

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE CIVIL RIGHTS INVESTIGATION OF LOUISIANA STATE POLICE

ACLU GUIDANCE: WHAT TO KNOW AND HOW TO GET INVOLVED

INVESTIGATION OVERVIEW

In summer 2022, after learning of several examples of unlawful force and racial discrimination by the Louisiana State Police (LSP), including the killing of Ronald Greene, the Department of Justice announced it would institute an official pattern or practice investigation of the agency — **the first investigation of a state police agency in 20 years.**

The Department of Justice (DOJ) launched this investigation based on credible evidence of systemic excessive force and discriminatory policing on the basis of race throughout the state. The history of LSP's misconduct has etched deep wounds in our communities of color, but this investigation is an opportunity to shed light on and remedy their unconstitutional practices.

The thorough examination of Louisiana State Police, which is led by the DOJ Civil Rights Division and the three U.S. Attorney's Offices here in Louisiana, will involve documenting and verifying any racial bias and unlawful use of force by LSP, as well as reviewing input from community members, incident reports, body-worn camera footage, policies, training materials, and supervision records. During the investigation, the DOJ will assess whether any systemic deficiencies contribute to misconduct or enable it to persist.

POTENTIAL OUTCOME

Pattern or practice investigations by the Department of Justice can produce several outcomes. For example, at the conclusion of the investigation, the DOJ may issue a letter detailing its findings related to racial bias, unlawful use of force, and any systemic factors that contribute to that misconduct. The Department may also negotiate remedies with LSP. Or, the investigation could result in LSP entering a consent decree, which would give a federal court power to order reforms and monitor the agency's progress. This type of consent decree is what has governed reforms to the New Orleans Police Department and the Orleans Parish jail in recent years.

A pattern or practice investigation will also seek to identify the root causes of the misconduct so they can be rectified. In addition to reforms, greater transparency will help advance the effective, accountable, bias-free policing the people of Louisiana so deeply deserve.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A critical part of the DOJ's investigation is hearing directly from community members.

While the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division brings in a wealth of knowledge based on many years of police reform work across the nation, it knows that in order to instill confidence in the thoroughness and integrity of this investigation, as well as to better understand the issues particular to Louisiana, the community must be heard.

During the course of the investigation, the DOJ will ask Louisianans to provide feedback and testimonials about Louisiana State Police through a series of town hall events, and by using a confidential email address and phone number.

In addition to gathering information directly from community members, all pattern or practice investigations involve interviewing police and local officials, collecting information from other criminal justice stakeholders, observing officer activities through ride-alongs and other means, and reviewing documents and specific incidents that are relevant to the investigation.

YOUR STORY MATTERS

You have the power to change the state of Louisiana through storytelling. Systemic injustice can only be rectified if it is properly identified. Testimonials from community members are vital to a fair investigation.

If you have been racially profiled by the Louisiana State Police or experienced an incident of excessive force, violence, intimidation, or harassment, the Department of Justice must hear about it.

REPORT IT NOW THROUGH A CONFIDENTIAL PROCESS



CALL	(202) 353-0684
EMAIL	community.louisiana@usdoj.gov
ATTEND A TOWN HALL	visit laaclu.org/doj-investigation

You have an important opportunity to partner with the Department of Justice to create lasting, positive change in our state's law enforcement agencies. In order to do so, we must tell our stories. Share yours confidentially or attend an upcoming town hall and join us in the effort to protect all Louisianans from police violence and misconduct.