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Federal Judge Must Oversee Chicago Police Reform: Black Lives Matter Suit

By Kelly Bauer (//www.dnainfo.com/chicago/about-us/our-team/editorial-team/kelly-bauer)

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Chicago Police with billy clubs.

DNAinfo File Photo/Kelly Bauer

DOWNTOWN — Activists have sued the Chicago Police Department, arguing that a federal judge is the only one that can effectively oversee badly needed reforms in the police force. [Click here to read a message from our Founder and CEO \(http://assets.dnainfo.com/message.html\)](http://assets.dnainfo.com/message.html)

The lawsuit against the department, filed on behalf of activists from Black Lives Matter Chicago and other anti-police-violence groups, argues the department needs federal court oversight and should pay damages to people who were subject to "excessive force" and "false arrest" by officers.

"This is institutional racism. This is something that we need to dismantle," said Kofi Ademola, an activist with Black Lives Matter, during a Wednesday news conference. "We will continue to do everything our power to make sure that this mayor is held accountable and that CPD no longer has a free pass in killing black people."

Chicago Police, responding during its own Wednesday news conference, said the department is committed to reform and working with community members. Supt. Eddie Johnson pointed to the new use of force policy (<https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20170517/bronzeville/chicago-police-use-of-force-policy-cpd>) and the expanding use of body cameras by officers, among other changes, as examples of how the department has focused on reform.

"I am making my commitment again today that we will not waver from this path," Johnson said. "As we continue to implement these reforms, we'll make our city safer because we'll have better-trained, better-equipped officers and meaningful partnerships with the community."

The activists filing the suit argued the city's leaders and its police department only tried to reform after Chicago Police came under intense scrutiny for the death of Laquan McDonald (<https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/tags/laquan-mcdonald-case>). McDonald was 17 when he was shot 16 times and killed by a Chicago Police officer.

"This is not going to end on its own," said attorney Craig Futterman. "The city's leaders and the police department have repeatedly proven that they are incapable of ending this pattern and practice of civil rights violations without external oversight and without sustained public vigilance."

Sheila Bedi, another attorney with the suit, said the city's leaders needed to focus on

"negotiating real, transformative solutions" within the Police Department. Those solutions "must include federal oversight," she said.

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The Police Department faced blistering criticism from the Department of Justice in a January report (<https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20170113/downtown/chicago-police-doj-justice-department-probe-laquan-mcdonald-loretta-lynn-rahm-emanuel-civil-rights>) which found police violated people's civil rights, used excessive force and tolerated practices of racial discrimination so severe Chicagoans felt "dehumanized."

The lack of police accountability was leading to a "deadly cycle" of violence in Chicago, then-U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch said.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel promised he'd negotiate a "consent decree," an agreement to ensure the department would reform under the eye of a federal judge.

Emanuel later acknowledged the Trump Administration would likely not push for police reform (<https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20170228/englewood/chicago-police-department-reform-federal-investigation-trump-consent-decree>), though Donald Trump had often criticized Chicago's violence during his campaign.

Emanuel walked back his promise of pursuing a consent decree on June 5, when he said no federal judge would be needed to oversee the reforms. He said the city would seek an independent monitor. (<https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20170605/beverly/police-reforms-laquan-mcdonald-rahm-emanuel-consent-decree-justice>)

On Wednesday, Corporation Counsel Ed Siskel said the city wishes the Department of Justice had "followed through with their commitment to a consent decree" but said Chicago would continue to negotiate and pursue reform.

Read the full lawsuit against Chicago Police:

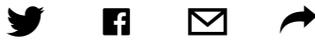
Case: 1:17-cv-04467 Document 1-1 Filed 06/14/17 Page 1 of 132 PageID #:1

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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
EASTERN DIVISION

IMMANUEL CAMPBELL, RUBIN CARTER,)	
MARKEES SHARKEY, DEONTE BECKWITH,)	
CHANTE LINWOOD, RACHEL JACKSON,)	
BLACK LIVES MATTER CHICAGO,)	
BLOCKS TOGETHER, BRIGHTON PARK)	
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL, JUSTICE FOR)	Case No. 17cv4467
FAMILIES – BLACK LIVES MATTER CHICAGO,)	(Class Action)
NETWORK 49, WOMEN’S ALL POINTS BULLETIN,)	
and 411 MOVEMENT FOR PIERRE LOURY,)	
)	
on behalf of themselves and a class of)	
similarly situated persons,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,)	
)	
v.)	
)	
CITY OF CHICAGO, and CHICAGO POLICE)	
OFFICERS MIGUEL VILLANUEVA (#17423),)	
JOSUE A. ORTIZ (#15448), DOROTHY CADE (#7814),)	
RICHARD BOLIN (#14590), PETER JONAS (#5069),)	
BRETT POLSON (#5612), ANGEL PENA (#7135),)	
WAUKEESHA MORRIS (#8255),)	
JAEHO JUNG (#13387),JOHN CORIELL (#14274),)	
CHAD BOYLAN (#8200), THOMAS MCGUIRE (#1337),)	
ANTHONY OSTROWSKI (#15324),)	
LAWRENCE GADE JR. (#1841),)	



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