

**LIVE UPDATES** Updated 4 minutes ago

# George Floyd Protest Live Updates: Reckoning Spreads Beyond Policing

The House Judiciary Committee is hearing testimony on police accountability. The fallout from protests is spreading across industries.

**RIGHT NOW** The Minneapolis police chief said he was calling off contract negotiations with the police union, as he sought to keep control of the department.

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## Here's what you need to know:

- The fallout is spreading from police departments to publishing and beyond.
- 'Make it stop': George Floyd's brother testifies before Congress.
- As Democrats call for overhauling law enforcement, Republicans blast the police defunding movement.
- Activists take aim at city policies and racist monuments as protests move into a new phase.
- The Minneapolis police chief calls off contract talks with the police union.
- Public opinion rarely moves fast, but it is now on Black Lives Matter.
- A New Jersey corrections officer is suspended after mocking George Floyd's death.

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## The fallout is spreading from police departments to publishing and beyond.

Protests over the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis have quickly given rise to a vast American reckoning with racism, as a backlash against entrenched inequality reverberates across society, from the upper echelons of corporations and media organizations to the pages of the dictionary.

The fallout has been swift and fierce.

By Wednesday, the chief executive of CrossFit had resigned after speaking belligerently about race and racism on a company call. Thousands of researchers across the country went on strike, forgoing research, classes, meetings and other work to instead spend the day calling for actions to protect the lives of black people. And Merriam-Webster said it would expand its dictionary definition of racism to address systemic bias.

The changes come as protesters across the country continue to cry out for racial justice and accountability with a visceral force.

In Richmond, Va., protesters ripped down a statue of the explorer and colonizer Christopher Columbus overnight and threw it into a lake. In Boston, a similar statue was beheaded. Across the country, at least 10 monuments to Confederates or other controversial historical figures have been removed, and people have challenged similar monuments in more than 20 cities.

The demand for consequences reflects a considerable shift in public opinion, as Congress races to address police accountability and racial bias in law enforcement during a pivotal election year. The House Judiciary Committee heard testimony on Wednesday from a brother of Mr. Floyd, who spoke out against the repeated police killings of black Americans and urged lawmakers to “make it stop.”

In Minneapolis, the police chief, Medaria Arradondo, said that he would no longer engage in contract negotiations with the police union, as officials across the country increasingly defy influential police and corrections groups.

Almost no industry has been immune from the fallout.

Authors and book publishing employees are speaking publicly about pay disparities in an overwhelmingly white industry under the hashtag #PublishingPaidMe. Among newspapers, which are also disproportionately white, high-ranking editors at The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal and The Philadelphia Inquirer have stepped down or been reassigned in recent days after staff complaints about editorial decisions touching on race and protests.

But history suggests that such intense focus on societal racism is unlikely to last, the Rev. Al Sharpton warned during a eulogy for Mr. Floyd this week. He promised to be back in Minneapolis when the trial for officers start, and to march on Washington “by the tens of thousands” on the anniversary of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech in August.

“We must commit to this family — all of these families, all of his children, grandchildren and all — that until these people pay for what they did, that we’re going to be there with them,” he said. “Because lives like George’s will not matter until somebody pays the cost for taking their lives.”

## **‘Make it stop’: George Floyd’s brother testifies before Congress.**



Philonise Floyd, George Floyd’s brother, testifies before the House Judiciary Committee at a hearing on police accountability on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday. Erin Schaff/The New York Times

A day after George Floyd was laid to rest during an impassioned service calling for broad corrections to racial injustice, his brother Philonise Floyd testified on Wednesday before a House hearing on police accountability and racial bias in law enforcement, and offered lawmakers a wrenching plea for change.

“I’m here to ask you to make it stop,” said Mr. Floyd, the first and most central witness to testify at the hearing. More than half a dozen civil rights experts and activists also spoke.

“George’s calls for help were ignored,” he told the House Judiciary Committee, recalling how his brother gasped that he could not breathe while pinned under the knee of a Minneapolis police officer for nearly nine minutes on May 25.

“Please listen to the call I’m making to you now, to the calls of our family, and to the calls ringing out in the streets across the world,” he said. “People of all backgrounds, genders and race have come together to demand change. Honor them, honor George, and make the necessary changes that make law enforcement the solution — and not the problem.”

Moved to tears as he recounted how his brother had continued to address the officers detaining him as “sir” as he lay dying, Mr. Floyd alluded to the reason the police were summoned that day: a complaint that someone had bought cigarettes with a counterfeit \$20 bill.

