

BPD Monitoring Team

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Baltimore Police Monitoring Team Announces Schedule for Progress Reports to Judge James K. Bredar

(Baltimore, MD) – After consultation with the Baltimore Police Monitoring Team, U.S. District Judge James K. Bredar has set a schedule over the next year for the Monitoring Team and the parties to update the Court on the Baltimore Police Department’s compliance with the Consent Decree. Judge Bredar is overseeing the Consent Decree’s implementation. The schedule includes both formal public hearings, to be held quarterly, and informal progress reports, which will be delivered to Judge Bredar in his chambers on a monthly basis.

At the public hearings, BPD, DOJ and the Monitoring Team will each provide a report on BPD’s progress toward achieving the objectives of the Consent Decree. The initial public hearings will necessarily focus on the areas targeted for reform in the First-Year Monitoring Plan. However, the public hearings will also provide an opportunity for the parties and Monitoring Team to update the Court regarding BPD’s progress toward achieving all of the objectives of the Consent Decree.

The public hearings will be held at 10 a.m. in Courtroom 1A at the United States Courthouse in Baltimore, located at 101 West Lombard Street, on the following dates:

- April 13, 2018
- July 26, 2018
- October 9, 2018
- January 10, 2019

The monthly meetings in Judge Bredar’s chambers will each focus on a discrete area of the Consent Decree. At every meeting, BPD, DOJ and the Monitoring Team will provide its own report to Judge Bredar about the progress BPD has made toward achieving the reforms required by specific provisions of the Consent Decree and the additional measures, if any, BPD must take to achieve and sustain substantial compliance in that area. Because these will be working meetings among BPD, DOJ and the Monitoring Team, under the supervision of the Court, they will not be open to the public. However, the parties and the Monitoring Team will include all of their meeting reports in their presentations at the quarterly public hearings.

The meetings with Judge Bredar will be held on the following dates over the next year:

- February 2, 2018
- March 2, 2018
- April 6, 2018
- May 29, 2018
- June 5, 2018
- August 14, 2018
- September 6, 2018

- October 2, 2018
- November 15, 2018
- December 17, 2018
- January 3, 2019

The first several meetings will address areas that Judge Bednar and the Monitoring Team have prioritized based on input from community members (including police officers), DOJ's investigative findings, and their own preliminary assessments. These are areas of critical importance to restoring public trust in BPD and ensuring that BPD has in place the proper institutional foundation to achieve long-term success under the Consent Decree.

The February 2 session will focus on transportation of persons in custody. Judge Bednar will address this issue first because it is critical that BPD ensure that its policies, procedures and practices protect the safety and security of persons in their custody (as well as officers) during transportation.

The March 2 session will address BPD misconduct investigations and discipline. The Consent Decree recognizes—and recent events demonstrate—that fortifying BPD's internal affairs function is crucial to achieving sustainable institutional reform. Without a credible, robust system for holding officers accountable for unconstitutional and otherwise unlawful conduct, the changes the Consent Decree mandates in important areas like stops, searches and arrests, impartial policing, and use of force are likely to prove elusive.

The April 6 session will address stops, searches and arrests. One of DOJ's principal findings was that BPD engaged in a pattern-or-practice of stopping, searching and arresting individuals in violation of the Constitution. Ensuring that BPD's routine interactions with civilians comply with the law is vital to achieving compliance with the Consent Decree and restoring public trust in BPD.

The reports made at the February, March and April meetings with Judge Bednar will be incorporated into the public presentations made by BPD, DOJ and the Monitoring Team at the initial quarterly hearing at the United States Courthouse on April 13.

Judge Bednar will adopt a similar schedule for public hearings and in-chambers meetings with BPD, DOJ and the Monitoring Team in subsequent years.

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The Baltimore Police Monitoring Team oversees the implementation of the Consent Decree – a judicially-enforceable agreement – between the Baltimore City Police Department, the City of Baltimore and the United States. The Consent Decree requires BPD to adopt a number of specific reforms aimed at ensuring effective, safe, and constitutional policing. The Monitoring Team's job is to help the Court gauge whether, consistent with the Consent Decree's objectives, BPD is achieving meaningful reform by making tangible changes in its policies and practices for the benefit of Baltimoreans. The Monitoring Team also provides technical assistance to BPD as it seeks to implement the reforms required by the Consent Decree. The Monitoring Team includes specialists in policing and police reform, civil rights enforcement, psychology, social science, organizational change, data and technology, and community engagement.