

ACLU of Wisconsin: Comments on proposed tear gas, pepper spray policy changes, lawsuit update in new requirements for Police Chief Morales

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MILWAUKEE – The American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin today commented on the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission’s order to the MPD to alter its policy to discontinue the use of tear gas and pepper spray used by the MPD in recent protests, work with the Community Collaborative Committee and others to develop a community policing policy, and provide an update on MPD’s compliance with the stop-and-frisk settlement agreement.

“This is a tumultuous time in not only the Milwaukee Police Department, but in police departments throughout the country. In order for police relations with the community to improve, we have to break with unhelpful police practices that we’ve seen in the past,” said Chris Ott, ACLU of Wisconsin executive director. “The FPC was right to order a change in policy to discontinue tear gas and pepper spray after a large volume of both were used against protestors throughout the city last month. Accountability, and a new policy, should be in place going forward to ensure that protestors are not subjected to harmful police practices when exercising their First Amendment right to protest.”

“The Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission also required Morales to provide a full update on the department’s compliance with the **City’s 2018 settlement** in the Stop and Frisk lawsuit. Our clients brought this lawsuit because racial profiling is both unjust and dangerous. No one should be stopped and searched by police because of their race, and recent months have shown terrible new examples of how encounters with police that should never have happened in the first place can go violently and fatally wrong,” Ott said.bnE

“It is especially important now for Milwaukee to prevent this from happening: for the safety and well being of Milwaukee residents, especially African-Americans and other people of color,” Ott stated. “The community’s input should be considered when developing policies and policing strategies. This collaboration could go a long way to rebuild trust.”

This statement is available online at:

<https://www.aclu-wi.org/en/news/aclu-wisconsin-comments--proposed-tear-gas-pepper-spray-policy-changes-lawsuit-update-new>