



NAACP Arlington Branch
Michael D. Hemminger, President
877-501-6417
7047@arlingtonnaacp.com

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Arlington, Virginia – "NAACP has been made aware of egregious civil rights violations in the Arlington County Detention Facility," stated [Janette McCarthy](#) Wallace, General Counsel of the NAACP.

Today, **December 18, 2023**, via written letter, the National General Counsel for the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization formally called on the Department of Justice to conduct an independent pattern and practice investigation into the Arlington County Detention Facility.

Nine people have lost their lives at the Arlington County Detention Center in the last eight years, with two of those deaths occurring within the previous four months. After deaths 6 and 7, former long-time Sheriff Beth Arthur defended the culture at the jail, saying they provide first-class medical care, and the deaths are not negligence, [despite state officials finding the same sheriff in violation of regulations](#). Sheriff Arthur, who resigned early from her term in January of this year, then settled the wrongful death case for over a half million dollars and changed medical providers. "After three additional deaths, a new medical provider, and not releasing the results of the investigations of prior deaths, there is no indicator that people are going to stop dying in the jail," said NAACP Arlington Branch President Michael Hemminger.

The Arlington Branch of the NAACP wrote to the Civil Rights Division on March 15, 2022, 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 practices in place at ACDF "so that arrest and detention does not equate to a death sentence in our community."

Following the seventh death, A \$10M wrongful death suit was filed in Arlington County, and the NAACP Arlington Branch called for a Department of Justice Investigation into the detention center. Today, we renew that call to avoid another preventable death. "We are pleased that the General Counsel has weighed in on these tragedies in our community; the NAACP will never be silenced in our pursuit of justice," said Hemminger. The NAACP is conducting its investigation of the deaths in the jail, and the organization will ensure that any civil rights violation(s) about conditions while in custody are met with due accountability and justice.

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