



September 21, 2016

Living in a Constant Culture of Police Misconduct

Over the years, black communities in Chicago have experienced an on-going battle with the Chicago Police Department. It is a proven fact that black communities in Chicago constantly deal with some form of police misconduct. Over the years of living in Chicago, I must say that I have had my share of run-ins with the Chicago Police Department.

Police misconduct refers to inappropriate or illegal actions taken by police officers in connection with their official duties. Police misconduct can lead to a miscarriage of justice, and sometimes involves discrimination or the obstruction of justice. This inappropriate behavior has ruined and continues to ruin individuals' lives and tear families apart, destroying many in the black communities in this city.

Police car cameras, body-equipped recording devices and cell phones with recording systems have uncovered many acts of police misconduct in the city of Chicago. Types of misconduct include false confession, false arrest, false evidence, false imprisonment, intimidation, police brutality, police corruption, racial profiling, surveillance abuse, witness tampering and off-duty misconduct - all of which must end in the city of Chicago. I think the city of Chicago must make the first move to begin healing the many years of police misconduct and mistrust in the black communities.

I think the city should apologize for the years of on-going disrespect, announce a police Code of Conduct Policy for the police department, and make sure every community has opportunities to be successful.

In 2014, the National Football League Commissioner Roger Goodell announced and NFL owners approved the NFL's revised and strengthened Personal Conduct Policy for its league. Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson should follow suit and announce to the citizens of Chicago the Chicago Police Department's (CPD) Code of Conduct policy.

In the aftermath of issues surrounding Ferguson, Missouri, Staten Island, New York, Chicago, Charlotte, and many others, polls have shown that citizens have decreased their trust in policies that are supposed to hold police officers accountable for their actions. Citizens have also questioned the policies of police departments around the country in how police misconduct cases are handled.

If the NFL can publicly announce their expectations of their players, then the Chicago Police and every law enforcement agency should do the same.

If these expectations are clear to all, the policies and laws and the consequences to maintain order in our city and state are in black and white and available for every person to reference when needed. It is clear that everyone must obey adopted policies or laws, or else suffer the consequences for violating them.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Ford', with a stylized, sweeping flourish at the end.

La Shawn K. Ford
State Representative-Eighth District