



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Civil Rights and Faith Leaders Send Tulsa Mayor and City Council Chair Letter Demanding Police Reforms**

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) today joined almost 50 Tulsa civil rights attorneys, religious leaders, members of law enforcement, elected officials and activists in [sending a letter](#) to Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum and City Council Chair David Patrick calling for reforms to the Tulsa Police Department (TPD) following the release of the [Tulsa Equality Indicators Annual Report 2018](#) (Equality Report). The recently issued Equality Report indicates that Black residents are arrested over twice as often as White residents, and that Black Tulsans are five times as likely to be victims of officer use-of-force than all other racial and ethnic groups.

The Equality Report is the most recent effort of city leaders to identify and address racial and social inequities in Tulsa. Last year, the Tulsa Commission on Community Policing released [77 recommendations](#) for improving policing practices following the death of [Terence Crutcher](#); yet, very few of them address the city's long history of racially-biased policing, and none hold Tulsa Police Department (TPD) officers accountable if they fail to comply with the proposed changes to department policies and training. To properly address these issues, local advocates and LDF are demanding the city hold public hearings to investigate the Equality Report's findings of racial disparities in TPD's arrest and use-of-force practices. The letter also calls for the TPD to:

- Revise their policies and training to emphasize de-escalation and alternatives to arrests;
- Mandate external and independent investigations of police use-of-force incidents resulting in death or injury;
- Create use-of-force policies that clearly state what information will be released publicly;
- Establish a Serious Incident Review Board comprising of sworn staff and community members who will review cases involving officer-involved shootings and other serious incidents that have the potential to damage community trust;
- Partner with the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training to contribute to its National Decertification Index, which collects information about officers who have had their licenses or certifications revoked; and
- Retain a nationally recognized police department implicit bias trainer who could work with the city's current consultant.

Since Mr. Crutcher's death, LDF has monitored Tulsans' concerns about excessive use-of-force and alleged racially-biased police arrests and stops. In December 2017, LDF and the ACLU of Oklahoma filed an [open records request](#) to gather information on the TPD's practices, policies, and procedures. TPD has provided access to the documents requested on its [website](#), which can be seen by following the Tulsa Police Open Records Data link.

Read the letter [here](#).

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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.*