

**TENTH REPORT ASSESSING SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT
COMPLIANCE BY SUFFOLK COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT**



August 12, 2025

I. INTRODUCTION

In January 2014, the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Suffolk County Police Department (“SCPD” or the “Department”) entered into a Settlement Agreement (“Settlement Agreement” or “Agreement”) to ensure that police services are provided to all members of the Suffolk County community, including the Latino community, in a manner that complies with the Constitution and laws of the United States.¹ DOJ, as part of its responsibilities for oversight of SCPD’s implementation of the Settlement Agreement, periodically reports on its assessment of SCPD’s compliance with the Agreement. This is the tenth Assessment Report, which addresses SCPD’s efforts from 2022 through the first quarter of 2025. In May 2024, we issued a letter to SCPD notifying it of the termination of Sections IV, VI, and VIII of the Settlement Agreement based on SCPD’s having maintained substantial compliance for more than a year following our Eighth and Ninth Reports.

In preparation for this report, DOJ representatives from both the Civil Rights Division and the United States Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of New York reviewed documents and materials provided by SCPD, including entries in SCPD’s community relations daily activity reporting system, documentation regarding hate crimes and language assistance, traffic stop data and other information published on the Transparency Hub of SCPD’s website, and other reports. We met with the then Acting Commissioner of the Suffolk County Police Department, Kevin Waring, and his leadership team to discuss SCPD’s continuing progress under the Settlement Agreement and reform efforts, including additional reforms it pursued in response to recent litigation. We also met with advocates and solicited the views of the Suffolk County community, including the Latino community.

We thank the SCPD officials with whom we met during this assessment period, and we appreciate the cooperation and sustained commitment that SCPD and Suffolk County leadership continue to show in addressing the requirements of the Agreement. We also thank the many members of the Suffolk County community who have met with us and provided us with invaluable feedback.

This Assessment Report is divided into two sections. First, we provide a compliance rating for each of the remaining three provisions of the Settlement Agreement: (1) bias-free policing; (2) language assistance; and (3) community engagement. Second, we provide a more detailed analysis of SCPD’s successes and the tasks that remain in each of those areas of the Agreement.

II. SUMMARY OF CURRENT COMPLIANCE RATINGS

Section IX of the Settlement Agreement provides that the United States will assess and report on SCPD’s compliance with the Agreement. *See* Agreement at 19-20. The compliance ratings below represent the United States’ current assessment of SCPD’s compliance with each area of the Agreement. While Section III of this Report provides a more detailed analysis of

¹ This Agreement is available in both English and Spanish at <https://www.justice.gov/crt/special-litigation-section-cases-and-matters/download#police>.

SCPD’s compliance with the Agreement, these ratings are included to provide SCPD and the Suffolk County community with a clear and accurate summary of progress to date.

<u>Settlement Agreement Area</u>	<u>Status of Compliance</u>
III. BIAS-FREE POLICING	
a. Policies and Procedures	Substantial Compliance
b. Traffic-Stop Data	Substantial Compliance
c. Training	Substantial Compliance
V. LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE	
a. Policies Related to Language Access	Substantial Compliance
b. Language Line Order	Substantial Compliance
c. Policy on Persons with Limited English Proficiency	Substantial Compliance
d. Spanish-Language Access to SCPD Website	Substantial Compliance
e. Incentives for Interpreters	Substantial Compliance
f. Consultation with the Latino Community	Substantial Compliance
g. Language Assistance Training	Substantial Compliance
h. Community Survey	Substantial Compliance
VII. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
a. Maintaining Community Relationships	Substantial Compliance
b. Community Liaison Officers	Substantial Compliance
c. Community Oriented Policing Enforcement (COPE)	Substantial Compliance
d. Community Response Bureau	Substantial Compliance
e. Community Outreach	Substantial Compliance
f. Social Media and Notification Systems	Substantial Compliance

As this table represents, SCPD has reached substantial compliance with all sections of the Settlement Agreement and has sustained those reforms for more than the required year. We summarize here some of the specific accomplishments:

