8	HWD	2,923	213	56	16	20	3,228	**4.8%**	288	*6*
9	CENT	1,890	1,226	20	7	12	3,155	**4.7%**	333	*1*
10	MISN	1,460	1,025	25	-	6	2,516	**3.8%**	250	*12*
11	NE	1,528	866	30	1	2	2,427	**3.6%**	271	*7*
12	WIL	1,372	776	13	3	3	2,167	**3.2%**	218	*20*
13	SE	1,157	773	22	8	10	1,970	**2.9%**	293	*5*
14	DEV	1,571	247	31	-	3	1,852	**2.8%**	252	*11*
15	TOP	1,181	335	3	-	5	1,524	**2.3%**	219	*19*
16	PAC	1,231	142	21	16	13	1,423	**2.1%**	258	*10*
17	NHWD	1,057	311	5	2	7	1,382	**2.1%**	211	*21*
18	WLA	1,176	181	6	6	8	1,377	**2.1%**	240	*16*
19	WVAL	937	166	-	9	3	1,115	**1.7%**	225	*18*
20	OLYM	760	234	107	-	7	1,108	**1.7%**	231	*17*
21	VNY	820	160	11	1	3	995	**1.5%**	205	*22*
22	VTD	791	-	-	11	15	817	**1.2%**	135	*26*
23	CSPD	693	4	-	-	31	728	**1.1%**	121	*27*
24	STD	393	-	-	188	7	588	**0.9%**	109	*28*
25	CTD	386	-	-	65	-	451	**0.7%**	105	*29*
26	METRO	258	2	-	5	32	297	**0.4%**	265	*8*
27	WTD	169	-	-	1	-	170	**0.3%**	98	*30*

Topic 4: Comparing Pretext Stop Detentions to COMPSTAT Crimes Rates by Area

Geographic Areas with the highest COMPSTAT combined person and property crime rates did not necessarily have the highest number of pretext stop detentions.[31] For example, Central and Pacific Areas ranked 1 and 2 in COMPSTAT combined person and property crimes, but they ranked 9 and 16 in total pretext stop detentions.

Likewise, geographic Areas with the highest number of pretext stop detentions did not necessarily have the highest number of combined person and property crime rates. For example, Newton, Harbor, Hollenbeck, and Foothill ranked 1, 3, 4, and 5, respectively, in the total number

[31] Per COMPSTAT, "***Person***" crimes include Homicide, Rape, Robbery, and Aggravated Assault; "***Property***" crimes include Burglary (breaking & entering), Motor Vehicle Theft, Theft from Motor Vehicles, and Larceny & Theft.

of pretext stop detentions; but they ranked 9, 18, 20, and 21, respectively, in combined person and property crime rates.

Table No. 5

Total Pretext Stop Detentions Rank #	Organ.	Total Pretext Stop Detentions by Organ.	%	Annual Avg. of COMPSTAT Combined P&P Crimes 2022-2025	*COMPSTAT Comb. P&P Crimes Rank #*
1	NEWT	9,377	14.0%	6,376	*9*
2	SW	5,420	8.1%	7,223	*3*
3	HARB	5,414	8.1%	4,808	*18*
4	HOBK	4,661	7.0%	4,696	*20*
5	FTHL	4,430	6.6%	3,626	*21*
6	77th St.	4,224	6.3%	7,146	*4*
7	RAMP	3,609	5.4%	6,219	*10*
8	HWD	3,228	4.8%	6,620	*6*
9	CENT	3,155	4.7%	10,138	*1*
10	MISN	2,516	3.8%	4,806	*19*
11	NE	2,427	3.6%	5,645	*12*
12	WIL	2,167	3.2%	6,685	*5*
13	SE	1,970	2.9%	5,603	*13*
14	DEV	1,852	2.8%	5,358	*16*
15	TOP	1,524	2.3%	5,442	*15*
16	PAC	1,423	2.1%	7,836	*2*
17	NHWD	1,382	2.1%	6,485	*8*
18	WLA	1,377	2.1%	5,937	*11*
19	WVAL	1,115	1.7%	5,342	*17*
20	OLYM	1,108	1.7%	6,503	*7*
21	VNY	995	1.5%	5,547	*14*

Topic 5: Pretext Stop Detention Duration and Time of Day

For the 66,958 pretext stop detentions, the average duration of each stop was 23 minutes. However, more commonly, the duration of a pretext stop was 10 minutes. In comparison, for all 681,053 traffic stop detentions during this same period, the average duration of the stop was 19 minutes, and more commonly the duration of any stop was also 10 minutes. Thus, pretext stop detentions lasted on average four minutes longer than all traffic stop detentions but were consistent in duration to any traffic stop.

The 66,958 pretext stop detentions occurred over the 12 two-hour intervals as follows, with75% of the detentions occurring over the 10-hour period from 16:00 (4 pm) to 01:59 (1:59 am).

Table No. 6

Time From	Time To	Total Pretext Stop Detentions	% of Total 66,958 Pretext Stop Detentions
04:00	05:59	799	1.2%
06:00	07:59	899	1.3%
08:00	09:59	2,665	4.0%
10:00	11:59	3,109	4.6%
12:00	13:59	3,045	4.5%
14:00	15:59	3,850	5.7%
16:00	**17:59**	8,080	**12.1%**
18:00	**19:59**	10,951	**16.4%**
20:00	**21:59**	14,299	**21.4%**
22:00	**23:59**	11,632	**17.4%**
00:00	**01:59**	5,067	**7.6%**
02:00	03:59	2,562	3.8%
	total	**66,958**	100%

Topic 6: Detentions, Arrests, and Arrest Rate per Year (2022 to 2025)

For the total 66,958 pretext stop detentions, the table below shows the total pretext stop detentions and arrests per year. In comparing 2023 to 2024, the total pretext stop detentions more than doubles (from 10,676 to 24,437) and the arrest rate decreases by 1.9 percentage points (from 7.7% to 5.8%). The arrest rate for the entire 3.75-year period is 6%.

Table No. 7

Year	Total Pretext Stop Detentions	Total Pretext Stop Arrests	Arrest Rate
2022[32]	8,066	560	**6.9%**
2023	10,676	821	**7.7%**
2024	24,437	1,420	**5.8%**
2025	23,779	1,238	**5.2%**
totals	**66,958**	**4,039**	**6.0%**

Topic 7: Pretext Stop Arrest Rate per Officer Assignment

The 4,039 pretext stop arrests (per Topic 6 above) include:
(a) 3,028 warrantless arrests;
(b) 197 warrantless-and-warrant arrests; and,
(c) 814 warrant-only arrests.

[32] Partial year from April 1 to December 31, 2022.

For the 3,225 warrantless arrests, the arrest codes are documented in the AFDRs. However, for 814 warrant-only arrests, the arrest codes are not documented in the AFDRs.

The arrest numbers and rate per officer assignment are presented in the table below. The arrest rate for field duty and GED officers (the two largest officer assignment categories) were 6.6% and 3.9%, respectively. At 3.9%, GED officers had the lowest arrest rate of any officer assignment (excluding Compliance with only one pretext stop detention).

Table No. 8

Officer Assignment	Pretext Stop Detentions	Total Pretext Stop Arrests	Arrest Rate
Field Duty	39,958	2,632	**6.6%**
GED	25,208	976	**3.9%**
Task Force	751	111	**14.8%**
Narcotics/Vice	650	219	**33.7%**
Other	193	23	**11.9%**
Investigative/Detective	134	67	**50.0%**
Roadblock/Checkpoint	40	9	**22.5%**
Special Events	19	1	**5.3%**
K-12 Public School	4	1	**25.0%**
Compliance (parole/probation checks)	1	-	**0.0%**
totals	**66,958**	**4,039**	**6.0%**

Topic 8: Pretext Stop Arrests per Arrest-Code Category

For the 3,225 pretext stop warrantless arrests, the OIG identified 42 arrest-code categories, with the top ten categories below accounting for 87% of the total. The Firearms category with 1,068 arrests was more than double the next two highest categories of Narcotics (494) and Auto Theft (483).

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Table No. 9

	Arrest-Code Category	Total Warrantless Arrests	% of Total 3,225 Warrantless Arrests
1	Firearms	1,068	**33.1%**
2	Narcotics	494	**15.3%**
3	Auto Theft	483	**15.0%**
4	DUI	242	**7.5%**
5	Evading Officer	125	**3.9%**
6	Assault and/or Battery	116	**3.6%**
7	Burglary	85	**2.6%**
8	Robbery	73	**2.3%**
9	Theft Non-Auto	70	**2.2%**
10	Ammunition	43	**1.3%**
	All Other Categories	426	**13.2**
	total	3,225	**100%**

Topic 9: Pretext Stop Detentions with Very-Violent-Crime Arrest-Code Categories

Aside from the above "top ten" pretext stop arrest-code categories, other categories pertaining to very-violent crimes include warrantless arrests for Carjacking (9), Murder (8), Kidnapping (7), and Felony Hit and Run (4). Regarding the eight Murder arrests (from seven pretext stops), some data is as follows:

Table No. 10

Stop Date	Organ	Officer Assignment	Arrestee Race	Arrestee Gender
10/20/2022	CSPB	Field Duty	Hispanic	Male
4/7/2023	SE	Field Duty	Hispanic	Male
4/25/2023	HWD	Field Duty	White	Male
4/25/2023	HWD	Field Duty	White	Female
5/23/2023	WB	Inv/Det	Black	Male
7/10/2024	VNY	Field Duty	Hispanic	Male
4/30/2025	HOBK	GED	White	Female
5/5/2025	MISN	Narc/Vice	Hispanic	Male

Topic 10: Detentions and Arrest Rates per Race and Gender

The number and percentage of pretext stop detentions for the three largest race groups were: Hispanic – 38,841 (58%), Black – 20,513 (31%), and White – 5,293 (8%). Per Topic 4, the majority of pretext stop detentions occurred in geographic divisions with a high percentage of Hispanic and/or Black residents; and the six divisions with the highest number of pretext stop detentions (each with over 4,000 and 6.5% of the total) were Newton, Southwest, Harbor,

Hollenbeck, Foothill, and 77th Street. Per Topic 5, 50% of the pretext stop detentions occurred during hours of darkness from 8pm to 4am.