“I am asking you, is that what a black man’s life is worth?” Mr. Floyd said. “Twenty dollars? This is 2020. Enough is enough.”

The hearing’s subject is the sweeping legislation proposed by Democrats that would be the most expansive federal intervention into law enforcement in recent memory. It comes amid a groundswell of public support for the Black Lives Matter movement, with widespread protests in big cities and small towns alike.

#### **Latest Updates: George Floyd Protests** Updated 3m ago

- [The fallout is spreading from police departments to publishing and beyond.](#)
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The shift in public opinion during an election year has sent Republicans scrambling to create their own policy proposals. Senate Republican leaders announced that Tim Scott of South Carolina, the only Republican senator who is African-American, would lead a legislative push to address racial discrimination and police brutality.

The announcements reflect mounting political urgency. House Democrats have indicated that they intend to act quickly, with a vote on their legislation by the end of the month.

Wednesday’s hearing included remarks from Sherrilyn Ifill, the president and director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, and Ben Crump, a civil rights lawyer who represents the family of Mr. Floyd.



House Republicans invited Dan Bongino, the conservative political commentator and former Secret Service agent, and Angela Underwood Jacobs, whose brother, Dave Patrick Underwood, a Federal Protective Services officer, was shot and killed late last month during a night of unrest in Oakland, Calif.

## As Democrats call for overhauling law enforcement, Republicans blast the police defunding movement.



Representatives Jerrold Nadler (center left) and Jim Jordan (center right) during a hearing on policing and equal justice on Capitol Hill Wednesday. Erin Schaff/The New York Times

Representative Jerrold Nadler, Democrat of New York and the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, opened his panel's hearing on race and law enforcement Wednesday with a call for Congress to adopt "a guardian — not warrior — model of policing."

"The nation is demanding that we enact meaningful change," Mr. Nadler said.

Republicans on the panel agreed that change was needed to root out police misconduct and racism, and in his opening remarks, Representative Jim Jordan of Ohio, the ranking Republican on the panel, directly addressed Philonise Floyd, calling his brother George Floyd's death "as wrong as wrong can be."

Mr. Jordan said the public was hungry for “a real discussion, real debate, and real solutions, about the police treatment of African-Americans.”

He then equated George Floyd’s death with the killing of a law enforcement officer during unrest last month in Oakland. He turned to the officer’s sister, who was at the hearing, and used the same words, calling that death “as wrong as wrong can be.”

Mr. Jordan also tried to tie Democrats to the defund the police movement, which he called “pure insanity.” He praised law enforcement officers, who he said had to contend with looters “attacking innocent people.” Most of the protesters in demonstrations across the country have been peaceful.

## **Activists take aim at city policies and racist monuments as protests move into a new phase.**



Demonstrators in City Hall in Seattle called on Tuesday for the mayor to resign and the police department to be defunded. Lindsey Wasson/Reuters

Hundreds of protesters flooded Seattle City Hall on Tuesday night, in a visceral protest against the killing of black Americans. In Philadelphia, a crowd took to a largely white, affluent neighborhood on the northeast side of the city, chanting “black lives matter.”



The movement to end systemic racism and police brutality in America is moving into a new chapter, more than two weeks after the death of George Floyd ignited fiery protests and widespread anger.

There have been far fewer reports of fires, looting or violent clashes between protesters and the police in recent days, but demonstrations are still unfolding across the country, increasingly aimed at city policies and racist symbols.

In Seattle, hundreds of protesters occupied City Hall on Tuesday — not by force, but with the approval of a City Council member, Kshama Sawant, who said that the voice of the people needed to be heard.



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Photos: Seattle City Councilmember Kshama Sawant led protesters to occupy City Hall for about an hour this evening. Inside, people took turns speaking, sharing songs and repeatedly chanting about the removal of Mayor Jenny Durkan.



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The changes come as cities across the country move swiftly to make significant policy changes in response to the protests. City officials from Houston to San Diego are now banning the police from using chokeholds and other neck restraints, and the mayors of Los Angeles and New York City have pledged to move funds out of police budgets to invest in social services and in communities of color.

## The Minneapolis police chief calls off contract talks with the police union.



Chief Medaria Arradondo of the Minneapolis Police Department greeted security guards at a memorial service for George Floyd on June 4. Victor J. Blue for The New York Times

The chief of the Minneapolis Police Department said on Wednesday that he was calling off contract negotiations with the police union, as he sought to keep control of the department amid calls from city lawmakers to dismantle it.

