

## Vermont State Police Fair and Impartial Policing

<https://vsp.vermont.gov/communityaffairs>

In May 2016, Colonel Birmingham announced the first Director of Fair and Impartial Policing and Community Affairs for the Vermont State Police. The position focuses on developing and implementing a comprehensive program to ensure fair and impartial policing practices at all levels of the state police, building relationships of trust, diversifying our workforce, and improving our cultural awareness as the state of Vermont becomes more diverse.

This comprehensive effort reflects the VSP's continuing commitment to fair and impartial policing. In these first four+ years, we have reached across Vermont and beyond as leaders in values-driven policing. The director works with diverse Vermont communities and VSP commanders to further develop the following areas:

**Recruitment and hiring:** Working with the VSP Recruitment and Training Division to develop recruiting efforts, and to ensure that prospective members have strong knowledge and understanding of national issues related to race and policing, implicit and explicit forms of bias, and the relationship between police and the community.

**Training:** Ensuring our membership is effectively trained at the highest level to ensure fair and impartial policing practices within each of the three divisions of the VSP.

**Supervision and accountability:** Ensuring that supervisors have the skills to identify racial bias and other improper practices and take corrective actions when they detect biased policing.

**Outreach to diverse communities:** Establishing relationships with a diverse range of citizens and community leaders, co-chairing VSP's Fair and Impartial Policing Committee, bridging gaps between police and communities that have been historically marginalized in an effort to build trust and mutual understanding.

**Data collection and analysis:** Conducting comprehensive reviews of traffic stop data, use of force data, and implementing any changes in policy, practice, and/or training.

**Assessment of institutional practices:** Reviewing department practices from traffic enforcement to the promotional process to ensure we are adhering to the principles of fair and impartial policing, cultural awareness, and fostering a diverse membership.

**Policy development:** Ensuring meaningful department policies to guide troopers as they make critical law enforcement decisions.

As we continue to evolve in a rapidly changing profession, our focus in these key areas will ensure the Vermont State Police remains a highly professional and accessible agency to the people we serve.