The pretext stop arrest rates (arrests/detentions) from largest to smallest for the three largest race groups were White – 7.3%, Black – 6.0%, Hispanic – 5.9%.

The number and percentage of pretext stop detentions per gender were Male – 55,294 (83%), Female – 11,619 (17%), and Other/Unknown – 45 (<1%).

The arrest rates (arrests/detentions) per gender were Male – 6.3%, Female – 4.7%, and Other/Unknown – 24.4%.

Table No. 11

Race	Total Detentions	% of Total	Total Arrests	% of 4,039	Arrest Rate
Hispanic	38,841	58%	2,303	57%	**5.9%**
Black	20,513	31%	1,233	30%	**6.0%**
White	5,293	8%	385	10%	**7.3%**
Mid.East/S.Asian	1,278	2%	51	1%	**4.0%**
Asian	601	1%	35	1%	**5.8%**
Other/Unknown	432	1%	32	1%	**7.4%**
totals	**66,958**	100%	**4,039**	100%	**6.0%**

Table No. 12

Gender	Total Detentions	% of Total	Total Arrests	% of 4,039	Arrest Rate
Male	55,294	83%	3,484	86%	**6.3%**
Female	11,619	17%	544	13%	**4.7%**
Other/Unknown	45	0%	11	0%	**24.4%**
totals	**66,958**	100%	**4,039**	100%	**6.0%**

In comparison to all traffic stop detentions (pretext and non-pretext), Black and Hispanic individuals made up the majority of people detained in traffic pretext stop detentions. Hispanic and Black individuals represented 58% and 31%, respectively, of the traffic pretext stop detentions, but only 52% and 22%, respectively, of all traffic stops detentions. In contrast, White, Mid.East/S.Asian, and Asian individuals accounted for a minority of people detained in traffic pretext stop detentions.

Also, per the table below, Males represented a majority of individuals detained in a pretextual traffic stop – in that they represented 83% of traffic pretext stop detentions, but only 74% of all traffic stop detentions.

Table No. 13

Race	Traffic Pretext Stop Detentions	% of Total	ALL (Pretext & Non-Pretext) Traffic Stop Detentions	% of Total
Hispanic	38,841	58%	356,871	52%
Black	20,513	31%	152,573	22%
White	5,293	8%	109,142	16%
Mid.East/S.Asian	1,278	2%	31,550	5%
Asian	601	1%	23,922	4%
Other/Unknown	432	1%	6,995	1%
totals	66,958	100%	681,053	100%
Gender	**Traffic Pretext Stop Detentions**	**% of Total**	**ALL (Pretext & Non-Pretext) Traffic Stop Detentions**	**% of Total**
Male	55,294	83%	507,326	74%
Female	11,619	17%	173,202	25%
Other/Unknown	45	0%	525	0%
totals	66,958	100%	681,053	100%

For the 66,958 pretext stop detentions, the detainee average age was 31. In comparison, for all 681,053 traffic stop detentions during this same time period, the detainee average age was 34 – three years older.

Topic 11: Pretext Stop Detentions with Vehicle Impounds

Apart from an arrest, a vehicle impound is the most significant consequence to a pretext stop detainee. Of the total 66,958 pretext stop detentions, 1,697 (2.5%) resulted in a vehicle impound. Field duty and GED officers made 76% and 17%, respectively, of these 1,697 impounds; but field duty and GED officers made 60% and 38%, respectively, of the 66,958 pretext stop detentions. Thus, field duty and GED officers were overrepresented and underrepresented, respectively, in pretext stop-related vehicle impounds.

Of the 1,697 vehicle impounds, 992 (58%) were associated with warrantless arrests, 89 (5%) with warrant arrests, and 616 (36%) with no arrests. Of the 992 warrantless arrests, the most represented arrest-code categories were Firearms & Accessories – 243 (14%), Auto Theft – 232 (14%), Narcotics – 142 (8%), and DUI – 77 (5%).

Table No. 14

Officer Assignment	Total Detentions	% per Ofcr Assignment	Total Vehicle Impounds	% of Impounds per Ofcr Assignment
Field Duty	39,958	59.68%	**1,290**	**76.0%**
GED	25,208	37.65%	**282**	**16.6%**
Task Force	751	1.12%	**37**	**2.2%**
Narcotics/Vice	650	0.97%	**58**	**3.4%**
Other	193	0.29%	**4**	**0.2%**
Investigative/Detective	134	0.20%	**24**	**1.4%**
Roadblock/Checkpoint	40	0.06%	**2**	**0.1%**
totals	**66,958**	100%	**1,697**	**100%**

Topic 12: Pretext Stop Detentions with Vehicle Code Citations Issued

Although pretext stops by definition use officer-observed vehicle code violations as an opportunity (pretext) to investigate more serious crimes, citations are still sometimes issued. Of the 66,958 pretext stop detentions, 6,690 (10%) were associated with a citation issued. Of these 6,690 citations, field duty and GED officers issued 85% and 10%, respectively. Further, for the 6,690 citations issued, the most represented vehicle code categories pertained to Driver's License – 1,355 (20%), License Plate – 1,045 (16%), Vehicle Registration – 1,033 (15%), and Muffler/Exhaust – 572 (9%).

Table No. 15

Officer Assignment	Total Detentions	% per Ofcr Assignment	Total Citations Issued	% of Citations per Ofcr Assignment
Field Duty	39,958	59.68%	**5,651**	**84.5%**
GED	25,208	37.65%	**655**	**9.8%**
Task Force	751	1.12%	**234**	**3.5%**
Narcotics/Vice	650	0.97%	**113**	**1.7%**
Other	193	0.29%	**23**	**0.3%**
Investigative/Detective	134	0.20%	**3**	**0.0%**
Roadblock/Checkpoint	40	0.06%	**4**	**0.1%**
Special Events	19	0.03%	**6**	**0.1%**
Compliance (P/P checks)	1	0.00%	**1**	**0.0%**
totals	**66,958**	100%	**6,690**	**100%**

Topic 13: Pretext Stop Detentions with No Substantive Result

Of the 66,958 total pretext stop detentions, 55,728 (83%) had no substantive result documented in the AFDR. For these 55,728 detentions, Verbal Warning with 42,652 detentions (77%) was the most common non-substantive result. For the other 13,076 detentions (23%), the non-substantive results were FI (Field Interview) Card Completed, No Action, Written Warning, and a combination of two or more of the four non-substantive results.

Table No. 16

Non-Substantive Result	Total Detentions	% of 55,728
Verbal Warning	42,652	**76.5%**
FI Card Completed	4,396	**7.9%**
No Action	4,333	**7.8%**
Written Warning	1,075	**1.9%**
Combination of Above	3,272	**5.9%**
total	**55,728**	**100%**

Note: Substantive results per the AFDRs include Arrest, In-Field Cite & Release, Citation Issued, Non-Criminal Caretaking Transport, Contacted Parent or Legal Guardian, etc.

Topic 14: Pretext Stop Firearms Recoveries per Officer Assignment and Race

Of the total 66,958 pretext stop detentions, 1,505 (2.2%) resulted in firearms recoveries. Field Duty and GED officers made 49% and 46%, respectively, of these 1,505 firearms recoveries; but field duty and GED officers made 60% and 38%, respectively, of the 66,958 pretext stop detentions.

Table No. 17

Officer Assignment	Total Pretext Stop Detentions	% per Ofcr Assignment	Total Detentions with Firearms Recoveries	% of 1,505
Field Duty	39,958	59.68%	742	**49.3%**
GED	25,208	37.65%	685	**45.5%**
Narcotics/Vice	650	0.97%	38	**2.5%**
Task Force	751	1.12%	21	**1.4%**
Investigative/Detective	134	0.20%	12	**0.8%**
Other	193	0.29%	7	**0.5%**
total	**66,958**	**100%**	**1,505**	**100%**

Hispanic, Black, and White individuals represented 58%, 31%, and 8%, respectively of these 66,958 pretext stop detentions; but Hispanic, Black, and White detainees were associated with 52%, 40%, and 6%, respectively, of the firearms recoveries. Thus, Black individuals were overrepresented (by 9 percentage points, 31% vs. 40%), while Hispanic and White detainees were underrepresented.

Table No. 18

Race	Total Detentions	% of Total	Total Detentions with Firearms Recoveries	% of 1,505
Hispanic	38,841	58%	775	**51.5%**
Black	20,513	31%	603	**40.1%**
White	5,293	8%	86	**5.7%**
Mid.East/S.Asian	1,278	2%	20	**1.3%**
Asian	601	1%	14	**0.9%**
Other/Unknown	432	1%	7	**0.5%**
totals	**66,958**	100%	**1,505**	**100%**

IV. OIG REVIEW OF A SAMPLE OF TRAFFIC STOPS

On August 25, 2026, the OIG presented to the BOPC its report, *Review of the Los Angeles Police Department's Gang Enforcement Detail Stops with Recorded Searches and Related Matters*.[33] That review examined a sample of 300 traffic stops conducted by GED officers and identified deficiencies in GED officers' compliance with the Department's pretext stop policy.

For this report, the OIG conducted a separate review of a sample of traffic stops conducted throughout the Department in January 2026. The sample included stops conducted by officers in all assignments and was designed to assess compliance with the Department's pretext stop policy and other applicable traffic stop policies.

