

ACLU Wisconsin: Milwaukee Police Department continues discriminatory stop-and-frisks despite 2018 settlement of lawsuit, data shows

Posted on Wednesday, Sep 23, 2020

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

MILWAUKEE – The Milwaukee Police Department continues to stop and frisk people in a racially discriminatory manner, and is still not compliant with key requirements of its 2018 Settlement Agreement, according to the latest annual report of the Crime and Justice Institute, Consultant overseeing the settlement of the case of Collins v. City of Milwaukee. CJI's report was released on Tuesday.

As part of the settlement, the MPD agreed to end the practice of racially-biased stop-and-frisk. The MPD, as well as the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission and the City, also agreed to a series of other reforms. The settlement came after a 2017 lawsuit by nine Black and Brown Milwaukee residents, represented by the ACLU of Wisconsin, national ACLU, and the law firm of Covington and Burling LLP, which showed that Black and Brown people in Milwaukee were being unconstitutionally and disproportionately stopped by police.

“The latest report concludes that the Milwaukee Police Department continues to subject Black people to stops and frisks at significantly higher rates than white people,” said Karyn Rotker, staff attorney for the ACLU of Wisconsin. “On some metrics, Latinx residents are also being targeted by MPD officers at higher rates than white residents.”

Statistics from the “Analysis of 2019 Traffic Stops, Field Interviews, No-action Encounters, and Frisks” Report attached to CJI’s main report show that Black residents continue to be stopped and frisked at higher rates than persons of other races. For example, Black drivers were still 8.4 times more likely to get stopped by police than white people, 5.16 times as likely to have been stopped for field interviews, and 7.86 times as likely to be frisked. Latinx drivers are 2.4 times more likely to be stopped as white people and 1.3 times as likely to be frisked.

More broadly, the Report indicates that neither the City nor the department as a whole has made compliance with the settlement a priority. Officers are not being adequately supervised, the Fire and Police Commission is not conducting regular audits or providing proper oversight, and proactive police engagement with the community has been slow to materialize.

“The racial disparities in stops and frisks are only minimally better with respect to field interviews and are now significantly worse with respect to traffic stops. MPD’s failure to enforce the law in an equitable and unbiased way is just more proof that the policing system needs to be overhauled,” said Jason Williamson, deputy director of the ACLU’S criminal reform project. “ Unless the Milwaukee Police Department, Milwaukee Police and Fire Commission, and the City come together and make compliance a priority, Black and Brown people will continue to be the target of MPD’s racially discrimination policies.”

A copy of the reports are available online at:

https://www.aclu-wi.org/sites/default/files/field_documents/-second_annual_report_of_consultant_sept_2020_0.pdf and

https://www.aclu-wi.org/sites/default/files/field_documents/-second_annual_report_of_consultant_data_analysis_sept_2020_0.pdf