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## NEWS

## Toronto police will have to record the race of anyone strip searched starting next month



Peter Smith | Dec 19 2019, 4:06 pm



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Toronto Police Service has announced a new initiative that will see them collect data of the individuals being subject to physical strip searches in an effort to address racism within the department.

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The data collection is part of the measures mandated by the Anti-Racism Act to address issues of bias and racism within Canada's various level of government. Besides justice, bodies related to the public sector, specifically child welfare, and education are all required to start race based data collection.

Police say the Service currently has an annual average of "1,500 reportable use of force incidents and 15,000 strip searches."

"The Toronto Police Service is not immune to bias and racism, and we have been working diligently over the past several years to make positive changes to address both overt and implicit bias within the Service," said Toronto Police Service Chief Mark Saunders, in a release.



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In January, officers will collect race-based data “based on their own perception” and report their findings to the Toronto Police Services Board, along with a mid-year feasibility report on self-identification. Police say the data collected will be anonymized and made available via their Data Portal in 2021.

The release also says that TPS’ Anti-Racism Advisory Panel and the Toronto Police Service Diversity and Equity team have been working with members of the community to “design the initiative in a way that respects human rights and dignity.”

A newly formed Community Advisory Group has been assembled to report on findings in the data and set benchmarks for police.

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