A. Review Scope and Methodology

As previously noted, officers must complete an AFDR for each traffic stop and classify the stop as either pretext or non-pretext. In January 2026, Department officers conducted 16,720 traffic stops.[34] The OIG selected a sample of 100 stops for review: 50 classified by officers as pretext stops and 50 classified as non-pretext stops. Including both categories allowed the OIG to assess officers' application of the Department's pretext stop policy and compare compliance between pretext and non-pretext stops.

Of the 16,720 traffic stops, 1,973 (11.8%) were classified as pretext stops and 14,747 (88.2%) as non-pretext stops. From the population of 1,973 pretext stops, the OIG randomly selected 50 for testing against the pretext and search policies.[35]

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[33] OIG's Report titled, "*Review of the Los Angeles Police Department's Gang Enforcement Detail Stops with Recorded Searches and Related Matters*," dated August 25, 2026.

[34] Extracted from the Department's AFDR database on March 26, 2026.

[35] The OIG limited the sample to the driver of the involved vehicle.

For the non-pretext comparison group, the OIG limited the population to stops involving equipment or non-moving violations for which officers issued no citation. This approach identified stops that more closely resemble the circumstances commonly associated with pretext stops. A total of 2,940 non-pretext stops met these criteria, from which the OIG randomly selected 50 for review.

For each of the 100 stops, the OIG reviewed Department records and video recordings associated with the encounter, including the AFDR, Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) summary, Incident Recall, Digital In-Car Video (DICV) recordings from the primary unit, and BWV recordings of all primary-unit officers.

Note: Department policy requires officers to complete an AFDR immediately after an encounter. If exigent circumstances exist, the AFDR must be completed as soon as practicable but no later than the end of the officer's watch.[36]

B. Summary of Review Results

The OIG presents the following data from the reviewed sample of traffic stops.

Table No. 19 Vehicle Driver Demographics (Pretextual Stops)

Race	Male	Female	Total
Hispanic	32	5	37 (74%)
Black	9	0	9 (18%)
Mid.East/S.Asian	2	0	2 (4%)
White	2	0	2 (4%)
TOTAL	45	5	50 (100%)

Table No. 20 Vehicle Driver Demographics (Non-Pretext Stops)

Race	Male	Female	Total
Black	21	4	25 (50%)
Hispanic	19	3	22 (44%)
White	2	0	2 (4%)
Asian	0	1	1 (2%)
TOTAL	42	8	50 (100%)

[36] Department Manual, Volume 4, Section 202.02.

Table No. 21 Evidence and Other Contraband

	No. of Pretext Stops	No. of Non-Pretext Stops
Firearm and Ammunition	0	1[37]
Ammunition	1	0
Weapon (Not Firearm)	2	0
Illegal Narcotics	2	1
Containers with Alcohol	2	0

Table No. 22 Search and Other Action

Stop Involved	No. of Pretext Stops	No. of Non-Pretext Stops
Person Search	2	8
Vehicle and/or Property Search	17	8
Vehicle Impounded	0	1
Unlicensed/Uninsured Driver (Vehicle Not Impounded)	19	25

Table No. 23 Result of Stop

	No. of Pretext Stops	No. of Non-Pretext Stops
Custodial Arrests	0	2[38]
Citations Issued	1	0
Verbal Warning	43	48
Verbal Warning and Field Interview Card Completed[39]	3	0
Field Interview Card Completed	1	0
Written Warning	2	0
Total	**50**	**50**

[37] Officers conducted a traffic stop involving a male driver perceived to be Hispanic, for driving a vehicle with a missing license plate. After the stop, officers observed contraband in plain view located on the rear seat of the vehicle. The officers conducted a vehicle search and found a firearm, loose ammunition rounds, and a Kevlar vest. The officers were informed during the wants and warrants check that the detainee had an outstanding warrant. The detainee was arrested, and the evidence was seized.

[38] One arrest related to a warrant for burglary, and one arrest related to a misdemeanor warrant and suspended license.

[39] An FI card is a form that officers may fill out when they interact with a person in the "field" (i.e., during patrol, traffic stops, pedestrian stops, or other street-level contacts) — even if that person is not arrested or cited. The card is used to document basic information and observations about the person: name, physical description, date/time and location of contact, and other data like social media handles, phone number, email, plus any notes about what the person was doing or with whom they were associating.

1. Results of Pretext Traffic Stops Review

For the 50 pretextual traffic stops reviewed, the OIG examined the appropriateness of the stated reason for each stop, the adequacy of the required articulation to initiate a pretext stop, any search activity, and compliance with the procedural justice requirements. The OIG identified deficiencies in officer's application of the Department's pretext stop policy. The following sections summarize the OIG's findings.

a. Pretext Stops Conducted Inconsistently with Department Policy

The Department's pretext stop policy defines a pretext stop as one in which an officer uses reasonable suspicion or probable cause of a minor traffic or code violation as a pretext to investigate an unrelated, more serious crime. The OIG identified 10 of the 50 pretext stops reviewed (20%) in which BWV showed that the officers' actions were limited to addressing the observed traffic violations. Although officers classified all 10 stops as pretext stops, the OIG found that none was supported by sufficient specific, articulable information or documentation to satisfy the Department's pretext stop policy.

The enforcement actions resulting from the 10 stops consisted of nine verbal warnings and one written warning; officers issued no citations. In four of the 10 stops, officers documented in the AFDR that the basis for the pretext stop included information that the location was a known "gang location."[40] Department policy expressly provides that decisions to conduct pretext stops must not be based on generalized factors. In addition, seven of the 10 stops involved moving violations.

Based on the available documentation and BWV footage, the OIG concluded that these 10 stops were conducted inconsistently with the Department's pretext stop policy. The following case summaries illustrate the deficiencies identified.

Case No. 1
The officer documented in the AFDR that the basis for the stop was for "windshield tint. Windshield tint creates low visibility which creates a public safety concern can cause a t/c [traffic collision]." However, the BWV showed the officer informing a male driver perceived to be Hispanic that the stop was for failing to stop at a red traffic signal. Thus, the documented reason for the stop in the AFDR differed from the reason communicated to the driver during the encounter. During the encounter, the officer discussed the importance of stopping at a red traffic signal to prevent traffic collisions. Although the officer initially indicated an intent to issue a citation, the encounter concluded with a verbal warning. The officer's actions throughout the stop were limited to addressing the traffic violation, with no articulation of a more serious crime being investigated.

[40] Officers observed moving violations in three of four stops. For the remaining stop, officers observed a vehicle with tinted windows and a possible distracted driver.

Case No. 2
The officer documented in the AFDR that the vehicle was stopped because its "tinted windows are hazardous and can prevent drivers from seeing other peds [pedestrians], motorists, and bicyclists in area. Veh [vehicle] seen leaving a known gang loc [location]." The BWV showed the officer explaining to the female driver perceived to be Hispanic that the stop was initiated due to tinted windows. The officer further explained that the driver remained stopped after the traffic signal turned green, which led the officer to determine whether the driver may have been distracted. The officer instructed the driver to pay attention to the road and gave a verbal warning for the tinted windows. The officer's actions throughout the stop were limited to addressing the traffic violation, with no articulation of a more serious crime being investigated.

Case No. 3
The officer documented in the AFDR that the vehicle was stopped because the driver "failed to stop at stop sign, driving through known gang area of […]." The BWV showed the officer explaining to the male driver perceived to be Hispanic that the stop was initiated due to running a stop sign. The officer did not issue a citation and instead provided the driver with a verbal warning for the moving violation. The officer's actions throughout the stop were limited to addressing the traffic violation, with no articulation of a more serious crime being investigated.

Case No. 4
The officer documented in the AFDR that the vehicle was stopped for "driving w/o headlights and dark windshield tint during hours of darkness in a dimly lit street. T/s [traffic stop] for safety hazard for driver and other motorists." The BWV confirmed that the officer advised the male driver perceived to be Hispanic that the reason for the stop was because the vehicle was operating without headlights turned on and had tinted front windows during dark hours, which could increase the risk of a traffic collision. The officer's actions throughout the stop were limited to addressing the traffic violation, with no articulation of a more serious crime being investigated.

Case No. 5
The officer documented in the AFDR that the vehicle was stopped for "t/s [traffic stop] for lane straddling." The BWV confirmed that the officer advised the male driver perceived to be Hispanic that the reason for the stop was unsafe lane change. The officer issued the driver a verbal warning for the moving violation. The officer's actions throughout the stop were limited to addressing the traffic violation, with no articulation of a more serious crime being investigated.

Case No. 6
The officer documented in the AFDR that the vehicle was stopped for "b/o [burned out/ in "bad order"] light causing safety hazard and immediate danger of a collision to other vehicles during darkness." The BWV confirmed that the officer advised the male driver perceived to be Hispanic that the reason for the stop was the vehicle's broken taillight, consistent with the reason documented in the report.

During the detention, the officer addressed the observed vehicle equipment violation and ultimately issued a verbal warning for the broken taillight rather than a citation. Officers did not sufficiently articulate the information regarding a separate, more serious crime that provided the basis for the pretext stop.

Case No. 7
The officer documented in the AFDR that the vehicle was stopped for "t/s [traffic stop] for unsafe right turn. Driver no id [identification] and not registered r/o [registered owner]. Detained pending gta [grand theft auto]." The BWV confirmed that the officer advised the male driver perceived to be Hispanic that the reason for the stop was unsafe right turn. During the stop, the driver was unable to provide a driver's license or other identification, requiring officers to investigate and determine the driver's identity and verify the status of the vehicle. This investigation was initiated due to the circumstances encountered during the lawful traffic stop, specifically the lack of identification and the driver not being the registered owner, rather than to investigate a specific unrelated serious crime. Officers did not sufficiently articulate the information regarding a separate, more serious crime that provided the basis for the pretext stop.

