



To the FBI National Citizens Academy Alumni Association,

We understand the concerns you may have following the death of George Floyd while in the custody of Minneapolis police officers. As a part of the community, we share your concerns.

Last week, Special Agent in Charge Rainer Drolshagen of FBI Minneapolis confirmed that his office opened an investigation into the death of George Floyd within hours of Floyd's death. Since then, the FBI Minneapolis team has been working around the clock to ensure their investigation is conducted in a fair, thorough and impartial manner. SAC Drolshagen also asked anyone who was in the area of the incident that day to come forward so his team of investigators will have even more facts and evidence. "Each little piece of the puzzle," he said, "will help us complete the big picture."

Over the years we've hosted many discussions with you – our community partners – on what it might be like if a similar incident occurred in your own community. We outlined how the FBI would respond and emphasized your important role as leaders in helping restore trust and stability within the community. Now, during this time of unrest in many cities across our country, we ask that you consider what you have learned about the FBI's work.

As you know, the FBI's role is to investigate allegations of criminal violations of federal civil rights laws. This includes "color of law" violations – actions taken by a person acting under authority of federal, state, or local laws to willfully deprive someone of their constitutional or other legal rights. We are the collectors of these facts, and our priority is to follow those facts to the truth. When the FBI investigates a color of law matter, we take a fresh look at the evidence. This may include interviewing witnesses who have already spoken to the original investigating agency, interviewing witnesses who have not yet spoken to law enforcement, examining all physical and video evidence, and reconstructing crime scenes to better understand what transpired.

While the team at FBI Minneapolis works swiftly and tirelessly, many questions remain, and the answers may not come quickly. However, our experience tells us it is better to be meticulous and take the time to do it right than to rush to conclusions. Once all the available facts are collected and we determine there has been a violation of federal law, the FBI will present the evidence to the United States Attorney's Office and the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division to pursue criminal charges.

The FBI is as passionate about civil rights as the public. We take our responsibility to protect the civil rights of all people seriously. Color of law cases are a priority because U.S. law enforcement officers and trusted officials are given tremendous power and authority to enforce the law and ensure justice in our country. Simply put, preventing an abuse of this authority is necessary to the health of our nation's security. We cannot, however, evaluate facts based on anger and public frustration. The public can depend on the FBI to methodically review the evidence, test hypotheses, and be careful and deliberate in providing unbiased investigative results independent of any local investigation.

Please join us in supporting FBI Minneapolis as their investigation continues in the days, weeks and possibly months to come. In the meantime, if the opportunity presents itself, we ask that you consider sharing with others your understanding of the FBI's steadfast commitment to conducting thorough investigations that safeguard our communities and realize justice for all. And as always, thank you for your unwavering support of the FBI.

In partnership,

Gerald N. Jackson III  
Acting Unit Chief  
FBI Community Relations Unit