Chief Medaria Arradondo said he would bring in outside advisers to examine how to revamp the police union contract to allow “more flexibility for true reform.” He said the review would cover issues like the role of supervisors and the discipline and arbitration process, a thorny subject raised by protesters in several states.

Chief Arradondo, an African-American who once sued the police department and the city for discrimination, expressed frustration with the way police union contracts tie the hands of department leaders in dealing with problem officers.

“There is nothing more debilitating to a chief, from an employment-matter perspective, than when you have grounds to terminate an officer for misconduct, and you’re dealing with a third-party mechanism that allows for that employee to not only be back on your department, but to be patrolling in your communities,” he said.

Derek Chauvin, the former officer charged with murder after kneeling on George Floyd's neck for almost nine minutes, was on the Minneapolis force for 19 years before being fired the day after Mr. Floyd's death. During that time Mr. Chauvin was the subject of at least 17 misconduct complaints, his personnel file shows, including one in 2007 in which he appears to have been reprimanded and possibly suspended.

Activists say the police union in Minneapolis exerts more control than the chief does over police officers' behavior.

Lt. Bob Kroll, president of the Minneapolis Police Officers Federation, the union representing more than 800 officers, did not immediately return a call seeking comment for this report.

Lieutenant Kroll has been the subject of at least 20 internal-affairs complaints; all but three were closed with no discipline, according to an investigation by The Minneapolis Star Tribune. In the past, he has referred to Black Lives Matter as a "terrorist organization."

In his first substantial reaction to the killing of Mr. Floyd and its aftermath, Lieutenant Kroll sent a letter to officers on June 1 commending their "outstanding work" and criticizing how the city handled the protests, which he described as "a riot" backed by a "terrorist movement" that he said was years in the making.

Chief Arradondo said he would bring in a company called Benchmark Analytics to track police officers' performance and alert supervisors to "early warning signs" of misconduct. He promised to announce more measures over the next week.

Mayor Jacob Frey applauded the chief's plans in a statement, saying the city needed not only a new police union contract but also "a new compact between the people of Minneapolis and the people trusted to protect and serve."

**Public opinion rarely moves fast, but it is now on Black Lives Matter.**





Demonstrators marched in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on Friday. Victor J. Blue for The New York Times

American public opinion can sometimes seem stubborn. Voters haven't really changed their views on abortion in 50 years. Donald J. Trump's approval rating among registered voters has fallen within a five-point range for just about every day of his presidency.

But the Black Lives Matter movement is proving to be an exception.

Public opinion on race and criminal justice issues has been steadily moving left since the first protests ignited over the fatal shootings of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown. And since the death of George Floyd in police custody on May 25, public opinion on race, criminal justice and the Black Lives Matter movement has shifted leftward.

Over the last two weeks, support for Black Lives Matter increased by nearly as much as it had over the previous two years, according to data from Civiqs, an online survey research firm. By a 28-point margin, Civiqs finds that a majority of Americans support the movement, up from a 17-point margin before the most recent wave of protests began.

The survey is not the only one to suggest that recent protests enjoy broad public support. Weekly polling for the Democracy Fund's U.C.L.A./Nationscape survey shows a significant increase in unfavorable views of the police, and an increase in the belief that African-Americans face a lot of discrimination.



Perhaps most significant, the Civiqs data is not alone in suggesting that an outright majority of Americans agree with the central arguments of Black Lives Matter.

## A New Jersey corrections officer is suspended after mocking George Floyd's death.



People gathered for a Black Lives Matter protest in Franklin Township, N.J., on Monday. Daryan Fennal

A New Jersey corrections officer was suspended and a FedEx employee was fired on Tuesday after re-enacting the killing of George Floyd on the sidelines of a march protesting racism and police violence.

The march on Monday passed through Franklinville, N.J., south of Philadelphia. It was met by a small group of counterprotesters, including the two men who performed the re-enactment.

“If you don’t comply, that’s what happens,” one man can be heard yelling in a video posted on social media as he presses his knee down on the other man’s neck. A third man yells: “Black lives matter — to no one.”

The re-enactment took place next to a pickup truck covered with an American flag and two large banners that said “TRUMP” and “ALL LIVES MATTER.”

