



**San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department  
375 Woodside Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94127**

**Statement on the Murder of George Floyd**

This is a time of great mourning, loss, anguish, and justified rage in San Francisco and across the United States. George Floyd's murder by a police officer was exceptional in its cruelty - but his tragic loss is part of a trend of police brutality directed at Black communities that is all too common, and has endured for generations. Indeed, Mr. Floyd's death occurred six weeks after Breonna Taylor was fatally shot by police. Ten weeks after Ahmaud Arbery was murdered by white vigilantes. Six years after the death of Eric Garner. Ten years after the death of Oscar Grant. These are only the few among many whose lives and well-being have been undone by acts of police violence.

It is no surprise then that Mr. Floyd's murder, sowed by racism, has unleashed a torrent of social unrest. So many people – including the youth we serve – are taking to the streets, in most cases peacefully, to demand change that has yet to be realized. Protests have also become violent and destructive, and while I do not condone violence in any form, I am also trying to listen to the rage that begets such acts.

This unrest comes in the midst of unprecedeted loss and hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in the communities where the children and families we serve live. The zip codes that are experiencing the highest rates of COVID-19 in San Francisco are the same zip codes where our clients live. As I have heard from many of you, the families we serve are also being affected by the economic impact of the pandemic, and are struggling to make ends meet.

We cannot divorce these injustices – that African-Americans are three times more likely to be killed by police than whites, that African-American are dying at higher rates from COVID-19, that the unemployment rate among African Americans is higher than that of whites – because they are related to systemic racism that remains pervasive in United States, and in San Francisco.

Each of us at the San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department comes to work every day for the same reason: for the kids. And I believe that we all want to do better, so that we can better serve the kids. In order to do better, we must confront – head-on, eyes and hearts open – the racial disparities of the juvenile justice system in San Francisco for our communities of color. While these disparities are correlated with long-standing socio-economic disparities, we cannot dismiss the role that we may play in perpetuating or exacerbating them. Put simply, we must place racial equity at the center of our work. At the suggestion of one of our colleagues the Juvenile Probation Department will be convening a work group to look at our policies and identify racially discriminatory impacts of our practices.

I believe that George Floyd's murder affects all of us as human beings. It affects us as law enforcement personnel. And it should reinforce how important it is for us to do our work with integrity and compassion.

My deepest condolences to Mr. Floyd's family.

Respectfully,

Chief Katherine W. Miller