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LDF Media
212-965-2200 / media@naacpldf.org

LDF Issues Statement on Sentencing of Former Police Officer Involved in Killing of Atatiana Jefferson

Yesterday, former Texas police officer Aaron Dean was sentenced to 11 years and 10 months in prison for manslaughter in the killing of Atatiana Jefferson in October 2019.

In response to this sentencing, [Legal Defense Fund](#) (LDF) President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson issued the following statement:

“Atatiana Jefferson, like Breonna Taylor, like every Black person in America, should have felt safe in her home. She should have been able to spend time with her 8-year-old nephew without being killed by an officer’s bullet. That she was not able to do this, that her life was taken away by law enforcement while in her own home, is a reflection of law enforcement officers’ rampant use of fatal force, particularly in Black communities.

“Unfortunately, the killing of Atatiana Jefferson is not an outlier. Black women in America remain disproportionately at risk of police violence and abuse. While this sentencing is a rare and important instance where an officer has been held accountable for their abuse of power, it is no substitute for the critical need to broadly overhaul our public safety system to address the root causes of violence and prevent law enforcement interactions that inflict deep trauma on Black communities. We hope that the family of Atatiana Jefferson finds some solace in this outcome.”

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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.