



For Immediate Release
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**NAACP Legal Defense Fund Files FOIA Appeal with the U.S. Justice Department for Documents
Relating to the North Charleston, S.C. Police Department**

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) today filed an [appeal](#) regarding a partially denied Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) [request](#) with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).

The original FOIA request asked for all documents, data, and other information that the COPS Office has received from the North Charleston, South Carolina, Police Department (NCPD) and city officials. The requested documents included grant applications and reports, as well as information gathered and developed as part of the COPS Office's comprehensive and independent assessment of the NCPD, which it began in May 2016. The COPS Office provided LDF only 62 pages, and withheld 331 pages that are responsive to the request. LDF is challenging the COPS Office's response, asserting that the privilege cited does not stop the sharing of purely factual information or factual portions of deliberative documents. Additionally, LDF believes the COPS Office must fully disclose information requested about the Collaborative Reform Initiative, even if the privilege applies to some of the withheld documents, because there is no reasonably foreseeable harm to any of the interests protected by the privilege, a requirement of the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016.

LDF's FOIA appeal is an attempt to secure information key to reforming the NCPD following the September [announcement](#) that the COPS Office will no longer focus on working with police departments to conduct comprehensive assessments of problematic police practices embedded at certain agencies, such as excessive use-of-force and racial bias. These assessments were requested by several cities and law enforcement agencies, including North Charleston, to improve policing outcomes as well as relationships with communities.

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation's first civil and human rights law organization and has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF's Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.