

Encouraging Local Police Reform

Letters to Local Officials

- 1. Decide on your audience.** You could write to the chief of police, the mayor, the city council, the city manager, county commission, etc. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. Share your message in more ways than one!
- 2. Find contact information online.** Physical addresses are readily available. Emails may be too, but due to cybersecurity threats, many cities have removed personal contact information from their websites. Call the department in question to request the email addresses of those you wish to contact. Explain that you are a resident wishing to contact so-and-so about a relevant local issue.
- 3. Share an experience or your appreciation** for those in the law enforcement community. [Remember the six principles of peacemaking:](#)
 - Peacemaking is proactive and courageous.
 - Peacemaking seeks to unify instead of divide.
 - Peacemaking demands great tolerance for people and none for injustice.
 - Peacemaking views human suffering as sacred.
 - Peacemaking chooses love instead of hate.
 - Peacemaking believes that ultimate peace is not only possible, but sure.
- 4. Share why you are writing this letter** — perhaps it is another step in your ongoing work of social justice and anti-racism. Perhaps you are new to this work and are finding ways to promote ethical governance where you live. Perhaps recent news stories have moved you to action — share what has inspired you.
- 5. Introduce the specific points of reform or policies** you would like to address. Open a dialogue with your recipient to learn more about these reforms and related local efforts they have been promoting. Some ideas may include:
 - Body-worn cameras
 - De-escalation techniques
 - Use of force training (combined with de-escalation practices and non-lethal alternatives)
 - Racial/implicit bias training
 - Community-based policing
 - Citizen oversight/impartial investigation
- 6. Look to the work of local and national organizations** that have championed this cause for years. Amplify their messages and support their work:
 - [Black Lives Matter](#)
 - [NAACP](#)
 - [Campaign Zero](#)
 - [ACLU](#)