



**For Immediate Release**  
**Tuesday, December 18, 2023**

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## **LDF Applauds the Department of Justice’s Creation of National Law Enforcement Accountability Database**

On Monday, as required by President Biden’s Executive Order on Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) announced the launch of the National Law Enforcement Accountability Database (NLEAD), which will require certain federal law enforcement agencies to provide searchable records of officer misconduct. With the announcement, certain authorized actors involved in hiring decisions for federal officers will have access to NLEAD. The database will contain information on six categories related to officer misconduct: criminal convictions; suspensions; terminations; civil judgments related to the officer’s duties; resignations or retirements while under investigation; and a sustained complaint based on a finding of serious misconduct.

The Bureau of Justice Assistance will, in the future, assist in providing aggregated reporting on the NLEAD to the public for certain categories of misconduct.

In response to this announcement, the Legal Defense Fund’s (LDF’s) President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson, and Associate Director-Counsel Tona Boyd, issued the following statement:

Nelson:

“The establishment of NLEAD within the Department of Justice is an unprecedented and important step to help prevent officers with histories of misconduct from moving from one department to another without detection. Inadequate investigative and accountability systems have permitted officers who commit misconduct to evade discipline, and a shroud of secrecy has kept police misconduct hidden from the public. Families and communities that have been impacted by police abuse have long called for transparency into officer misconduct records, and we hope the information unearthed by this database helps advance that longstanding effort.

“Law enforcement agencies will no longer be able to turn a blind eye to the records of misconduct in officer hiring and offending officers will not be able to distance themselves from their misdeeds. We commend the Biden administration for its leadership in issuing the Executive Order and the Department of Justice for dedicating resources to bring this project to fruition. We also call on both entities to continue to strengthen accountability for police misconduct and to advance alternatives to policing that protect Black communities and enhance public safety.”

Boyd:

“The announcement of the NLEAD sends a message to law enforcement agencies that officers should be held accountable for violations of policy and the law, which have resulted in serious injury to too many individuals who are disproportionately people of color. To bolster this message, we urge the DOJ to use all of the tools available to ensure federal law enforcement agencies are complying with their reporting requirements or are held accountable for not meeting their obligations.

“LDF continues to advocate for accountability for police violence in our communities, including through our [framework for public safety](#). LDF’s National Police Funding Database is a publicly-available tool that tracks federal funding to local law enforcement agencies and lawsuit settlements in police misconduct cases. We hope families and communities will also use this, along with the reporting from NLEAD, to advocate for changes to their local public safety systems.”

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Founded in 1940, the [Legal Defense Fund \(LDF\)](#) is the nation’s first civil rights law organization. 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 Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Please note that LDF 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.