



Office of the Attorney General  
Washington, D. C. 20530

March 31, 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENT COMPONENTS AND  
UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS

FROM:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Handwritten signature of Jeffery B. Sessions in black ink.

SUBJECT:

Supporting Federal, State, Local and Tribal Law Enforcement

Our mission statement directs the Department of Justice “to ensure public safety,” “to provide federal leadership in preventing and controlling crime,” and “to ensure fair and impartial administration of justice for all Americans.” We fully embrace and share these responsibilities with thousands of law enforcement agencies across the country that also seek to prevent crime and protect the public. We understand the crucial role interagency partnerships play in successful crime prevention strategies, and the Department is proud of the longstanding relationships it has with our federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement partners. The Federal government alone cannot successfully address rising crimes rates, secure public safety, protect and respect the civil rights of all members of the public, or implement best practices in policing. These are, first and foremost, tasks for state, local, and tribal law enforcement. By strengthening our longstanding and productive relationships with our law enforcement partners, we will improve public safety for all Americans.

The Department will use its resources to effectively promote a peaceful and lawful society, where the civil rights of all persons are valued and protected. To that end, I expect that all Department components will adhere to and support principles that will advance those two goals, including, but not limited to the following:

- The safety and protection of the public is the paramount concern and duty of law enforcement officials.
- Law enforcement officers perform uniquely dangerous tasks, and the Department should help promote officer safety, officer morale, and public respect for their work.
- Local law enforcement must protect and respect the civil rights of all members of the public.
- Local control and local accountability are necessary for effective local policing. It is not the responsibility of the federal government to manage non-federal law enforcement agencies.

- The misdeeds of individual bad actors should not impugn or undermine the legitimate and honorable work that law enforcement officers and agencies perform in keeping American communities safe.
- The collection and analysis of timely, reliable statistics on crime and criminals are essential for effective law enforcement strategies.
- Recruitment and training of law enforcement officers should focus on making law enforcement a rewarding career, and attracting and retaining well-qualified personnel.
- Collaboration between federal and local law enforcement is important, and jurisdictions whose law enforcement agencies accept funding from the Department are expected to adhere to the Department's grant conditions as well as to all federal laws.

The Deputy Attorney General and the Associate Attorney General are hereby directed to immediately review all Department activities – including collaborative investigations and prosecutions, grant making, technical assistance and training, compliance reviews, existing or contemplated consent decrees, and task force participation – in order to ensure that they fully and effectively promote the principles outlined above. Nothing in this Memorandum, however, should be construed to delay or impede any pending criminal or national security investigation or program.