

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.acluohio.org/en/press-releases/more-30-black-leaders-and-advocacy-organizations-formally-demand-department-justice>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

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COLUMBUS Today, more than 30 advocacy organizations, including The Amos Project, ACLU of Ohio, Columbus NAACP, and Columbus Urban League, announced their formal demand for the U.S. Department of Justice to investigate the Columbus Police Departments (CPD) history of violence and misconduct targeting Black people. View the [formal demand letter](#). (links to google drive)

The coalitions letter cites an extensive list of the community's concerns that have previously been lodged against the CPD, including the following:

Excessive force has been systematically used against residents of Columbus, especially Black residents.

Militaristic anti-protest tactics have violated both CPD policy and the civil rights of Columbus residents.

Hiring practices have resulted in a police force that does not live in or represent the diversity of our community.

The City of Columbus has bargained away their ability to hold police accountable in the contract with the Fraternal Order of Police.

Culture of corruption and internal discrimination against Black officers and whistleblowers.

The City of Columbus refused to enter into the consent decree sought by the Department of Justice through the 1999 lawsuit brought against CPD.

"Until the Department of Justice mandates and oversees the effective implementation of major structural changes within the department the most vulnerable in the Columbus community people of color, children, low-income people, people with disabilities, immigrants, and LGBTQ people will not be safe from those sworn to protect and serve us," said **Sean L. Walton, a civil rights attorney representing the families with loved ones lost to police violence.**

"Racism has been declared a public health crisis. At this point and moving forward, it is all about action. This is something that we have been asking for for a very long time, and we will not continue to settle for less," said **Adrienne Hood, the mother of 23-year-old Henry Green, who was killed by Columbus Police in 2016.**

"Our children have now been part of a bloodline of trauma that we should all be ashamed of. We have kids day in and day out who are afraid to go outside. We have young Black girls who are being adulterated before their team and misrepresented and that needs to stop," said **Stephanie Hightower, President and CEO of the Columbus Urban League.**

"A Department of Justice investigation is just the start. We need to continue advancing reform and rethink what safety means in this city. We will continue to work alongside community members to rebuild trust and make Columbus safer for everyone, regardless of where you live, what zip code you come from, and the color of your skin," said **Shannon Hardin, Columbus City Council President.**

"We have witnessed a disturbing pattern of extreme use of force by police across the country, Ohio, and right here in Columbus. It is far past time to merely discuss reform. We need to set the wheels in motion to bring about an in-depth review of current practices and scenarios, and ultimately bring about transformative change. Everyone deserves to feel safe in their communities. With never-ending police violence, especially in communities of color, were a long way from that reality," offered **Jocelyn Rosnick, ACLU of Ohio Policy Director.**

The community's official petition to collect signatures can be [found here](#).

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