

SEO BLOG written for Ben Crump Law, PLLC – Wendy Mize, Copywriter

Meta Description:

The city of Louisville, Kentucky, has agreed to pay \$12 million to the family of Breonna Taylor in a historic wrongful death settlement. The settlement also includes sweeping police reforms. Please click here for more details.

The Breonna Taylor Settlement

A historic wrongful death settlement has been reached six months after the fatal shooting of Breonna Taylor, a 26-year old EMT who was killed in a flawed police raid on her Louisville, Kentucky home. The shooting sparked months of protests in Louisville and nationwide as part of the Black Lives Matter movement against racism and police violence.

The Breonna Taylor settlement will award \$12 million to Ms. Taylor's family. It is believed to be the highest settlement amount ever paid in America to the family of a Black woman wrongfully killed by the police, according to the Taylor family's lawyer, Ben Crump of Ben Crump Law, PLLC.

The settlement is also historic because it includes comprehensive police reform by Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer and the Louisville Metropolitan City Council. The City Council passed a ban on "no-knock" search warrants that contributed to Ms. Taylor's death. The ban was named "Breonna's Law".

'An Important Step Toward Justice'

Attorney Ben Crump, the noted civil rights lawyer, called the \$12 million Breonna Taylor settlement "an important step toward justice more than six months after Breonna's death."

"Nothing will ever bring back the precious life or fill the bottomless void left by the death of Breonna for her family or her community, which she served as a frontline emergency worker," said Mr. Crump. "But this settlement, with the accompanying police reforms, sends a powerful signal to the community that Breonna's life and her death will have long-term impact, hopefully preventing the loss of other Black lives."

Breonna Taylor's mother, Ms. Tamika Palmer, said that the settlement means "we will continue to save lives in her honor."

How the Breonna Taylor Settlement Can Bring Police Reform

Mr. Crump encouraged the city's lawmakers and community stakeholders to not only acknowledge Ms. Taylor's death as a flaw in their current police technics but to take proactive measures in changing these policies.

As part of the Breonna Taylor settlement, the city of Louisville agreed to a comprehensive community reform that will:

Establish a Housing Credit Program

The city will establish a housing credit program as an incentive for officers to live within their own patrol districts as their primary residence. This not only provides a pathway toward home ownership and an economic boost for the community, but it helps eliminate the "us" and "them" division that contributes to racism and police brutality.

Encourage Community Building

The Louisville Metropolitan Police Department (LMPD) will encourage its officers to volunteer with a community organization to create and sustain lasting relationships between citizens and the police force. This program would encourage officers to spend two hours per pay period during their regular work shift with a community organization.

Retain Social Workers

The LMPD is committed to retaining social workers who will be available to support and assist police officers on dispatched runs where it would be helpful. A social worker can offer an objective, experienced viewpoint as well as help to calm stressful interactions.

Mr. Crump praised the implementation of these community reform plans. "In the many cases I have represented involving police brutality -- from George Floyd and Jacob Blake to Pamela Turner -- I have never seen the level of responsive, comprehensive systemic reform that has occurred here under the leadership of Mayor Fischer and the city council."

Settlement Includes Search Warrant Procedural Changes

The historic Breonna Taylor settlement also addresses how police officers obtain and conduct search warrants. Ms. Taylor was killed during a "no-knock" search warrant raid for narcotics in which police believed she would be home alone. In truth, Ms. Taylor's

boyfriend, a legal gun owner, mistook police officers as intruders and fired, injuring an officer. This fatal error has prompted the LMPD to amend its search warrant procedures.

A commanding officer will now review and approve all search warrants, affidavits to seek search warrants, and assess the overall risk factors before an officer may request judicial approval for a search warrant. There will be additional safeguards that include a separate on-scene commanding officer at each warrant location.

Greater Police Accountability

The Breonna Taylor settlement will also create greater police accountability in such areas as:

- **Currency seizures:** New accountability measures include the requirement for police officer's body cameras to be on during the entire seizure process of any money recovered through a search warrant.
- **Use of force warning system:** This early warning system will track use of force incidents, citizen complaints, investigations, and other elements to identify police officers who may need assistance or additional training.
- **Resume drug testing:** The LMPD has committed to resuming its practice of random drug testing so that all officers are tested at least once every year.
- **Expanded personnel files:** The department will negotiate with the police union to seek expansion and inclusion of Professional Standards Unit (PSU) investigations for at least five years after an officer leaves the LMPD.

When asked to comment on these new police accountability standards, Ben Crump stated: "We credit Mayor Fischer and the city council for their tremendous leadership in bringing progress and reform out of tragedy."

Ben Crump Encourages Criminal Charges on Involved Officers

As much as these community and police reforms present a historic transition for Louisville, Mr. Crump reminded city officials that Ms. Taylor's family deserves justice for her wrongful death.

"We continue to urge Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron to convene a grand jury and charge the involved officers immediately," Mr. Crump stated.

Ms. Palmer echoed Mr. Crump's request for justice, saying that although the Breonna Taylor settlement is significant, "It's time to move forward with the criminal charges, because she deserves that and much more," Palmer said. "Her beautiful spirit and personality are working through all of us on the ground, so please continue to say her name: Breonna Taylor."

Ben Crump Law, PLLC: Civil Rights, Personal Injury, and More

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References:

1. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/09/15/us/breonna-taylor-louisville-settlement/index.html>