

ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL KWAME RAOUL

PRESS



RELEASE

www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov

For Immediate Release
January 31, 2019

Press Office: 312-814-3118

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL APPLAUDS APPROVAL OF CONSENT DECREE TO
REFORM CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT**

*Consent Decree to Be Enforced by Federal Judge & Overseen by Independent Monitor to
Achieve Sustainable Police Reform in Chicago*

Chicago – Attorney General Kwame Raoul today lauded the approval of a federal consent decree that will require wide-ranging and enforceable reforms of the Chicago Police Department (CPD). Judge Robert M. Dow, Jr. approved the consent decree in a written order issued today following over a year of negotiations by the Attorney General’s Office, the City of Chicago and CPD, as well as engagement with Chicago communities, organizations and police officers.

The consent decree mandates reforms of CPD’s policies, practices, training, and accountability mechanisms to address the use of force, ensure police accountability, improve public and officer safety, and ultimately, build trust between CPD and Chicago residents. The consent decree will be enforced by Judge Dow, with assistance of an independent monitor, who will continually evaluate CPD’s progress with the requirements of the consent decree until the city and CPD achieve full and effective compliance.

“Today is a new beginning for the Chicago Police Department,” Raoul said. “There is a significant amount of work to be done to reform, and I am committed to this important work to make Chicago safer for both residents and police officers.”

The consent decree is the result of a lawsuit brought by the Attorney General’s Office against the city in August 2017 that sought to implement reforms to CPD practices that were recommended by the U.S. Department of Justice following its civil rights investigation of CPD. The Attorney General’s Office brought the lawsuit after the Justice Department, under President Trump, did not pursue a consent decree in federal court despite its own recommendation to do so.

As part of the process of drafting the consent decree, the Attorney General’s Office engaged members of the community and law enforcement for their feedback and input on police reform. The Attorney General’s Office held 14 community roundtables across the city and reviewed feedback from residents through paper and online feedback forms. The Attorney General’s Office also held 13 focus groups with CPD officers of all ranks.

In addition, the Attorney General’s Office and the city released a draft of the consent decree in July 2018 and invited the public to provide comments before a final version was submitted to the

court. The public also submitted hundreds of written comments to Judge Dow and shared their views during in a two-day public hearing on the consent decree in October 2018.

[In his 16-page opinion](#) approving the consent decree, Judge Dow wrote:

“Overall, the decree aims to ensure that the critically important job of policing in Chicago is done fairly, transparently, and without bias, affording dignity to those who are served and protected and proper guidance, training, and support for the women and men who comprise the police force.” [...]

“The decree takes an important step forward in the City of Chicago’s ongoing efforts to repair the damaged relationship between its police department and members of the community whom the department serves and protects. But it is a beginning, not an end.”

The Attorney General’s Office and the city are continuing to negotiate candidates to recommend to the court to serve as the independent monitor. The independent monitoring team will be responsible for assessing whether the city and CPD are implementing each of the hundreds of provisions in the consent decree. Every six months, the independent monitoring team will issue a public report to Judge Dow regarding the status of the city and CPD’s efforts to implement the consent decree. In addition to having unrestricted access to CPD personnel, facilities, trainings, and information, the independent monitoring team will also establish a public website and regularly engage with community members, interested stakeholders, and officers to develop a complete picture of whether the reforms required by the consent decree are taking root.

To find more information, visit the Attorney General’s consent decree [website](#).

The consent decree lawsuit and negotiations were handled by the Attorney General’s Public Interest Division Chief Cara Hendrickson, Assistant Chief Deputy Gary Caplan, Civil Rights Bureau Chief Shareese Pryor, and Assistant Attorneys General Cynthia Flores, Leigh Richie, Stevi Steines, Jeff VanDam, Thomas Verticchio, and Christopher Wells.