Case No. 8
The officer documented in the AFDR that the vehicle was stopped for "unsafe speed and expired reg [registration]. Vehicle driving around known […] gang loc [location], high crime area." The BWV confirmed that the officer advised the female driver perceived to be Hispanic that the reason for the stop was the observed traffic violations of unsafe speeding and expired registration. During the detention, the officer recognized the passenger as a known gang member and asked questions regarding recent gang activity. The officer ultimately issued a written warning for the speeding and expired registration violations, and the occupants were released.

Case No. 9
The officer documented in the AFDR that the vehicle was stopped because the "driver was seen leaving location where known […] gang members congregate. Stopped vehicle for not making a complete stop behind limit line." The BWV showed the officer explaining to the male driver perceived to be Hispanic that the stop was initiated because the driver failed to stop at a stop sign. The officer did not issue a citation and instead provided the driver with a verbal warning for the moving violation. Officers did not sufficiently articulate the information regarding a separate, more serious crime that provided the basis for the pretext stop.

Case No. 10
The officer documented in the AFDR that the vehicle was stopped for a "not stopping at a stop sign. This creates a public safety issue for pedestrians walking." The BWV showed the officer explaining to the male driver perceived to be Hispanic that the stop was initiated because the driver failed to stop at a stop sign. The officer did not issue a citation and instead provided the driver with a written warning for the moving violation. The officer's actions throughout the stop were limited to addressing the traffic violation, with no articulation of a more serious crime being investigated.

b. Insufficient Articulable Information

The Department's policy provides that a pretext stop may be conducted only when an officer is acting upon *"articulable information in addition to the traffic violation, which may or may not amount to reasonable suspicion, regarding a serious crime."* The policy further provides that an officer's decision to conduct a pretext stop *"should not be based on a mere hunch or on generalized characteristics such as a person's race, gender, age, homeless circumstance, or presence in a high crime location."* Officers must also articulate on BWV the reason for each pretext stop. The policy states that *"failure to sufficiently articulate the information which – in addition to the traffic violation – caused the officer to make the pretext stop, shall result in progressive discipline."*[41]

The OIG found that 12 of the 50 pretext stops (24%) lacked sufficient articulable information, in addition to the traffic violation, regarding a separate serious crime as required by Department policy. In these 12 stops, officers reported the stops as pretextual and initiated them based on minor traffic violations, but the OIG found insufficient information in the available documentation and BWV linking the vehicle or its occupants to a separate serious crime.

Based on its review of the available documentation and BWV footage, the OIG concluded that these 12 stops were conducted inconsistently with the Department's pretext stop policy. The following case summaries illustrate the deficiencies identified.

Case No. 1
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving two males both perceived to be Hispanic, whose vehicle was parked in a red curb zone, a violation of L.A.M.C. § 80.56(e)(4) No Stopping Curb Zones. Officers approached the vehicle and ordered both occupants out of the vehicle and placed them in handcuffs while they investigated their activity.

During the encounter, one officer stated on the BWV, "This is a very active area and look where you're parked. You can't park right here." The officer further stated, "You know where you're at, right? I don't know what kind of life you're into right now, you know. Good or bad, or whatever, but you're in this area right now. It's dangerous right now." The officer later added, "It's hot right now. A lot of shootings [are] happening right now. You could be mistaken for [gang]. You never know."

In the AFDR, the officer documented the reason for the stop as the "vehicle illegally parked in red zone." During a pat-down search, officers recovered brass knuckles from one of the detainees. The officer advised the detainee that possession of brass knuckles was illegal but returned the item and instructed the detainee to dispose of it. The officer also searched the vehicle after obtaining the driver's consent. Ultimately, the officer issued the driver a verbal warning for illegally parking in a red zone.

[41] The OIG reviewed officers' BWV and written documentation to evaluate the adequacy of the articulated information supporting the determination that the traffic stop was conducted as a pretext stop.

Case No. 2
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving four males all perceived to be Hispanic, for expired registration. Officers documented in the AFDR the reason for the stop as they "obs [observed] vehc [vehicle] with expired reg [registration]." Officer explained to the driver that the traffic stop was initiated due to the vehicle's registration having expired three months earlier. After requesting for driver's license, registration, and proof of insurance, the driver stated that he did not have his driver's license.

The officer then ordered all four occupants out of the vehicle, conducted a pat-down of the driver and recovered a pocket knife. The officer then placed all four occupants in handcuffs while conducting a search of the vehicle. The occupants were subsequently released, and the driver was issued a citation for driving without a valid driver's license.

In the AFDR, the officer noted that the "driver was in possession of knife on person, obs [observed] open cannabis container in plain view." The BWV showed that throughout the encounter, the officers did not articulate specific, objective facts linking any of the occupants to a specific serious crime. The driver's possession of a pocket knife and the observation of an open cannabis container were not known to the officer until after the traffic stop had already been initiated and, therefore, could not have served as the basis for initiating the stop.

Due to the lack of specific, articulable facts documented or communicated to support the pretextual stop, and because the officer did not become aware of the driver's possession of a pocket knife or the open cannabis container until after the traffic stop had already been initiated, the available evidence does not demonstrate that those factors justified the initial pretext stop.

Case No. 3
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving a male driver and female passenger both perceived to be White, for expired vehicle registration. In the AFDR, officers noted the reason for the stop as "t/s [traffic stop] exp [expired] reg. [registration]. Vehicle obs [observed] in know gta [grand theft auto] area." The officer explained to the driver that the stop was initiated because the vehicle's registration had expired. After requesting the driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance, the driver stated that he did not have his driver's license. The officer then directed the passenger to operate the vehicle because the driver was not licensed to do so. The occupants were subsequently released, and the driver received a verbal warning.

Case No. 4
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving a male driver perceived to be Black for illegally tinted windows. In the AFDR, officers noted the reason for the stop as "officers were conducting extra patrol in the area and obs [observed] a veh [vehicle] with dark window tint." The officer explained to the driver that the stop was initiated due to the vehicle's tinted windows. After verifying the driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance were valid, the officer released the occupant and gave the driver a verbal warning.

Case No. 5
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving a male driver and female passenger both perceived to be Hispanic, for illegally tinted windows. In the AFDR, officers noted the reason for the stop as "officers observed vehicle with dark window tint on front windshield and front driver and passenger windows. Vehicle was in an area with increase in gang related activity." Prior to the stop, officer can be heard on BWV stating that the reason for the stop was for "tinted windows for public safety concern. Covered license plate, and a defaced license plate. Because it's wrapped." The officer also relayed this reason to the driver. Although the officer articulated additional information regarding the covered license plate, that articulation does not explain how the covered license plate was connected to a specific serious crime. After verifying the driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance were valid, the officer released the occupant and gave the driver a verbal warning.

Case No. 6
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving a male driver perceived to be Hispanic for illegally tinted windows and a tinted cover over the rear license plate. In the AFDR, officers noted the reason for the stop as "obs [observed] vehicle with front tinted windows and license plate cover tint, in known [gang] loc [location]." The officer explained to the driver that the stop was initiated due to the vehicle's tinted windows and tinted cover over the rear license plate. During the encounter, the officer found marijuana inside the vehicle and ordered the driver to exit the vehicle. The officer then conducted a pat-down search of the driver and searched the vehicle. Ultimately, the officer released the occupant and gave the driver a verbal warning.

Case No. 7
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving a male driver perceived to be Black for illegally tinted windows. In the AFDR, officers noted the reason for the stop as "opr [operator] veh [vehicle] window obstructed. Location known gang area." The officer explained to the driver that the stop was initiated due to the vehicle's tinted windows. After verifying the driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance were valid, the officer released the occupant and gave the driver a verbal warning.

Case No. 8
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving two male occupants perceived to be White, of a vehicle that displayed a rear license plate but no front license plate. In the AFDR, the officers noted the reason for the stop as "no front plate. T [traffic] stop for gangster attire in high crime area." The officer explained to the driver that the reason for the stop was the missing front license plate.

The officer then ordered both occupants out of the vehicle, explaining that the location was an area with high gang activity. The officer stated to the driver, "I don't know if you're around here. Right here in this area of LA, south central of [gang]. It's very active. It's hot." When the driver asked for a reason, the officer responded, "for doing some movement in the vehicle and it got a lot of stuff. You got seats [rear seats] down. I don't know what you guys are about." The driver exited the vehicle, and officers conducted a pat-down and search the vehicle. The officers

did not locate evidence of a serious criminal offense during the encounter. The occupants were subsequently released, and the driver received a verbal warning for failing to display a front license plate.

Case No. 9
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving a male driver and female passenger both perceived to be Black, after observing that the vehicle's registration had expired. In the AFDR, the officers noted the reason for the stop as "known gang area where gang members are known to carry guns." The officer explained to the driver that the reason for the stop was because the vehicle registration had expired. The officer then ordered the occupants out of the vehicle due to the area's high level of gang activity. After the driver exited, officers conducted a pat-down, and the driver consented to a search of the vehicle. The officers did not locate evidence of a serious criminal offense during the encounter. The occupants were subsequently released, and the driver received a verbal warning for the expired registration.

Case No. 10
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving two female occupants perceived to be Hispanic, for expired vehicle registration. In the AFDR, officers noted "driver was parked in front of a […] gang strong hold. Driver had tattoos consistent with gang tattoos." The officer explained to the driver that the reason for the stop was because the vehicle's registration had expired and also asked the occupants their probation or parole status. The driver was issued a verbal warning for the expired registration.

