

## Position Statement on Bias in Law Enforcement

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### Issue:

Law enforcement officers are in positions of authority based on public trust. Law enforcement officers are expected to deliver services to citizens in a manner that respects their civil rights, humanity, and physical and mental health while acting lawfully and promoting public safety. Negative interactions with law enforcement officers, including biased policing, may undermine public confidence and lead to the onset of clinically significant symptoms such as trauma-related disorders, the development of major mental disorders, exacerbation of an existing mental disorder, or the victimization of people with preexisting mental disorders. Pre-employment and ongoing psychological screenings, including assessment for bias, can assist with anticipating and reviewing law enforcement officers’ overall job performance, disciplinary actions, and other adverse policing outcomes.

### APA Position:

**It is the position of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) that assessing for biases is necessary not only as a part of comprehensive law enforcement officer pre-employment screenings but also in ongoing performance evaluations.**

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