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ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL CALLS FOR FURTHER REFORMS TO THE CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT'S SEARCH WARRANT POLICY

Chicago – Attorney General Kwame Raoul called for additional reforms to a proposed search warrant policy the Chicago Police Department (CPD) plans to implement to address the disturbing pattern of “wrong raids” by CPD officers. As part of a public comment process regarding the proposed policy, Raoul recommended adopting best practices from across the country aimed at preventing these traumatic incidents and ensuring accountability for the harm they inflict.

“Wrong raids disproportionately affect minority communities and can have deadly consequences for both civilians and officers involved,” Raoul said. “CPD’s proposed updates to its search warrant policy are an important step to begin ensuring that search warrant policies and practices protect the safety of all involved, but there continues to be need for improvement. Credible reform requires real community input. I urge CPD to use this public comment process as a genuine opportunity to listen to the voices most affected by wrong raids. I look forward to continuing to work with the public, CPD, and other law enforcement partners committed to improving policing throughout Illinois.”

Police in Chicago have executed multiple search warrants in recent years at the wrong homes, often relying on incorrect information about the residence of a suspected criminal. These “wrong raids” have traumatized innocent people, including children. Evidence suggests that wrong raids occur more frequently in minority communities and often involve displays of firearms in front of children, the elderly, and other vulnerable residents. Despite the trauma inflicted, these incidents have often gone untracked and frequently fail to result in discipline for those officers involved. The documented problems with mistaken and unlawful executions of search warrants, aggressive forcible-entry home raids, and the use of “no-knock” raids are consistent with serious concerns documented around the country. The effort by the city of Chicago and CPD to update the department’s search warrant policy follows several high-profile incidents documented in body-worn camera recordings, including a shocking wrong raid on the home of Chicago resident Anjanette Young.

In his comments, Raoul outlined several recommendations to improve CPD's proposed search warrant policy so that it will incorporate meaningful community engagement, comply with the law and a court-ordered reform plan, and derive from evidence, research, and best practices, including:

- Banning “no-knock” search warrants or, at minimum, severely limiting their use.
- Requiring consideration of de-escalation techniques when executing search warrants.
- Clarifying the definition of a “wrong raid” to require more stringent review of whether a department member conducted a sufficient investigation to verify the complaint for the search warrant before its execution.
- Documenting damage caused by the execution of search warrants and working with residents to fix the damage and secure the home.
- Requiring more consideration of vulnerable populations in pre-planning sessions and greater protections for them during the execution of warrants.
- Requiring more training on interactions with children for any officers executing warrants.
- Requiring more robust data collection related to search warrants, particularly those involving children.
- Improving data collection for SWAT involvement in the execution of search warrants.
- Requiring the use of body-worn cameras by SWAT team members during the execution of search warrants.
- Requiring review of body-worn camera footage from wrong raids.
- Enhancing reporting requirements related to wrong raids.
- Delineating responsibilities of higher-ranking officers during search warrant executions.

In addition to these specific recommendations for improving search warrants, Raoul also urged CPD to consider other best practices, including considering alternatives to arrest and execution of warrants, especially for non-violent offenses; using mental health professionals or social workers to assist police with the execution of search warrants; considering whether the target of a search warrant, or those on the premises, have known mental health concerns; and requiring the presence of paramedics or emergency medical services at the scene of search warrants.

[The recommendations](#) included in Attorney General Raoul's comments are consistent with CPD's commitments under the consent decree between the city of Chicago and the state of Illinois that requires the city to implement wide-ranging reforms of CPD, which continues to be enforced by the Attorney General's office.