Case No. 11
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving two male occupants perceived to be Hispanic, for expired vehicle registration. In the AFDR, officers noted "Ts [traffic stop] exp [expired] reg [registration] for three years, r/o [registered owner] of veh [vehicle] returned w/ misd [misdemeanor] warrant, veh [vehicle] driving in high gang/narco [narcotics] area." The officer explained to the driver that the stop was initiated because the vehicle's registration had expired. The officer issued a verbal warning for the expired registration and no further enforcement action was taken.

Case No. 12
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving a male driver and three female occupants all perceived to be Hispanic, for expired vehicle registration. In the AFDR, officers noted "observed vehicle traveling with expired registration." The officer explained to the driver that the reason for the stop was because the vehicle's registration had expired. The officer issued the driver a verbal warning for the expired registration and no further enforcement action was taken.

c. Analysis of Pretext Stop Findings

Of the 50 pretext stops reviewed, 10 (20%) were conducted inconsistently with Department policy, and an additional 12 (24%) lacked sufficient articulable information to support the use of

a pretext stop to investigate a separate serious crime. Together, these findings indicate that 22 of the 50 stops reviewed (44%) contained deficiencies.

Table No. 24 provides a breakdown of the reviewed stops by Area and the number of stops with deficiencies.

Table No. 24 Pretextual Stop Findings by Area

Area	No. of Stops	No. of Stops with Deficiencies	Deficiencies of Area Stops (%)
Hollenbeck	8	5	62.5%
Harbor	8	5	62.5%
Newton	4	3	75.0%
Olympic	4	1	25.0%
Foothill	2	1	50.0%
Northeast	3	1	33.3%
77th	2	1	50.0%
Central	2	0	0%
Hollywood	2	1	50.0%
Mission	2	1	50.0%
North Hollywood	2	2	100%
Van Nuys	2	0	0%
West Valley	2	0	0%
Devonshire	1	0	0%
Pacific	1	0	0%
Southwest	1	0	0%
Topanga	1	0	0%
West Los Angeles	1	1	100%
Total	**50**	**22**	**44%**

For the 50 pretextual stops reviewed, 15 (30%) were conducted by officers assigned to GED and 35 (70%) by officers assigned to field duties. Although GED officers accounted for only 30% of the reviewed stops, GED officers represented 50% of the stops with deficiencies.

Table No. 25 Pretext Stop Findings by Assignment Type

Assignment Type	No. of Stops	Sample Size %	Deficiencies
Gang Enforcement	15	30%	11
Field Duties	35	70%	11
Total	50	100%	22

For the 50 pretext stops reviewed, 27 (54%) were correctly classified as pretextual stops and contained articulable information indicating an investigation into a serious crime.[42] Specifically, 22 (81%) of the pretextual stops were initiated to conduct stolen vehicle investigations, while an additional three (12%) were initiated to conduct narcotics investigations. Together, these categories accounted for 93% of all pretextual stops reviewed. The remaining pretext stop was initiated to conduct a DUI investigation.

Officers relied on relatively minor vehicle or equipment code violations to establish the legal basis for the 27 stops while pursuing investigations into more serious criminal offenses. Table No. 26 provides a detailed breakdown of the pretextual stop reasons, the underlying investigative purposes, and the enforcement action taken for these 27 stops.

Table No. 26
Pretext Stop Reason, Underlying Investigative Purpose, and Enforcement Action

Underlying Investigative Purpose (Serious Crime)	Total No. of Stops	Pretextual Stop Reason	No. of Stops	Enforcement Action
Stolen Vehicle Investigation	**22**	Vehicle Displayed No Rear License Plate	**14**	Verbal Warning
		Mismatched License Plate	**3**	Verbal Warning
		Obscured License Plate	**2**	Verbal Warning
		Unregistered License Plate	**1**	Verbal Warning
		Suspended Vehicle Registration	**1**	Verbal Warning
		Expired Registration	**1**	Verbal Warning
Narcotics Investigation	**3**	Possession of Nitrous Oxide	**2**	Verbal Warning
		Tinted Windows	**1**	Verbal Warning
DUI Investigation	**1**	Expired Vehicle Registration	**1**	Verbal Warning
Illegal Firearm Possession	**1**	Broken Rear Taillight	**1**	Verbal Warning
Total	**27**		**27**	

2. Results of Non-Pretext Stops Review

For the 50 non-pretext traffic stops reviewed, the OIG examined the adequacy of the articulation supporting stops for a minor equipment violations or other infractions, any search activity, and compliance with applicable procedural justice requirements.

[42] The OIG was unable to determine whether one pretextual stop complied with Department policy due to delayed BWV activation, which resulted in the absence of audio of the conversation that occurred prior to activation.

a. Insufficient Articulable Information Supporting a Public Safety Reason

The Department's pretext stop policy states that the use of traffic and pedestrian stops *"for the sole purpose of enforcing the Vehicle Code or other codes are intended to* ***protect public safety****."* The policy further provides that officers *"should make stops for minor equipment violations or other infractions only when the officer believes that such a violation or infraction significantly interferers with public safety."* The policy also directs officers to articulate on BWV the public safety reason for all traffic stops. The OIG notes that, as written, the Department's policy uses the term "should," rather than "shall," when directing officers to articulate the public safety reason for a stop.

The OIG found that in 38 of the 50 non-pretext stops reviewed, officers adequately articulated on BWV or documented in the AFDR the public safety reason for conducting the stop based on a minor equipment violation or other infraction.

For the remaining 12 stops (24%), the OIG found that the available documentation and video recordings did not contain sufficient articulable information demonstrating that the observed violation significantly interfered with public safety.

b. Expanding the Duration or Scope of a Stop

The Department's pretext policy states that "*officers' actions during all stops (e.g., questioning, searches, handcuffing, etc.) shall be limited to the original legal basis for the stop, absent articulable reasonable suspicion or probable cause of criminal activity that would justify extending the duration or expanding the scope of the detention. Officers shall not extend the duration or expand the scope of the detention without additional reasonable suspicion or probable cause (beyond the original legal basis for the stop)."* The OIG notes that the policy does not expressly require officers to document the articulable information supporting an extension of the duration or scope of a stop on BWV or in a written report.

For 24 of the 50 non-pretext traffic stops reviewed (48%), officers conducted routine traffic stops that were accurately classified in the corresponding AFDRs. In each of these stops, BWV showed that officers' actions remained limited to addressing the traffic violation that provided the original bases for the stop.

For the remaining 26 of the 50 stops (52%), officers extended the duration or scope of the stop beyond the original traffic violation. In 23 of these stops, the OIG found that officers clearly articulated on BWV or documented in the AFDR the additional reasonable suspicion or probable cause that justified the extension.

For the remaining three stops, the OIG could not determine from the available documentation or video recording whether additional reasonable suspicion or probable cause existed to justify

extending the duration or scope of the detention beyond the original basis for the stop. The OIG provides case summaries for these three stops below.

Case 1
Officers documented on the AFDR that they conducted a traffic stop involving a male driver perceived to be Black, for expired vehicle registration. However, BWV showed that the officer explained to the driver that the reason for the stop was for window tint and crossing over two yellow lines. The officer asked the driver for his license and registration but, prior to confirming the driver's identification via the mobile computer, the officer asked the driver if he was on probation or parole as well as if there were any weapons, drugs, knives, or guns in the vehicle. No further action was taken, and the officer gave the driver a verbal warning. The basis for expanding the stop beyond the original violation was unclear.

Case 2
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving a male driver perceived to be Black, for tinted windows and expired vehicle registration. After the officer explained the reason for the stop, the officer asked the driver if he was on probation or parole and if there were any weapons in the vehicle. No further action was taken, and the officer gave the driver a verbal warning. The basis for expanding the stop beyond the original violation was unclear.

Case 3
Officers conducted a traffic stop involving two male occupants perceived to be Black, "due to vehicle blocking the intersection." Officers also documented in the Incident Recall that the stop was initiated in a "known gang loc [location]." The officer asked both occupants for their identification cards and conducted a search via the mobile computer for wants and warrants. One officer communicated to his partner officer, "remember what we talked about? Look in there, see if we can develop probable cause." Officers asked both occupants if either were in possession of any weapons. The basis for expanding the stop beyond the original violation was unclear.

3. Results of All Stops Involving Consent to Search

Of the 100 traffic stops reviewed, 39 involved a person or property search beyond a pat-down search:[43] 17 of 50 pretext stops (34%) and 22 of 50 non-pretext stops (44%). These 39 stops resulted in 49 searches, including 10 person searches and 39 vehicle or property searches.

Under certain circumstances, officers may lawfully conduct a search without obtaining consent. In other circumstances, officers may request an individual's voluntary consent to search. Department policy requires officers to capture the entire interaction involved in requesting and

[43] The Department's Training Bulletin, "Personal Searches – Part I, The Pat Down Search," Volume XXXVI, Issue 1, dated February 2004, states that, "a pat-down must be based on s*pecific and articulable facts* that cause an officer to *reasonably suspect a detainee might be armed or dangerous."* (Emphasis in original).

obtaining verbal consent on BWV or DICV.[44] Officers must also ensure that a person giving consent understands that the consent is voluntary and advise the person that consent may be withdrawn at any time.

Of the 49 searches, the OIG determined that officers were required to obtain consent for seven: six during pretext stops and one during a non-pretext stop. In one of those seven searches, officers did not obtain the required consent before conducting a search of the detainee's vehicle. This search occurred during a pretext stop.