In a statement on Tuesday, Chief Brian Zimmer of the Franklin Township Police Department said that town officials were “appalled and saddened by the revolting actions of certain individuals” and that an investigation had been launched.

A spokesman for the New Jersey Department of Corrections said the corrections officer had been suspended, and a FedEx spokeswoman, Davina Cole, said the “individual involved” was no longer employed by the company.

“FedEx holds its team members to a high standard of personal conduct, and we do not tolerate the kind of appalling and offensive behavior depicted in this video,” Ms. Cole said in a statement, adding, “we stand with those who support justice and equality.”

## **Pompeo rejects comparisons between the U.S. and repressive foreign governments.**



Secretary of State Mike Pompeo spoke to reporters in Washington on Wednesday. Andrew Harnik/Agence France-Presse, via Pool/Afp via, Getty Images

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo rejected questions from reporters on Wednesday about how the United States could demand respect for democratic rights around the world after American police and security officers forcibly broke up a peaceful demonstration outside the White House last week.

Mr. Pompeo dismissed comparisons between the Trump administration's heavy-handed tactics against the protesters — which included low-flying helicopter maneuvers meant for combat zones and security forces hitting protesters with clubs — and those of authoritarian governments.

“The question is so troubling, because you ask the question assuming there is a moral equivalency,” Mr. Pompeo told journalists at the State Department.

One crucial difference, he said, was that the protests in the United States following the death of George Floyd have led to an open national debate over law enforcement practices.

“Our diplomats all around the world can be incredibly proud of the fact that they represent a nation that has God-given rights, ensconced in our fundamental founding documents, that ensure that when we get something wrong here in the United States, when something as tragic and as awful as what happened to George Floyd takes place, that the government responds,” he said.

Mr. Pompeo said the State Department was investigating concerns and complaints from other nations that foreign journalists covering the protests were attacked by the security forces.

“We will address them in a way that is appropriate to try to address any concerns those nations may have about their journalists, who we, too, do our level best to protect,” Mr. Pompeo said.

**‘Cops’ is being removed from TV, and HBO Max pulls ‘Gone With the Wind.’**





A scene from "Cops," a reality series that debuted on Fox in 1989. Spike TV, the predecessor to the Paramount Network, picked up "Cops" in 2013. Fox

The Paramount Network confirmed on Tuesday that it had removed the reality show "Cops" from its schedule, as protests nationwide call for police reform. Late last month, the network had temporarily cut the show from its schedule.

"'Cops' is not on the Paramount Network and we don't have any current or future plans for it to return," a spokeswoman for the network said.

Spike TV, the predecessor to the Paramount Network, picked up "Cops" in 2013 after the show was canceled by Fox, its network home for 25 years. The show's first episode featured a raid on a Florida crack house, and the 33rd season was expected to premiere on Paramount on June 15.

"These cop reality shows that glorify police but will never show the deep level of police violence are not reality, they are P.R. arms for law enforcement," said Rashad Robinson, executive director of Color of Change. "Law enforcement doesn't need P.R. They need accountability in this country."

Also on Tuesday, HBO Max removed from its catalog "Gone With the Wind," the 1939 movie long considered a triumph of American cinema but one that romanticizes the Civil War-era South while glossing over its racial sins.

The streaming service pledged to eventually bring the film back “with a discussion of its historical context” while denouncing its racial missteps, a spokesperson said in a statement on Tuesday.

Set on a plantation and in Atlanta, the film won multiple Academy Awards, including best picture, and remains among the most celebrated movies in cinematic history. But its rose-tinted depiction of the antebellum South and its blindness to the horrors of slavery have long been criticized, and that scrutiny was renewed this week as protests over police brutality and the death of George Floyd continued to pull the United States into a wide-ranging conversation about race.

“‘Gone With the Wind’ is a product of its time and depicts some of the ethnic and racial prejudices that have, unfortunately, been commonplace in American society,” an HBO Max spokesperson said in a statement. “These racist depictions were wrong then and are wrong today, and we felt that to keep this title up without an explanation and a denouncement of those depictions would be irresponsible.”

Reporting was contributed by Jason M. Bailey, Kim Barker, Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs, Nate Cohn, Johnny Diaz, Catie Edmonson, Nicholas Fandos, Thomas Fuller, Emma Grillo, Lara Jakes, Erin McCann, Sarah Mervosh, Kevin Quealy, Ed Shanahan, Nicole Sperling, Tracey Tully and Daniel Victor.