

South Tucson Police Department

Who is in charge: William Lackey.

Where he stands: “We’re doing the same things, we’re just doing it in a glass house.”

How it’s documented: Calls are classified according to highest FBI clearance code.

What the Star reviewed: None. The search turned up one result over three-year period and no incident report was written for that case.



William Lackey

Overview

Sworn officers: 24

Immigration-related incidents the year after S.B. 1070 took effect that the agency provided: No data available.

Share of total incidents: Unknown.

Findings

- The agency does not have a way to track referrals to Customs and Border Protection. In its data system, calls are classified according to the highest FBI clearance code. For example, if the call was for an assault, it would be cleared for the assault and not as an agency assist.
- The system does not allow keyword searches. The department’s search for cases classified as assists to a federal immigration agency turned up a single result over a three-year period, and no incident report was written for that case. The department is now considering using a new set of secondary classification codes that would allow it to pull up all cases in which a person is referred to Border Patrol. An incident report is to be written each time a person is referred, even if the officer does not cite the person for a state crime.
- Because the area has a high proportion of undocumented immigrants and the department doesn’t want to further damage trust, South Tucson has an informal policy against citing people for minor traffic violations if they are also referred to Border Patrol to determine their immigration status.
- In contrast to several other jurisdictions’ policies, South Tucson’s policy clearly says, “Officers shall not stop or detain a person based solely on the suspicion that the person(s) are present in the United States unlawfully.”
- Because the department is small, South Tucson has relied heavily on a clause in the law that allows officers to not do an immigration check if it is “not practicable,” Chief Lackey said.