4. Department Oversight of Pretext Stops

The Department's Audit Division conducts periodic inspections of traffic stops. Each quarter, Audit Division reviews approximately 10 pretext and 10 non-pretext traffic stops for each Bureau, resulting in between one to three stops reviewed per Area. These inspections focus on selected violations, which may vary by quarter, and include both moving and equipment violations. A random sample of traffic stops conducted by patrol officers is evaluated to assess compliance with the following requirements:

- Verbal communication of the reason for the stop to the driver;
- Adherence to BWV policy, including timely activation; and,
- Proper articulation, either on BWV and/or AFDR/CAD, of the additional information used to justify a pretext stop or the public safety-related basis for a non-pretext stop.

The purpose of these inspections is to identify deficiencies and inform potential training needs. Inspection results are forwarded to the Office of Operations and provided to the appropriate Area Commanding Officer for follow-up with the involved officer(s).

V. BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The OIG's recommendations are based on the combined results of its policy comparison, analysis of Department data, and review of individual traffic stops. The policy comparison identified approaches used by other jurisdictions. The Department data showed how pretext stops were used after the 2022 policy took effect. The review of individual stops assessed whether officers applied the policy as written.
The review identified two related issues. First, the Department has not consistently implemented the 2022 pretext stop policy. In 22 of the 50 pretext stops reviewed, officers did not document sufficient specific and articulable information connecting the stopped vehicle or its occupants to a separate serious crime investigation. In 10 of those stops, officers' actions were limited to addressing the observed traffic violation, even though the stops were classified as pretextual.

[44] Office of the Chief of Police Administrative Order No. 22, *Field Officer's Notebook – revised; and Consent to Search Verbal Advisement Form – Activated*, dated November 20, 2020.

Second, the current policy permits any observed minor traffic, equipment, or registration violation to serve as the initial basis for a pretext stop, provided the officer has additional articulable information regarding a serious crime. The review identified repeated instances in which officers did not adequately articulate that additional information. The findings therefore raise not only an implementation issue but also an opportunity to provide clearer limits on when minor violations may serve as the basis for a pretext stop.

The OIG also identified policy provisions that could provide greater clarity. For non-pretext stops, the policy states that officers "should" articulate the public safety reason for the stop, although the review found that 12 of 50 sampled non-pretext stops lacked sufficient articulation. For stops that are extended beyond their original purpose, the policy requires additional reasonable suspicion or probable cause but does not expressly require officers to document the facts supporting that extension.

The OIG considered these findings together with its review of other jurisdictions. Five jurisdictions reviewed by the OIG prohibit initiating traffic stops based solely on specified minor traffic, equipment, or registration violations. These policies provide an alternative approach to limiting officer discretion at the initiation of a stop. The comparison demonstrates that jurisdictions have used more specific policy limits to address the circumstances in which minor violations may serve as the basis for a traffic stop.

Accordingly, the OIG proposes a framework for the BOPC and the Department to consider. The first recommendation would establish clearer limits on the minor violations that may serve as the basis for a pretext stop. The second would establish training, supervisory review, documentation, and auditing procedures to promote consistent implementation. The third addresses safeguards for consent searches during traffic stops. The fourth would provide an opportunity for public input before the BOPC adopts substantive changes to the Department's pretext stop policy.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The OIG makes the following recommendations:

1. The Department should develop proposed revisions to its 2022 pretext stop policy to establish clearer limits on the traffic, equipment, and registration violations that may serve as the basis for a pretext stop. The revised policy should consider:
    a. Identifying specified minor traffic, equipment, and registration violations for which officers would not initiate a traffic stop based solely on the observed violation.
    b. Establishing a narrowly tailored exception when, at the time the stop is initiated, the officer has reasonable suspicion, supported by specific and articulable facts, that the vehicle or an occupant is involved in, has committed, or is about to commit a serious crime.

c. Establishing an exception when an immediate and specific threat to public safety exists and initiating the stop is reasonably necessary to address that threat.
d. Requiring an officer who invokes an exception to contemporaneously document the specific and articulable facts known at the time the stop was initiated that support the exception.
e. Requiring documentation of any additional reasonable suspicion or probable cause supporting an extension of the duration or scope of the stop beyond its original legal basis.

Within 90 days, the Department should present a draft revised policy to the BOPC for review and consideration.

2. To ensure consistent implementation of any revised policy, the Department should establish procedures for training officers, conducting supervisory review, and periodically auditing compliance with the policy.

Within 180 days of policy adoption, the Department should report publicly on implementation, including training, supervisory review procedures, and any additional steps taken to monitor compliance.

3. The BOPC and Department should evaluate whether to limit consent searches during traffic stops, including whether to require an independent lawful basis for the search beyond the individual's consent.

4. The OIG considers public input an important part of the policy development process and recommends that the BOPC consider providing an appropriate opportunity for community organizations, subject matter experts, and other interested members of the public to comment on proposed revisions before taking final action. The OIG will conduct community listening sessions and provide the BOPC and the Department with a summary of the input received. The Department is encouraged to conduct its own public outreach to explain the proposed policy revisions, the reasons for the revisions, and its response to the BOPC's direction before any policy is presented for final approval.

VII. DEPARTMENT RESPONSE

INTRADEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

September 25, 2026
1.14

TO: Office of the Inspector General

FROM: Chief of Police

SUBJECT: LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL'S REVIEW OF LAPD'S IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS 2022 PRETEXTUAL STOP POLICY IN TRAFFIC STOPS

The Los Angeles Police Department (Department) has reviewed the Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) report and recommendations and reaffirms its commitment to ensure that all traffic stops are conducted consistently with constitutional policing principles, Department policy, and public-safety objectives. At the same time, the Department recognizes that low-level offenses may, depending on the circumstances, present legitimate concerns related to traffic safety, enforcement, or broader public-safety considerations. As always, the Department thanks the OIG for its audit and the iterative collaboration along the way (in July of this year, the OIG presented its initial findings and considered the Department's initial feedback).

The Department's overall conclusion is that, consistent with internal anecdotes and prior findings from the OIG, officers are struggling to articulate their lawful authority while navigating objectively complex Department policies on pretext requirements and consent searches.

The methodology and data analysis are wholly derived from officer self-classification in the Automated Field Data Report (AFDR) pretext field. The report's own Section IV sample review indicates that this field is unreliable regardless of whether the stop was labeled pretext or not. Ten of 50 stops classified as pretext were, in fact, limited to the traffic violation with no additional offense investigated; similarly, 26 of 50 non-pretext comparison stops involved expansion of scope beyond the original violation. In other words, regardless of the activity, officer categorization was unreliable.

Additionally, the samples chosen for this audit were specifically designed to test low-level violations: the non-pretext comparison group was deliberately limited to equipment and non-moving violations with no citation issued, and the pretext-stop population itself over-represents these violations. The small sample sizes used in the analysis provide qualitative support for officer confusion implementing current policy but are less useful at extrapolating department-wide.

The conclusion that confusion is the primary issue lends itself to policy cleanup and clarification, training to the clearer standards, and improvement of accountability measures to ensure compliance. To that end, the Department, the OIG, a subgroup of two Commissioners, and other stakeholders have resumed the Pretext Working Group to devise policy revisions, including the

possibility of precluding primary enforcement of certain offenses. That work is not done and therefore the Department cannot present the specific policy changes that are being explored at this time.

Before addressing each recommendation in turn, the Department submits that confusion about terminology has contributed to public and policy discussions in ways that a shared vocabulary may help resolve. At the outset — not every stop is a pretext, even if it is labeled as such.

- ***Probable cause for a traffic infraction*** is a determination that a specific traffic or code violation has been committed — for example, an officer observes a moving violation, broken taillight, or expired registration. Under *Whren v. United States*, 517 U.S. 806 (1996), the lawfulness of the stop rests on the objective observation of the violation, not on the officer's subjective purpose.

- ***Reasonable suspicion of a crime*** is a lower standard than probable cause but requires specific and articulable facts suggesting that criminal activity has occurred, is occurring, or is about to occur, and that the person to be stopped is connected to that activity. Reasonable suspicion authorizes an investigative stop of a person or vehicle under *Terry v. Ohio*, 392 U.S. 1 (1968), independent of any traffic violation.

- ***Probable cause for a crime*** is a higher standard than reasonable suspicion — a fair probability that a particular person has committed a specific crime. Probable cause for a crime authorizes an arrest and a search of a person incident to that arrest.

- ***A pretext stop*** has an objectively valid basis in a traffic or code violation (giving the officer probable cause for the infraction) but is motivated in part by the officer's investigative interest in a more serious crime — where the information about that serious crime, standing alone, does not amount to reasonable suspicion. Department Manual Section 1/240.06 also requires officers to have "articulable information in addition to the traffic violation, which may or may not amount to reasonable suspicion, regarding a serious crime." If, in fact, the officer has reasonable suspicion, ***that is not a pretext stop***.

Therefore, pretext operates in a very narrow band of legal authority. Below that band, an officer has probable cause for a traffic violation, but no articulable serious-crime interest and the stop is simply a traffic stop. Above that band, the officer's serious-crime information has risen to reasonable suspicion, and the stop is properly an investigative stop under *Terry*.

The Department also notes that the OIG report does not specifically identify any stop or search as unconstitutional. Every finding concerns compliance with standards above the constitutional floor, such as Department Manual Section 1/240.06, the Department's heightened consent-search procedures under Administrative Order No. 22, or the state statutory duty to state the reason for the stop under California Vehicle Code § 2806.5. The fundamental identified problem was articulation. However, as these policies are designed to keep officers well above legal jeopardy, and the core issues of detentions and searches absolutely implicate the Constitution, the Department unequivocally agrees that greater compliance overall is necessary.

Office of Inspector General Recommendation No. 1.

