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Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

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Attorney General Merrick B. Garland Announces Investigation of the City of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and the Minneapolis Police Department

Attorney General Merrick B. Garland announced today the Justice Department has opened a pattern or practice investigation into the City of Minneapolis (the City) and the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD). The investigation will assess all types of force used by MPD officers, including uses of force involving individuals with behavioral health disabilities and uses of force against individuals engaged in activities protected by the First Amendment. The investigation will also assess whether MPD engages in discriminatory policing. As part of the investigation the Justice Department will conduct a comprehensive review of MPD policies, training and supervision. The department will also examine MPD’s systems of accountability, including complaint intake, investigation, review, disposition and discipline. The Department of Justice will also reach out to community groups and members of the public to learn about their experiences with MPD.

“The investigation I am announcing today will assess whether the Minneapolis Police Department engages in a pattern or practice of using excessive force, including during protests,” said Attorney General Garland. “Building trust between community and law enforcement will take time and effort by all of us, but we undertake this task with determination and urgency, knowing that change cannot wait.”

This morning, Department of Justice officials informed Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey, MPD Chief Medaria Arradondo, City Attorney Jim Rowader, City Coordinator Mark Ruff, and City Council President Lisa Bender of the investigation. The department will continue to work closely with both the City and MPD as the investigation progresses.

“One of the Civil Rights Division’s highest priorities is to ensure that every person in this country benefits from public safety systems that are lawful, responsive, transparent and nondiscriminatory,” said Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Pamela S. Karlan for the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division. “It is essential that police departments across the country use their law enforcement authority, including the authority to use force, in a manner that respects civil rights and the sanctity of human life.”

“People throughout the city of Minneapolis want a public safety system that protects and serves all members of our community,” said Acting U.S. Attorney W. Anders Folk for the District of Minnesota. “This investigation by the Department of Justice provides a vital step to restore and build trust in the Minneapolis Police Department and its officers.”

The investigation is being conducted pursuant to the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, which prohibits state and local governments from engaging in a pattern or practice of conduct by law enforcement officers that deprives individuals of rights protected by the Constitution or federal law. The Act allows the Department of Justice to remedy such misconduct through civil litigation. The department will be assessing law enforcement practices under the First, Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, as well as under the Safe Streets Act of 1968, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Special Litigation Section of the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, in Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Minnesota, in Minneapolis, are jointly conducting this investigation. Individuals with relevant information are encouraged to contact the Department of Justice *via* email at Community.Minneapolis@usdoj.gov or by phone at 866-432-0268. Individuals can also report civil rights violations regarding this or other matters using the Civil Rights Division's new reporting portal, available at civilrights.justice.gov.

Additional information about the Civil Rights Division is available on its website at www.justice.gov/crt. Additional information about the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Minnesota is available on its website at <https://www.justice.gov/usao-mn>.

Component(s):

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