

YOUR LOVED ONE HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY INJURED OR KILLED BY POLICE

WHAT DO YOU DO WITHIN THE FIRST 24 HOURS?



SEEK SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY. TAKE ACTION.

The days ahead will be tough. But remember, you are not alone. You don't have to be alone. Use your support network.

1. You do not have to talk to police. If you do, only ask questions. Don't give them answers.

You should be very careful if you are considering talking to the police, and you are under no obligation to speak to them. You may think they're there to help you figure out what happened. But remember, police are not your friend. Anything you say to or around the police can be used against you. It is important that you are aware of what you say around the police. They can be recording conversations without your knowledge.

Under a new law that protects families from coercive police interrogations, before any interview with an immediate family member of the person killed or seriously injured, the peace officer or prosecuting attorney shall:

- Clearly identify themselves by providing their full name and the name of the agency by which they are employed.
- Inform the person of the status of your family member, whether your family member has been killed or seriously injured by law enforcement.

If you do agree to an interview - you may choose a later time or not at all. As an impacted family member, you have rights.

- You are entitled to have a trusted support person with you at all times no matter what.
- Whoever is asking for an interview from you must inform you that they are conducting a formal interview that may or may not involve an assessment of the conduct of your loved one. In our experience, these interviews are often less about the officers' actions and more about your loved one.
- Law enforcement cannot lie, coerce, or mislead you to get you to do an interview or while conducting the interview.

2. Document everything, as soon as you can.



Have a friend, family member, or community support come to the scene. Get names and contact information of witnesses. Try to remember as much as you can from the scene and record everything you see.

3. You DO NOT need to go to the police station for any reason. If you are at the scene, don't leave the scene!



Police will try to lure you down to the station with promises of more information. You don't have to leave the scene and go to the police station. But, if you need to, take a trusted support person with you. You can also leave someone you trust at the scene.

4. Don't give up ANYTHING without a warrant.



Anything means cell phone footage, surveillance footage and any footage. Law enforcement can tamper with the footage and destroy or alter evidence.

5. Have one spokesperson for the family.



Have a spokesperson for the family -- it can be a family member, a friend, a community member speaking for you. Tell your loved one's story before they are criminalized in the press. Only talk to the media if it's a sympathetic reporter. It is important to have a consistent message.

6. Connect with legal support.

If your loved one survives the injury or incident, police may place criminal charges on your loved one. Connect with your local public defender's office. Don't have your loved one talk to the police until a defense attorney is present. Protect your loved one from being interrogated by the police.

If your family is interested in pursuing a lawsuit against the police, coordinate with a trusted civil rights attorney on civil proceedings. Be mindful of any deadlines for filing claims.