The Department should develop proposed revisions to its 2022 pretext stop policy to establish clearer limits on the traffic, equipment, and registration violations that may serve as the basis for a pretext stop. The revised policy should consider:

a. *Identifying specified minor traffic, equipment, and registration violations for which officers would not initiate a traffic stop based solely on the observed violation.*
b. *Establishing a narrowly tailored exception when, at the time the stop is initiated, the officer has reasonable suspicion, supported by specific and articulable facts, that the vehicle or an occupant is involved in, has committed, or is about to commit a serious crime.*
c. *Establishing an exception when an immediate and specific threat to public safety exists and initiating the stop is reasonably necessary to address that threat.*
d. *Requiring an officer who invokes an exception to contemporaneously document the specific and articulable facts known at the time the stop was initiated that support the exception.*
e. *Requiring documentation of any additional reasonable suspicion or probable cause supporting an extension of the duration or scope of the stop beyond its original legal basis.*

In response to Recommendation No. 1. Fundamentally, the Department believes that legitimate concerns about pretext stops are best addressed through clear policy, comprehensive training, procedural justice, auditing, and strong supervisory oversight. The OIG report confirms the Department's belief that officers are confused by current policy guidelines.

The Department will continue to work with the Pretext Working Group to clarify policy and will consider recommendations concerning prohibiting violations on a case-by-case basis. If any violations are eventually prohibited, the Department submits that it will be more operationally feasible if the violations are consistently prohibited and does not support different rules for pretext stops as opposed to non-pretext stops. The violation is either worth enforcing or it is not.

Additionally, the Department is not inclined to create exceptions for any prohibited violation for reasonable suspicion or an immediate specific threat to public safety. If a stop is supported by reasonable suspicion, it is not a pretext stop at all; it is a *Terry* stop and officers should proceed under that legal authority. Similarly, an immediate specific threat to public safety does not require any pretext to address. If an underlying violation has the potential to create an immediate threat to public safety, it should not be on any prohibited list in the first place.

In sum, with the Pretext Working Group, the Department will review current policy to reinforce constitutional policing, procedural justice, and the appropriate use of officer discretion. Associated training will focus on fair and impartial enforcement, respectful communication, transparency about the reasons for police action, and fostering community trust and police legitimacy. Additionally, the Department will strengthen supervisory oversight and auditing of traffic stop activity to evaluate compliance, identify trends or areas of concern, and ensure accountability.

Office of Inspector General Recommendation No. 2

To ensure consistent implementation of any revised policy, the Department should establish procedures for training officers, conducting supervisory review, and periodically auditing compliance with the policy.

In response to Recommendation No. 2. Implementation of any revised policy will require a structured, deliberate process designed to ensure clarity, compliance, and alignment with legal, operational, and community expectations:

- The previously mentioned Pretext Working Group will continue to drive toward clearer and more effective policies that can be successfully implemented.
- Training Division will conduct a one-day formalized training session for all Area Training Coordinators. This session will thoroughly coach officers on any revised policy. Additionally, an instructional training video stressing key points will be shown at roll calls at their respective commands.
- Area Training Coordinators will be responsible for ensuring that all officers at their command receive the training and sign policy acknowledgments, which will be kept in their personnel packages. Policy distribution rosters will be forwarded to the Training Bureau.
- Training Division will develop mandatory training covering pretext stops, constitutional policing, the doctrinal distinctions between traffic stops based on probable cause for an infraction, pretext stops involving articulable serious-crime information below reasonable suspicion, and investigative stops under *Terry*, which will be required of all officers within the Department. This training will include a reminder that a traffic stop may not be extended in duration to accommodate any investigation unless reasonable suspicion or probable cause are developed.
- The Department will establish a formally selected Pretext Stop Policy Cadre. This cadre will be responsible for visiting all Areas across different watches to provide instruction, reinforce key policy elements, and remain available to address questions.
- The Department will continue to conduct formal supervisory reviews of Body Worn Video (BWV) recordings to ensure compliance with the current BWV policy. In addition, Bureau Audit Coordinators, in conjunction with the RIPA Coordinators, will conduct quarterly audits to assess adherence to policy.

Office of Inspector General Recommendation No. 3

The BOPC and Department should evaluate whether to limit consent searches during traffic stops, including whether to require an independent lawful basis for the search beyond the individual's consent.

In response to Recommendation No. 3. The Department maintains a restrictive consent-search policy requiring that consent obtained during a traffic stop be expressed or implied, voluntary, reasonable in length, and constitutionally compliant. Notably, the Department policy exceeds the State of California requirements by mandating that all officers advise individuals of their right to refuse consent, and by allowing individuals to withdraw their consent at any time. Policy requires officers to apprise community members of these facts. To achieve compliance, the Department conducts monthly Bureau audits, special reviews by Audit Division, and quarterly RIPA COMPSTAT meetings. The Department will review existing training and accountability measures to improve outcomes.

Office of Inspector General Recommendation No. 4

> *The OIG considers public input an important part of the policy development process and recommends that the BOPC consider providing an appropriate opportunity for community organizations, subject matter experts, and other interested members of the public to comment on proposed revisions before taking final action. The OIG will conduct community listening sessions and provide the BOPC and the Department with a summary of the input received. The Department is encouraged to conduct its own public outreach to explain the proposed policy revisions, the reasons for the revisions, and its response to the BOPC's direction before any policy is presented for final approval.*

In response to Recommendation No. 4. The Department values the guidance provided by the Board of Police Commissioners (BOPC) and OIG and concurs that proactive community outreach is essential to any future consideration of changes to the current Pretext Stop Policy. The Department recognizes the importance of engaging community members in dialogue about the Department's traffic stop practices, the current policy framework, and how the Department can continue to serve public safety and community trust.

The Department will engage with the community listening sessions if invited to participate and looks forward to the summary of input from the OIG. As policy revisions are developed the Department will consider meaningful ways to communicate those changes to its communities.

If you have any questions, please contact Constitutional Policing and Policy Bureau, at (213) 486-8720.

Respectfully,

JIM McDONNELL
Chief of Police

APPENDIX A

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

SPECIAL ORDER NO. 3 **March 9, 2022**

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS ON March 1, 2022

SUBJECT: **POLICY - LIMITATION ON USE OF PRETEXTUAL STOPS – ESTABLISHED**

BACKGROUND: Members of our community and communities around the country have expressed concern regarding the manner and frequency with which officers are stopping individuals (pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists) for perceived minor violations to investigate other crimes (a subset of which are known as and approved by the United States Supreme Court as "pretextual stops"). Their fears stem in large measure from a belief that such enforcement activities are arbitrary, capricious, and a reflection of an individual officer's implicit or explicit bias(es). Moreover, some community members question the impact such pretextual stops have on crime reduction.

The Department continually assesses community concerns and expectations with respect to its responsibility to ensure public safety. The Department works regularly with various City entities (e.g., City of Los Angeles' Vision Zero for 2025 initiative) to identify and resolve problematic street corridors, which requires that officers actively engage motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians – via education and enforcement of California Vehicle Code violations (e.g., red light and stop sign violations, distracted driving, unsafe speed, driving under the influence) to improve roadway safety in all communities throughout the City of Los Angeles. In addition, the increase in violent crime necessitates proactive and vigilant enforcement efforts to ensure public safety.

In fulfilling its mission to increase safety and reduce the incidence and fear of crime, the Department seeks to eliminate bias in any form from within its ranks and practices. The Department also strives to reduce and, if possible, ultimately eliminate any perception of bias within the LAPD. For these reasons, the Department seeks to hone the focus of its traffic enforcement and crime prevention strategies to reduce traffic injuries and fatalities, and address crime (especially violent crime) while also facilitating trust and improving community relations. This mandate requires the judicious use of our legitimate authority as we endeavor to protect the various communities we serve. Therefore, absent intelligence or information connecting an individual to a crime or public safety concern, less attention should be given to observations of vehicle equipment violations where no strong causal connection to collisions – and hence public safety – exists. This re-prioritization of efforts and other Department policies (e.g., *Policy Prohibiting Biased Policing*) as well as training are part of the Department's goal of eliminating any actual or perceived disparities in treatment.

SPECIAL ORDER No. 3 **-2-**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Order is to establish Department Manual Section 1/240.06, *Policy - Limitation on Use of Pretextual Stops*. The policy provides parameters and responsibilities for Department personnel when utilizing pretextual stops so that they remain in compliance with the 4th and 14th Amendments to the United States Constitution.

PROCEDURE:

I. **POLICY - LIMITATION ON USE OF PRETEXTUAL STOPS – ESTABLISHED.** Department Manual Section 1/240.06, *Policy - Limitation on Use of Pretextual Stops*, has been established and is attached.

AMENDMENTS: This Order adds Section 1/240.06 to the Department Manual.

AUDIT RESPONSIBILITY: The Commanding Officer, Audit Division, shall review this directive and determine whether an audit or inspection shall be conducted in accordance with Department Manual Section 0/080.30.

If you have any questions, you may contact the Office of Constitutional Policing and Policy, at (213) 486-8730.

MICHEL R. MOORE
Chief of Police

Attachment

DISTRIBUTION "D"

DEPARTMENT MANUAL
VOLUME I
Established by Special Order No. 3, 2022

240. 06 POLICY - LIMITATION ON USE OF PRETEXTUAL STOPS

PREAMBLE. *While the exercise of an officer's discretion in initiating a "stop" or conducting a detention is authorized under the law, it should reflect the necessary balance of the role of law enforcement in the prevention of crime and receiving and thereafter maintaining the community's trust that the officer's actions are fair and without bias. Conducting a vehicle or pedestrian stop and/or detention can promote public safety and the protection of the public from serious and sometimes violent crime. Such stops can also subject motorists and pedestrians to inconvenience, confusion, and anxiety, and strain relationships between law enforcement and the community because some members of the community perceive stops as biased, racially motivated, or unfair. To maintain public trust, the Department's use of pretext stops as a crime reduction strategy must be measured, in furtherance of achieving the necessary balance between the perception of fairness and identifying those engaged in serious criminal conduct.*

Pretext Stops Defined. *A pretextual or pretext stop is one where officers use reasonable suspicion or probable cause of a minor traffic or code violation (e.g., Municipal Code or Health and Safety Code) as a pretext to investigate another, more serious crime that is unrelated to that violation.*

Policy.

