

## **This kit is a resource for families who have lost their loved ones to POLICE VIOLENCE.**

An untimely death begins the tragedy for a loved one's family.

Police killings consistently compound the grief in the following ways:

- Your world is filled with utter confusion as those sworn to protect you destroy your loved ones.
- You are made to feel isolated as the police force mobilizes to protect its own at the cost of the truth, and then to diminish their guilt they publicly demonize the victim. Your natural support system may be unsympathetic when you turn to them for emotional or spiritual solace, having been influenced by the police slant that always receives most of the media attention. Our combined experience demonstrates that even the strongest family's integrity is challenged by this onslaught, and, at best, you and your family must assume a defensive posture instead of seeking the necessary closure in your grief. The natural search for justice shall set many tasks and obstacles before you.

### **Develop Support System:**

Your first priority should be the preservation of yourself and your family. To assist you in these troubled times, the following compassionate and knowledgeable folks should be contacted:

Develop a list of people of faith, family and individual counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and other service providers that are attuned to the special circumstances of police killings (i.e. anger, depression, hurt, isolation, suicide, etc.) as well as ourselves as a family support group.

Present your case to supportive political, social justice, human rights, and civil rights groups, including Amnesty International, ACLU, NAACP, and National Lawyers Guild, etc.

### **Pursue Legal Strategies:**

**Obtain Legal Counsel:** Do not assume that public agencies will act in good faith. You will be engaged in a battle, and finding a competent attorney willing to tackle the law enforcement infrastructure is difficult. Here are some of our regional recommendations:

Attorneys referred by Police Watch.), National Lawyers Guild, local October 22nd chapters, and local activist organizations that you trust.

If none of the above are available, one way to find local attorneys willing to challenge City Hall is to go to the City's Clerks office and request a list of police pay-outs for the last several years. You may have to cross check the list with records available in Superior Court to find names of local attorneys (criminal and/or civil) who have won claims against your city police force.

File your complaint with the police station, the sheriff's department, the jail and/or civilian complaint review board. Obtain all rules and regulations about filing a lawsuit, i.e. due dates for different steps in the process, like how many days you have to file an appeal, according to each county, city, or state's regulations. In the event that you do not receive justice at the local or state level, you can file a Civil Rights Complaint, Civil Rights Division, Department of Justice. Be aware of time lines deadlines.

Attain your own independent pathologist.

### **Documentation:**

Expect to be stonewalled by your public servants. Keep a record of all visits, any type of correspondence, and phone calls. Make sure you note who, when, where, as well as what was discussed. Keep a file of all correspondence copies, and all correspondence registered with a receipt return. *Never volunteer any information to anyone other than your attorney.*

Your deposition should concentrate on the facts of the tragic incident rather than the emotional aspects.

### **Collect All Pertinent Records:**

Ask for copies, and ask again, until you possess copies of:

- Ambulance reports
- Hospital records
- Fire Department report (if they responded)
- Police reports
- Coroner's report (coroner investigator report, autopsy, coroner notes)
- District Attorney's report
- FBI or Justice Department report (if possible)
- 911 tapes and all County communication tapes that make reference to the incident
- Blood and tissue samples from the Hospital and Coroner for independent testing
- All lab reports from Criminal, Coroner and Hospital Lab

**SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

**NATIONAL FAMILY COALITION FOR JUSTICE**

New Jersey-Tel: 973-474-8584

New York-Tel: 646-294-8344 or 212-929-1957

E-Mail: famc4j@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.familycoalitionforjustice.com>

**MALCOLM X GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT**

PO BOX 471711, Brooklyn, NY 11247

Tel: 718-254-8800

E-Mail: [info@mxgm.org](mailto:info@mxgm.org)

Website: <https://www.mxgmnyc@mxgm.org>

**MOTHERS CRY FOR JUSTICE**

<https://www.facebook.com/motherscry4justice>

Tel: 646-294-8344 or 212-929-1957

**OCTOBER 22 COALITION TO STOP POLICE BRUTALITY,  
REPRESSION AND THE CRIMINALIZATION OF A  
GENERATION**

E-Mail: [oct22national@gmail.com](mailto:oct22national@gmail.com)

Website: [october22.org](http://october22.org)

**PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION FOR PROGRESS**

PO Box 22505, Newark, NJ 07101

Tel: 973-801-0001

E-Mail: [info@njpop.org](mailto:info@njpop.org)

Website: [www.njpop.org](http://www.njpop.org)

**STOLEN LIVES PROJECT**

E-Mail: [stolenlivesprojectonline@gmail.com](mailto:stolenlivesprojectonline@gmail.com)

Website: <http://stolenlives.org/>

**Do Your Own Investigation:**

Depend on no one. As soon as possible take many photos of the scene. Go back when lighting and traffic are the same as the initial incident and take photos there also. If possible, also take video footage. Canvass the neighborhood for witnesses. Look for physical evidence the police may have opted to overlook.

**Present Your Case to the Media:**

Writers and journalists who cover homicides under the cover of law depend upon a good working relationship with law enforcement. So it is not surprising that media almost always presents the police slant. It is still important for your family to attempt to get the truth and a balanced story before the public eye.

- Tape all TV news and radio broadcasts, keep a file on all print stories and bookmark all online stories regarding your case.
- Make special note of any journalist who provides fair coverage, and establish personal contact.
- Issue your own press release with important data so that your unusual questions get addressed.
- Make a list of all regional media.
- See attached press release as an example.
- It will be helpful to put your story on paper and take it to regional, ethnic or alternative press. Remember that major newspaper interest will follow and, with that, also broadcast news.

**National and Local Contacts:**

(family activists, organizers, etc.)

# NATIONAL FAMILY FIRST AID KIT



**FOR FAMILIES WHO HAVE  
LOST THEIR LOVED ONES  
TO POLICE**