



Empowerment Programs

Office of the General Counsel

December 18, 2023

The Honorable Kristen Clarke
Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

Dear Assistant Attorney General Clarke,

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (“NAACP”) has been made aware of egregious civil rights violations in the Arlington County Detention Facility (“ACDF”). We are gravely concerned that Black men and other men of color are facing the risk of death and severe harm as a result of civil rights violations by ACDF. We respectfully request the Civil Rights Division’s urgent attention to this matter.

The Arlington Branch of the NAACP wrote to the Civil Rights Division on March 15, 2022 (“Arlington NAACP Letter”)¹, detailing evidence of civil rights violations that disproportionately impact Black men and other men of color. The Arlington NAACP Letter requested that the Division investigate the patterns and practice in place at ACDF, “so that arrest and detention does not equate to a death sentence in our community.”

The Arlington NAACP Letter informed the Division of deprivations of adequate medical and mental health care in ACDF which have resulted in more than seven deaths of Arlington community members in recent years. Since this letter was sent, there have been additional deaths in ACDF. The Arlington NAACP Letter also indicates that evidence obtained through its own Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”) requests shows biased policing practices by law enforcement and personnel within the ACDF. The Arlington NAACP has engaged in numerous efforts to obtain answers from local authorities. Unfortunately, none of those efforts have led to meaningful engagement from local officials or any improvement in the unconstitutional treatment of the men held in ACDF.

The NAACP renews the Arlington Branch of the NAACP’s request for a Civil Rights Division investigation into the continued civil rights deprivations of Arlington community members. These deprivations have disproportionately affected Black men and other men of color. In addition to the request that the Civil Rights Division initiate an investigation, we also request a meeting to discuss the egregious harms to the Arlington community resulting from these civil rights violations.

¹ The Arlington NAACP Letter is attached to this correspondence.

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We await your response and look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Janette M. Wallace
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General Counsel

JMW/AKB/lr

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