- **Traffic-Stop Data:** SCPD has improved the quality and consistency of its traffic-stop data. Supervisors appear to be conducting quality-assurance checks on officers' reports to ensure the accuracy of the data. In February 2025, SCPD released a new report by Stonewall Analytics, which analyzed almost 160,000 traffic stops in 2023. The report analyzed whether Black and Hispanic drivers were more likely to be stopped by SCPD during the day than at night, which can indicate racial bias in traffic stop decisions because officers can better discern a driver's race during the day. The report also looked at the rate at which searches result in officers finding illegal drugs or weapons, or other contraband or evidence. The report found no evidence of racial bias in traffic stops made during the day compared to night. Although the report did identify slight differences in how often officers found contraband when searching White drivers compared to Black and Hispanic drivers, it concluded the variations were not statistically significant. Given the progress SCPD has made in collecting, maintaining, and analyzing its enforcement data, we conclude that it is in substantial compliance with the bias-free policing requirements of the Agreement, and has been in substantial compliance for over a year.
- **Policies Related to Language Access:** SCPD amended its policies to require supervisors to consistently review a random sample of body-worn camera videos for calls that dispatchers flag as requiring language assistance. We find that this new system will allow SCPD to comprehensively monitor compliance with its language access policies and we therefore find SCPD in substantial compliance with the language access requirements of the Agreement. It has also maintained substantial compliance for over a year.
- **Spanish-Language Access to SCPD Website:** Almost all forms are now readily available in Spanish on SCPD's website, and SCPD has made a significant number of key forms available in other languages including Chinese, Haitian Creole, Italian, Polish, and Portuguese. Key SCPD policies are available in Spanish on SCPD's Transparency Hub. Considering these results, we find SCPD is in substantial compliance with the requirements in the Agreement to provide Spanish-language access on the website. It has maintained its compliance in this area for approximately a year.

We commend SCPD for achieving and maintaining compliance in these remaining areas.

III. ANALYSIS OF SCPD’S COMPLIANCE TO DATE

III. BIAS-FREE POLICING	
a. Policies and Procedures	Substantial Compliance
b. Traffic-Stop Data	Substantial Compliance
c. Training	Substantial Compliance

Under the Agreement, SCPD committed to ensure that its police services are free of unlawful bias and provided in a manner that promotes broad community engagement and confidence in the Department and that all “members of the public receive equal protection of the law, without bias based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, or sexual orientation, and in accordance with the rights, privileges, and immunities secured or protected by the Constitution and laws of the United States.” Agreement III(a) at 4.

The Department achieved full compliance with the bias-free policing provisions of the Agreement in early 2024 and has maintained that compliance for more than a year.

a. Policies and Procedures

We have found SCPD to be in substantial compliance with the policies and procedures provisions of the Agreement since 2018. *See* Sixth Assessment Report at 6; *see also* Agreement III(a) - (b) at 4-5. As we have noted before, ensuring that SCPD members adhere to these policies in practice is an ongoing endeavor that relies, in part, on appropriate data collection and analyses. Additionally, SCPD has now addressed its data collection issues and its obligations for analyzing the data, as discussed below.

b. Traffic-Stop Data

So that the department can better ensure bias-free policing, the Agreement requires SCPD to collect accurate traffic-stop data, analyze it for indications of bias, and explain any measures it will take in response to those analyses. *See* Agreement III(c) at 6. SCPD had previously taken significant steps in achieving compliance in this area. *See, e.g.*, Eighth Assessment Report at 6–7 and Ninth Assessment Report at 6–8. By early 2024, SCPD had resolved the data reliability issues discussed in our last report by improving or implementing new software and practices to improve and ensure the consistency of its data. In February 2025 it released a new report prepared by an independent firm that analyzed traffic stops in 2023 to identify indications of racial bias in SCPD’s traffic enforcement activities.

In our Ninth Report, we discussed concerns with the accuracy and reliability of SCPD’s traffic stop data, emphasizing that SCPD must ensure and demonstrate that data is captured and preserved in a transparent and reliable manner. We suggested that SCPD conduct additional quality assurance checks on the data and have an outside organization conduct a new analysis of the validated data or commission a new analysis of more recent data. SCPD responded that it

would be addressing these concerns in 2023. *See* Ninth Assessment Report at 6-7. We also stated in our Ninth Report that once SCPD had completed a study of a reliable data set of its traffic stops, “they must, in order to come into substantial compliance with the traffic-stop data provisions of the agreement, evaluate whether the study suggests that changes are necessary to address any disparities identified in its data.” *Id.* at 8. *See also*, Agreement III(c)(ii) at 6.

