

## WHAT IS RACIAL PROFILING?

**RACIAL PROFILING** → the use of race or ethnicity as grounds for suspecting someone of having committed an offense → [Not a 'descriptor' of a criminal – but a 'grounds' of a crime]

'**Racial profiling**' refers to the practice by law enforcement officials of 'targeting' individuals for suspicion of crime based on the individual's race, ethnicity, religion or national origin.

**Racial profiling** is a form of stereotyping and discrimination based on **race**. It refers to the inappropriate targeting of racial and ethnic groups by police officers and other law enforcement officials. [?]

---

**Racial profiling** → exists when the members of a particular racial or ethnic group become subject to greater criminal justice or institutional surveillance than others → Profiling exists when racial characteristics – rather than behaviour – contributes to surveillance decisions.

According to the **Ontario Human Rights Commission** (2003), racial profiling can be defined as actions undertaken for reasons of safety or security that rely on stereotypes of race to target member of a group for negative treatment

---

By contrast, **Criminal Profiling** [?] relies on actual behaviour or information that meets the description of suspects. – objective behaviour and information here can lead to reasonable suspicion

**Racial profiling** may be a kind of criminal profiling but, rather than reflect objective evidence, it involves a mindset based on stereotypical

assumptions related to race and preconceived ideas about a persons character

**Criminal Profiling** → consists of analyzing a crime scene and using the information to determine the identity of the perpetrator. [While this doesn't directly give you the perpetrator's name, it is very *helpful in narrowing down suspects*.] → For example, a profile based on a crime scene provides information that may include the perpetrator's personality, sex, age, **ethnic background**, and possible physical features such as disfigurements or height and weight. This information can then be used to identify **possible suspects**, depending on who fits the profile.

**Racial Profiling** → Racial Profiling exists when the members of a particular racial or ethnic group become subject to greater criminal justice or institutional surveillance than others. Profiling exists when racial characteristics – rather than behaviour – contributes to surveillance decisions.

**Criminal Profiling involves “possible suspects” → Racial Profiling involves the “usual suspects”**

---

### **Examples of Racial Profiling:**

Stereotyping becomes a particular concern when people act on their stereotypical views in a way that affects others. This is what leads to profiling. Although anyone can experience profiling, racialized persons are primarily affected.

Typically profiling is carried out by persons in positions of authority, and can occur in many contexts involving safety, security and public protection issues.

Some examples of profiling presented during the inquiry include:

- Law enforcement official assumes someone is more likely to have committed a crime because he is African Canadian;
- School personnel treat a Latino child's behaviour as an infraction under its zero tolerance policy while the same action by another child might be seen as normal "kids' play";
- A private security guard follows a shopper because she believes the shopper is more likely to steal from the store;
- An employer wants a stricter security clearance for a Muslim employee after September 11<sup>th</sup>;
- A bar refuses to serve Aboriginal patrons because of an assumption that they will get drunk and rowdy;
- A criminal justice system official refuses bail to a Latin American person because of a belief that people from her country are violent; and
- A landlord asks a Chinese student to move out because she believes that the tenant will expose her to SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) even though the tenant has not been to any hospitals, facilities or countries associated with a high risk of SARS.