



## COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS CITY OF CHICAGO

### **STATEMENT ON THE KILLING OF GEORGE FLOYD** CHICAGO COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS

JUNE 5, 2020

The recent tragic killing of George Floyd, yet another black man killed during a police stop, has put this nation on edge. Protests are now filling the streets of America with thousands crying out for justice and demanding the end to racist policing practices and a biased criminal justice system. Watching a man beg for his last breath while a police officer cavalierly pins his knee into his victim's neck for nine minutes was too much for most of us to take without being outraged.

As the civil rights agency for the City of Chicago, the mission of the Commission on Human Relations is to enforce the city's human rights laws to punish acts of discrimination. It is abhorrent to us that in 2020, we are still talking about this issue, and demanding that black people stop being killed by police officers (or wannabe police officers), with little or no repercussions. We join now with thousands across this country to call for an immediate end to racist policing practices and the culture that allows this type of behavior to continue.

For many, particularly here in Chicago, the horror of the Laquan McDonald shooting continues to haunt us. We thought, if nothing else, that shooting would surely serve as a wake-up call to America that something had to change in our police departments. But in hindsight, we probably thought the same thing after the deaths of Sandra Bland and Eric Gardner. Their deaths served as evidence that Black people continue to be relegated to second class citizenship in the minds of many; citizenship that is absent respect, dignity, and the equal protection of the laws.

During this pandemic, the men and women of the Chicago Police Department have been working around the clock, the vast majority of whom who have been doing their jobs the right way. Yet, the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Trayvon Martin, and many others clearly illustrate that police brutality, or police inaction particularly where people of people of color are concerned, remains a problem across the country. This is a problem that demands the immediate attention and the committed will of our nation's leadership. We must have a sense of urgency to address this now! Let us learn from our past and work together to make lasting, systemic change to hold those responsible who choose to take the law into their own hands. We must also demand equity and fairness in our criminal justice system. There are too many lives at stake not to.

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