During this assessment period, spurred in part by a settlement in a class action brought by a private organization (Private Settlement),² SCPD revamped its traffic-stop data program. SCPD conducted outreach to other law enforcement agencies and collaborated with technology vendors to develop a more efficient and effective system for collecting, storing, and presenting its data. SCPD has augmented its data systems practices to minimize incomplete traffic stop entries. In April 2024, SCPD implemented an enhanced methodology for quarterly traffic audits, which directs commanders and patrol supervisors to use an internal data dashboard to review officers’ traffic stop data and identify and address atypical patterns of behavior. In addition, patrol supervisors are required to review with their officers their traffic stop data. SCPD also conducts a combination of informal audits and quality assurance checks across all ranks. Analysts in SCPD’s Research & Development Section review traffic stop data quarterly to verify each data point before data is published to internal and external dashboards.

As discussed in our last assessment, SCPD previously retained the services of an outside organization to analyze data from March 5, 2018 to March 4, 2019. *See* Ninth Assessment at pp. 6-7. That analysis and report showed that SCPD officers searched Black and Hispanic drivers, their vehicles, and passengers at rates higher than those of their White counterparts and that those searches were less likely to yield any contraband than searches of White subjects.

In February 2025, SCPD released a new report prepared by a different outside organization, which evaluated traffic stop data from 2023 for indications of racial bias in the department’s enforcement activities.³ Using data on almost 160,000 traffic stops SCPD conducted in 2023, this new outside organization conducted two different analyses designed to identify indications that racial bias might motivate SCPD’s enforcement activities:

- The analysts conducted a “Veil-of-Darkness” test in which it compared daytime traffic stops to traffic stops made at night. A Veil-of-Darkness test can help identify indications of racial bias because officers are less likely to be able to identify a driver’s race before a stop when it is dark. The analysis showed no significant relationship between race and daytime traffic stops of minority drivers.
- The analysts conducted a “Hit Rate” test, which involves analyzing whether officers find contraband like illegal drugs or weapons when conducting a search after a stop.

² In May of 2015, a private organization filed a federal class-action lawsuit against SCPD alleging that officers had routinely stopped, harassed, and sometimes robbed Latinos in Suffolk County. In July of 2023, a federal judge approved a settlement in that suit.

³ The full report is available on SCPD’s website:
https://suffolkpd.org/portals/18/scpd_pdfs/tstop/suffolk_county_traffic_stops_final_20250213.pdf

If officers search non-White drivers at a higher rate than White drivers without a correspondingly higher rate of identifying contraband (called the “hit rate”), it can indicate racial bias in the decisions to conduct searches. While the analysts found that the hit rate for White drivers who were searched was slightly higher than minority drivers, analysts determined that there was not sufficient evidence to conclude that the differences were statistically significant.

The newer analysis, based on a significant amount of data that is more reliable than the older analysis because of the steps that SCPD has taken to improve its data collection, did not find indications that racial bias motivates SCPD’s traffic enforcement activities. SCPD has retained the new analysts to conduct regular analyses of its traffic stop data under a three-year contract with options to further extend the term.

c. Training

The Agreement requires that all sworn officers receive training on bias-free policing at least annually. *See* Agreement at 6-7. This training is to “emphasize that discriminatory policing, in the form of either selective enforcement or non-enforcement of the law, including the selecting or rejecting of particular policing tactics or strategies, is prohibited by policy and will subject officers to disciplinary action.” *Id.* The Agreement also sets forth specific elements that SCPD must incorporate into its bias-free training. *Id.*

We found SCPD in substantial compliance with this requirement in our Seventh Assessment Report, when we determined that SCPD’s training was sufficiently thorough and clear, providing officers with the necessary understanding of the psychological and situational factors that can result in bias influencing law enforcement outcomes, and the techniques that officers should use to prevent this from happening. In our Ninth Report, we found that SCPD had maintained substantial compliance based on its continued progress toward training all of its officers, even in light of the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. During this compliance period, SCPD expanded its bias-free policing training.