Use of Traffic/Pedestrian Stops - General. *Traffic or pedestrian stops made for the sole purpose of enforcing the Vehicle Code or other codes are intended to* ***protect public safety****. Therefore, officers should make stops for minor equipment violations or other infractions only when the officer believes that such a violation or infraction significantly interferes with public safety.*

> *Note: The public safety reason for all traffic/pedestrian stops, citations and warnings should be articulated on body-worn video (BWV) and should include an officer's response to any questions posed by the individual stopped.*

Pretext Stops – Restricted. *It is the Department's policy that pretextual stops shall not be conducted* ***unless*** *officers are acting upon articulable information in addition to the traffic violation, which may or may not amount to reasonable suspicion, regarding a serious crime (i.e., a crime with potential for great bodily injury or death), such as a Part I violent crime, driving under the influence (DUI), reckless driving, street racing, street takeovers, hit and run, human or narcotics trafficking, gun violence, burglary, or another similarly serious crime. Such decisions should not be based on a mere hunch or on generalized characteristics such as a person's race, gender, age, homeless circumstance, or presence in a high-crime location.*

DEPARTMENT MANUAL
VOLUME I
Established by Special Order No. 3, 2022

Department personnel seeking one or more specific persons who have been identified or described in part by one or more of these characteristics may rely on them only in combination with other appropriate identifying factors.

Note: *The reason for all pretext stops, and the citations and warnings resulting from them, should be articulated on BWV and should include an officer's response to any questions posed by the individual stopped.*

Note: *An officer's training, experience and expertise may be used in articulating the additional information the officers used to initiate the stop.*

Note: *A failure to sufficiently articulate the information which – in addition to the traffic violation – caused the officer to make the pretext stop, shall result in progressive discipline, beginning with counseling and retraining. Discipline shall escalate with successive violations of this mandate.*

Duration and Scope of All Stops. *Officers' actions during all stops (e.g., questioning, searches, handcuffing, etc.) shall be limited to the original legal basis for the stop, absent articulable reasonable suspicion or probable cause of criminal activity that would justify extending the duration or expanding the scope of the detention. Officers shall not extend the duration or expand the scope of the detention without additional reasonable suspicion or probable cause (beyond the original legal basis for the stop).*

Conduct During the Stop. *Officers are to ensure their conduct during the course of any stop demonstrates the tenets of Procedural Justice, fairness, and impartiality. Consistent with the Department's procedural justice and community engagement initiatives, when tactics, operational security, and investigative continuity permit, officers shall, as early as practicable, provide the detainee(s) with the information that caused officers to stop them. These precepts are further discussed in the Department Training Bulletins, such as:*

- *Legal Contacts with the Public, dated February 2001;*
- *Contacts with the Public – Part II, Procedural Justice, dated April 2020; and,*
- *Contacts with the Public – Part I, Legal Considerations, dated March 2021.*

Note: *Training Bulletins are often revised over time. Personnel are encouraged to query the Department Local Area Network (LAN) to ensure review of the most current information.*

APPENDIX B

INTRADEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

May 7, 2026
1.0

TO: The Honorable Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: Executive Director, Board of Police Commissioners

SUBJECT: MOTIONS ON CITY COUNCIL FILE NO. 20-0875 – TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT ALTERNATIVES

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. That the Board of Police Commissioners (Board) REVIEW the attached documents.

DISCUSSION

On May 6, 2026, City Council File No. 20-0875 was adopted by the City Council. Attached for the Board's review are the following documents related to traffic enforcement alternatives, pretextual stops, and related policy recommendations:

1. Ad Hoc Committee on Unarmed Crisis Prevention, Intervention, and Community Services Report dated March 6, 2026
2. Verbal Amendment introduced on May 6, 2026
3. Motion dated May 6, 2026

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (213) 236-1400.

DJANGO SIBLEY, Executive Director
Board of Police Commissioners

File No. 20-0875

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON UNARMED CRISIS PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT relative to reports on traffic enforcement alternatives; and related matters.

Recommendations for Council action:

1. REQUEST the Board of Police Commissioners (BOPC) to amend Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Department Manual Section 1/240.06, entitled *Policy – Limitation on Use of Pretextual Stops*, to replace the existing limitation policy with strengthened guidance and additional prohibitions to ensure fair treatment and efficient deployment of resources. The updated policy should include the following:
    a. Prohibit all pretextual stops and detentions that result from pretextual stops of motorists and cyclists, except in cases where the violation poses a significant and imminent safety risk.
    b. Prohibit consent-based searches of persons, vehicles, or personal effects during pretextual traffic stops. This prohibition does not apply to searches supported by a valid warrant, probable cause, or other lawful justifications independent of consent.
    c. Ensure compliance with California Assembly Bill (AB) 2773 by requiring officers to clearly articulate the reason for the stop on Body-Worn Video (BWV) before commencing any questioning. Officers should thoroughly record, both visibly and audibly, any reasonable suspicion that develops after the initial stop.
    d. Ensure proper compliance and the implementation of AB 2147 (2022) to prevent racial bias in stops of pedestrians.
    e. Report back, with the assistance of the City Attorney, on the process and the necessary steps to implement a mail-based notification system that would allow certain traffic violations, allowing vehicle owners to receive violations by mail in lieu of an officer-initiated stop. Under this framework, the vehicle owner would still be responsible for correcting or otherwise remedying the violation. The report should outline any moving, equipment, and non-moving violations eligible for mail-in enforcement.
    f. Affirm LAPD's authority to conduct stops for traffic violations that endanger public safety and for reasonable and articulable suspicion of crimes.

2. REQUEST the Office of Inspector General to monitor LAPD Traffic Stop Data, incorporating findings from the Audit Division's quarterly AB 2773 compliance audits and the Stops Review Pilot Program, and provide semi-annual reports to the Council on the effectuation of this policy, including analyzing the feasibility of updating LAPD's public traffic dashboard to distinctly track and display pretextual stop data.

3. NOTE and FILE reports from the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA), BOPC, and Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) attached to this Council File.

Fiscal Impact Statement: None submitted by the CLA, BOPC, or LADOT. Neither the CLA nor the CAO has completed a financial analysis of these reports.

Community Impact Statement: Yes
For:
Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council
North Westwood Neighborhood Council

SUMMARY

At the special joint meeting held on March 6, 2026, your Ad Hoc Committee on Unarmed Crisis Prevention, Intervention, and Community Services considered reports from the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA), Board of Police Commissioners, and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), relative to traffic enforcement alternatives; and related matters.

After an opportunity for public comment was held, Councilmember Hernandez introduced the recommendations listed above, as amended by Councilmember Blumenfield. The committee voted to approve the amended recommendations as listed above, including concurring with the Transportation Committee's previous action of April 9, 2025 to note and file the LADOT report dated February 25, 2025.

This matter is now submitted to the Council for consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON UNARMED CRISIS PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

MEMBER	VOTE
BLUMENFIELD:	YES
HERNANDEZ:	YES
LEE:	NO
RAMAN:	ABSENT
PRICE:	YES

HVR 03.06.26

-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-

Item No. 5

VERBAL AMENDMENT

I HEREBY MOVE that Council AMEND the AD HOC COMMITTEE ON UNARMED CRISIS PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT relative to self-enforcing infrastructure and Mobility Plan 2035 for the Traffic Enforcement Alternatives Project., Item 5 in Council today, Council file No. 20-0875, to:

CLARIFY that Pretextual Stops that do not endanger public safety include, but are not limited to, stops for vehicle equipment violations and nonmoving/ administrative violations, unless the vehicle does not have a rear license plate or the violation substantially increases the likelihood of imminent injury or death.

PRESENTED BY_____
HEATHER HUTT
Councilmember, 10th District

SECONDED BY_____
EUNISSES HERNANDEZ
Councilmember, 1st District

May 6, 2026

CF 20-0875

5 C

MOTION

I MOVE that the matter of the AD HOC COMMITTEE ON UNARMED CRISIS PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT and TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT relative to self-enforcing infrastructure and Mobility Plan 2035 for the Traffic Enforcement Alternatives Project, Item No. 5 on today's Council agenda (Council File 20-0875), BE **AMENDED** to **REPLACE** Recommendations 1(A) and 1(B) of the Ad Hoc Committee on Unarmed Crisis Prevention, Intervention and Community Services report with the following:

a. Prohibit pretextual stops of motorists and cyclists while affirming LAPD's authority to conduct stops for traffic violations that endanger public safety and for reasonable and articulable suspicion of crimes.
b. Prohibit consent-based searches of persons, vehicles, or personal effects during traffic stops unless the search is supported by a valid warrant or criminal investigation, probable cause, or other lawful justifications independent of consent, and these justifications of the consent-based search must be documented on body-worn video.

ADD the following Recommendation:

4. Request the LAPD Board of Commissioners and LAPD Chief to update officer training to reflect this policy regarding pretextual stops and consent-based searches, including procedural justice measures to ensure that individuals clearly understand their rights and the nature of the encounter; methods for proper documentation; and compliance with Administrative Order No. 22.

DELETE Recommendation ~~F.~~ **1f**

PRESENTED BY:

TIM McOSKER
Councilmember, 15th District

MARQUEECE HARRIS-DAWSON
Councilmember, 8th District

ORIGINAL

SECONDED BY:

MAY 6 2026