

- Protests against police violence and racism began after a Minneapolis police officer killed George Floyd on Memorial Day, after Louisville police killed Breonna Taylor, and after a white woman called the police on Chris Cooper while he was birdwatching in Central Park. These protests have spread nationwide over the past few weeks.
- The City of Grinnell Human Rights Commission recognizes that the protesters are expressing valid, serious, and immediate concerns. For example, research shows that a black person is killed by the police in the United States on average nearly every other day (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/585152/people-shot-to-death-by-us-police-by-race/>). The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted black Americans (<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/2020/04/coronavirus-disproportionately-impacts-african-americans/>).
- The Commission has been in discussions with the City of Grinnell Police Department over the past year about how the GPD wants to proactively enhance relationships with marginalized groups. We reached out to all groups we could come up with contacts for, inviting them to contact Chief Dennis Reilly and other leaders of the GPD and the Human Rights Commission.
- With further time and consideration it has become obvious that our invitation to groups to reach out to the Chief of GPD puts the onus on those who already have been saddled with an extra burden to make more effort to enhance relationships. We will now follow up by providing the contact information of groups that we contacted before to suggest that our Chief of Police and the GPD reach out to these groups with their own direct invitation.
- The subject of policing equity should be a concern to all Grinnell residents, not just marginalized groups. The Human Rights Commission welcomes any input from Grinnell citizens about racism and policing. Reducing bias could enhance the safety and fairness of Grinnell's police force.
- The Chief of Police encourages any citizen to contact him or the Police Department with any concerns or questions.
- And as always any questions, concerns, or complaints about human rights in Grinnell can be sent to the City's Human Rights Commission (<https://www.grinnelliowa.gov/116/Human-Rights-Commission> or 6418219636), the State of Iowa Civil Rights Commission (<https://icrc.iowa.gov/> or 1-800-457-4416), and/or the GPD (<https://www.grinnelliowa.gov/169/Police> or 641 236-2670).
- The Commission meets quarterly, and the meetings are open to the public. Complaints are confidential, except in cases that result in a public evidentiary hearing.