

# Evers authorizes increased National Guard deployment to Kenosha, declares state of emergency

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Gov. Tony Evers today authorized doubling the National Guard's presence in Kenosha County to 250 and declared a state of emergency following violent protests in the wake of a police officer shooting a Black man in the back.

Under the order, members of the Guard can't be used to impede peaceful protests, but can "support local law enforcement, protect critical infrastructure and cultural institutions, and provide support to first responders."

In issuing the order, Evers urged those protesting to "please do so peacefully and safely."

But several Republicans accused Evers of fanning the flames with his initial comments critical of police before findings of an investigation into the shooting of Jacob Blake.

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"Governor Evers has the resources and the responsibility to put a stop to this violence and destruction, yet he foments division and destruction while hiding in the Governor's Mansion with police protection," said state Sen. Chris Kapenga, R-Delafield.

Along with signing the executive order declaring the emergency, Evers issued a statement and sent a string of tweets pleading with the public to "not allow the actions of a few distract us from the work we must do together to demand justice, equity, and accountability." He wrote on Twitter the reason for the protests of the last two nights "and many nights this year is the pain, anguish and exhaustion of

being Black in our state and country.”

“The ability to exercise First Amendment rights is a critically important part of our democracy and the pursuit of justice,” Evers wrote. “But there remains a line between peaceful assembly and what we saw last night that put individuals, families, and businesses in danger.”

See Evers’ Twitter thread:

<https://twitter.com/GovEvers/status/1298324994343055360>

See the release:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2020/gov-evers-declares-state-of-emergency-in-wisconsin/>

Before the order was issued, two Kenosha-area GOP lawmakers, Samantha Kerkman and Van Wanggaard, asked Evers to take immediate action to “stop the rioting and lawless destruction that persists in response to the shooting of Jacob Blake.”

“Please bring to bear all available and necessary state and federal law enforcement support to stop the physical and psychological damage that is being inflicted upon our community,” they wrote

The districts of Kerkman, a state rep, and Wanggaard, a state senator, largely cover Kenosha’s suburbs and the rural areas outside of the city.

During an afternoon news conference, Acting Madison Police Chief Vic Wahl said the department had yet to ask for aid from the Wisconsin National Guard. He said the department was continuing to look at staffing models but planned to continue relying on outside law enforcement as it did last night.

Read the Kerman/Wanggaard letter:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Letter-from-Wanggaard-and-Kerkman-asking-for-additional-resources-for-Kenosha.pdf>

### **Family attorney says Blake paralyzed from waist down**

A lawyer representing Blake’s family said it will be “a miracle” if the 29-year-old father of six ever walks again after being shot in the back multiple times.

Attorney Patrick Salvi Jr. said at a press conference in Kenosha this afternoon that

bullets had severed Blake's spinal cord, leaving him paralyzed from the waist down. He also said Blake had holes in his stomach, had most of his colon and small intestines removed, received damage to his kidneys and liver and received a shot in the arm.

The lawyers added that he was in surgery at the time of the press conference, and that Blake's family would be taking legal action.

Online video Sunday showed a Kenosha officer shooting Blake in the back multiple times as he entered his vehicle, sparking another round of unrest and protests over police treatment toward people of color. That also spurred a special session call from Gov. Tony Evers, imploring Republican lawmakers to act on his package of police reform measures.

"They shot my son seven times, seven times, like he didn't matter," said Jacob Blake Sr., Blake's father. "But my son matters. He's a human being, and he matters."

Civil rights attorney Ben Crump, who is also representing the family, said Blake's three sons were in the vehicle at the time and witnessed their father being shot. Crump said "these little boys are going to have psychological problems for the rest of their life" from seeing what happened.

Salvi added that the kind of rehab Blake will need is not free, and they will be bringing a civil lawsuit "to accomplish several goals."

He said the suit is meant to "hold the wrongdoers accountable," get Blake the "best possible medical care," and to ensure "due process under the law."

The attorneys said they're also demanding the officer involved in the incident be fired immediately, and questioned when Kenosha police will respond.

They said Blake's family has yet to receive details from police about what happened.

DOJ on Monday said all officers involved were placed on administrative leave.

A Kenosha police department official didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

Blake's mother, Julia Jackson, at the press conference addressed the violence, unrest and property damage that has occurred over the last few days in Kenosha and Madison.

She asked protesters, public officials, law enforcement officers and all human beings to "do Jacob justice and examine your hearts."

"If Jacob knew what was going on, as far as that goes, the violence and the destruction, he would be very displeased," Jackson said. "So I'm really asking and encouraging everyone in Wisconsin and abroad to take a moment and examine your hearts."