Based on these ongoing accomplishments and our prior satisfaction with the quality and content of the training and SCPD’s training practices, we find that SCPD has again maintained substantial compliance with this requirement of the Settlement Agreement.

V. LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE	
a. Policies Related to Language Access	Substantial Compliance
b. Language Line Order	Substantial Compliance
c. Policy on Persons with Limited English Proficiency	Substantial Compliance
d. Spanish-Language Access to SCPD Website	Substantial Compliance
e. Incentives for Interpreters	Substantial Compliance

f. Consultation with the Latino Community	Substantial Compliance
g. Language Assistance Training	Substantial Compliance
h. Community Survey	Substantial Compliance

The Agreement requires SCPD to develop and implement language-access policies and practices so that persons who have Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access to police services. *See* Agreement ¶ V at 8-11. SCPD has maintained substantial compliance with these requirements as well.

- a. Policies Related to Language Access
- b. Language Line Order
- c. Policy on Persons with Limited English Proficiency

Subparagraphs (a), (b), and (c) of the Language Assistance section of the Agreement all require SCPD to adopt policies that ensure adequate language access for LEP individuals who have encounters with the police. As we have noted in past reports, SCPD has developed and continues to refine excellent language-access policies and departmental protocols to increase its employees’ ability to understand and respond to all LEP individuals, whether witnesses, suspects, or members of the public generally.

SCPD continued to enhance its language access policies during this review period. Specifically, in January 2024, SCPD issued a Departmental Memo, DMEM 24-14, which requires supervisors to review a random sample of body-worn camera footage from officers who report to them. In May 2024, SCPD also amended Section 333 of its policy manual, which covers limited English proficiency services, to require supervisors to review random videos from LIMA calls (calls requiring language assistance) and refer officers who fail to provide language services to the Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) for remedial policy guidance and training. The amended policy further requires IAB to review camera recordings as part of its monthly audits of LIMA calls. These changes all work to enhance SCPD’s communications with LEP individuals.

The Department also has taken significant steps to implement its language access policies. SCPD has dedicated substantial resources to making it easier for officers to use language services, including installing tablets in every patrol car loaded with the Language Line app and issuing a memo with detailed instructions on how to use the language line (DMEM 22-93). And, SCPD has significantly increased the number of certified bilingual officers and Department Authorized Interpreters. As of 2024, nearly 10% of SCPD officers are certified bilingual or authorized by SCPD to provide interpretation services. SCPD now has more than 200 officers who are either certified as bilingual in Spanish or authorized by SCPD to interpret in Spanish, an increase of 78% since 2019.

In 2023, SCPD rolled out a new Records Management System (RMS) to manage and store the department’s data, including its language assistance data. During the period that SCPD was transitioning to its new system, language assistance data was split between the old system and the new system. Also, around the time of the transition, SCPD suffered a cyber intrusion that

impacted nearly all its data systems. Some language assistance data during the intrusion was collected by hand and later manually input into the new RMS. Because of these issues, SCPD reported that it suspended quarterly audits of the Patrol Division.

With quarterly audits suspended during the data migration project and cyber intrusion, SCPD initiated three projects aimed at ensuring compliance with the language access requirements of the Agreement. As described above, SCPD issued a new policy requiring supervisors to review random samples of body-worn camera videos and amended its Language Access Policy to require random review of videos for LIMA calls. After implementing this requirement, SCPD convened focus groups of supervisors to identify patterns and trends, and the Department used the information it gathered to update its trainings.

SCPD also assessed and audited its Language Access Tracking Form, focusing in particular on instances in which officers coded the disposition of a call as “Other.” Officers are required to complete the Language Access Tracking Form when they are dispatched to a LIMA call. SCPD observed that officers were coding the disposition of such calls as “Other” frequently and found that, in many instances, officers did, in fact, provide language assistance. SCPD believes that the dispositions that officers can select on the form are overlapping or failed to capture common outcomes to LIMA calls. As a result, SCPD is revising the form to make it easier for officers to identify the appropriate disposition of a LIMA call and deliver better data that the Department can analyze going forward. When SCPD rolled out its new RMS, it also made the Language Access Tracking Form mandatory when officers complete reports after responding to a LIMA call, which eliminated a previous issue SCPD identified through its regular audits that officers were not always completing the Language Access Tracking Form. SCPD also plans to use the new data collected through the Language Access Tracking Form, along with information gathered from the mandatory supervisory review of BWC footage, to continue conducting quarterly audits of its provision of language services.

