

Ending Regulatory Stops | Policy Model from Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

Communities across the nation have too often suffered the consequences of systemic racism in our criminal justice system. Black and brown people unjustly harmed or killed when encountering biased law enforcement officers is just one. There are many processes police are involved in that do not require the response of an armed officer. Ending regulatory stops is just one item on Emancipate NC's policy menu for local policing reform intended to divert civil processes away from the police. View the full menu of local policy models [here](#).

Changes to MCSO Traffic Stops

Regulatory stops include stops related to expired tags, malfunctioning tail lights, window tints, etc.

The new [policy](#) that keeps police from stopping drivers initially for these reasons is a [response](#) to the fact that Black and brown drivers are disproportionately pulled over for non-moving regulatory offenses.

The policy was developed by [Forward Justice](#) and the [North Carolina Second Chance Alliance](#), who cited that Black drivers make up about 22% of the population, yet are subject to 30% of [traffic stops](#).

“*By eliminating traffic stops for these low-level infractions that do not contribute to public safety, we can begin to minimize unnecessary and potentially harmful interactions between law enforcement and communities and address the racial disparities clearly inherent in these stops.*”

Whitley Carpenter, Senior Criminal Justice Counsel
Forward Justice

95% greater chance

Black drivers were 95% more likely to be subject to [traffic stops](#) than white drivers in Mecklenburg County.

5 out of 10

Half of the [most charged offenses](#) in Mecklenburg County are regulatory.

September 2022

Mecklenburg County's Sheriff's Office (MCSO) announced in September 2022 that drivers would no longer be stopped for non-moving violations.

10% drop in disparities

Black-to-white stop disparities dropped ten percent in Greensboro the year a similar stop ban was implemented.

Tips on how to Adopt Policy

- Look at the North Carolina Task Force for Racial Equity in Criminal Policy instructions on how to craft a [sample policy](#).
- Check out data from the [UNC School of Government Criminal Justice Innovation Lab](#) to get information on regulatory stops in your county. On the left-hand side of the dashboard, click on “Citation v. Arrest” and select “Traffic” in the bottom right-hand corner under the map. You click on the “Race” tab above the map to see racial disparities in enforcement.
- Check out data from [NCCopWatch.org](#), which collects data from the NC State Bureau of Investigations on traffic stops in each NC county.
- Reach out to [Forward Justice](#), a legal organization working to advance racial, economic, and social justice in the South. They drafted the new policy in Mecklenburg County.