



SPEAKING TRUTH. SEEKING JUSTICE.

Years of research, interviews, and study, have shown that Iowa has a problem with racially-biased policing. Just Voices is an initiative to raise victim's voices, speak their truth, and seek justice.

FACT SHEET: Pre-Textual Stops

Pre-Textual Stop

A pre-textual stop is one in which the officer detains the citizen for a minor infraction (such as a broken taillight or minor traffic offense) because the officer suspects the person of involvement in another, more significant crime (i.e. drug possession).

What is the issue with Pre-Textual Stops?

There are almost limitless minor infractions for which officers can legally pull over a car: a dirty license plate, broken tail light, lane change without signaling, loud muffler, and more. Police officers can choose which cars to pull over to determine if something more serious might be going on. Police officers can also make this decision based on the driver's age, race, and appearance.



This is also where implicit bias comes into play. The disparity in these types of stops indicates that racial bias towards Black people, the view that they are more suspicious or criminal, makes officers stop them more in the first place. This is unconstitutional, but difficult to prove.

Equipment Violations and Pre-Textual Stops



Stops for equipment violations can be also known as "pre-textual " stops. The vehicle is often then searched in hopes of finding a bigger offense. In Des Moines, Iowa a Black person is much more likely to be stopped for an equipment violation than a White person. And then once stopped, Black people are more likely to be issued a ticket or arrested.

What does a pre-textual stop look like?

Read what happened to Emmanuel on a chilly night, December 17, 2017. Find his story at www.justvoices.org.