SCPD’s Internal Affairs Bureau performs an auditing function as well, continuing its program of making “Quality of Service” contacts with LEP 911 callers. Since our Ninth Report, as noted above, SCPD revised its policy to require IAB investigators to review BWC footage associated with incidents where IAB makes Quality of Service contacts. IAB’s Quality of Service audits now show only around one percent error rate in these reviews. In this review period, IAB also self-initiated administrative investigation of eight officers for not complying with SCPD’s language access policies, including in instances of noncompliance by officers that were identified by IAB through its regular language access audits.

d. Spanish Language Access to the SCPD Website

SCPD’s revamped website uses an automated translation technology to provide translations of its pages into Spanish and other languages.

Almost all PDF forms on SCPD’s website are now readily available in Spanish and have been for some time. A number of key forms and guidance, including the complaint form, the Language Access Plan, and how to obtain mental health services, file a missing person report or request a silver alert, or obtain a police report, are available in Spanish, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Italian, Polish, and Portuguese. SCPD has published key policies in Spanish on its Transparency

Hub. SCPD also continues to publish and highlight relevant data on its Transparency Hub and feature Spanish language recruitment videos.

e. Incentives for Interpreters

As noted above, we have continued to see a steady increase in the number of certified bilingual officers and Department Authorized Interpreters (DAIs). SCPD's website features Spanish-language recruitment videos and highlights its program to recruit Spanish-speaking officers. SCPD told us that its personnel speak, among other languages, Mandarin, Korean, Hindi, and Haitian Kreyol/Creole.

f. Consultation with the Latino Community

The Agreement requires that the Department consult with representatives of the Latino community regarding language-access issues. As the pandemic wound down, SCPD appears to have increased its efforts to engage the Latino community. SCPD made its Latino Liaison Officer (LLO) a full-time position assigned to the Office of the Police Commissioner reporting directly to the Deputy Police Commissioner. SCPD reports that the LLO actively engages with schools, social services, non-profits, churches, and other organizations to facilitate and participate in events, panel discussions, and presentations. The LLO also coordinates with SCPD's other community engagement efforts.

SCPD also formed Precinct Level Advisory Boards (PLABs) in January 2024, in compliance with the Police Reform Plan and the Private Settlement. PLABs are intended to serve as bridges between precinct inspectors and communities and include 75 community leaders, residents, business owners, and other stakeholders. The program provides opportunities for SCPD and community stakeholders to collaborate on local concerns to enhance public safety. Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) and Community Oriented Policing Enforcement (COPE) regularly attend quarterly PLAB meetings to address community concerns.

g. Language Assistance Training

SCPD continued providing training to officers on language access and remains in substantial compliance with this provision of the Agreement.

h. Community Survey

In April 2021, the Department issued a report of its most recent satisfaction survey of the community, aimed at helping the Department assess the adequacy of its language-access services. The report of the survey is available on SCPD's website. We understand that SCPD is exploring options to collect community survey data in the future to continue to assess community sentiments.

VII. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
a. Maintaining Community Relationships	Substantial Compliance
b. Community Liaison Officers	Substantial Compliance
c. Community Oriented Policing Enforcement (“COPE”)	Substantial Compliance
d. Community Response Bureau	Substantial Compliance
e. Community Outreach	Substantial Compliance
f. Social Media and Notification Systems	Substantial Compliance

We previously found SCPD to be in substantial compliance with the community engagement provisions of the Settlement Agreement. *See* Ninth Report at 16. SCPD has maintained substantial compliance with these provisions. During this reporting period SCPD has maintained the established community engagement practices that helped it reach substantial compliance with engagements like its “Clippers N’ Cops,” “... With a Cop,” and “Park, Walk, & Talk” programs, and has instituted other programs that further those efforts. In 2022, SCPD established a community ambassador program in which approximately 30 community members function as liaisons between the community and the commissioner. In 2024, it established its PLABs program, discussed above. We commend SCPD for its previous and ongoing efforts to maintain and improve its relationships with the community.