

# Support Police Reform: FAQ on *Illinois v. Chicago* Consent Decree Fairness Hearing

## What is this hearing, and why should I go?

**What is the *Illinois v. Chicago* lawsuit?** The Chicago Police Department uses force too often, especially on people of color. For decades, officers have not been held accountable when they hurt people. The City has unsuccessfully tried to reform itself, and so the Illinois Attorney General filed a lawsuit against the City. The Attorney General, with community input, has negotiated a settlement agreement on exactly how the City promises to reform the Department.

**What is a consent decree?** If the judge approves this settlement agreement, it will be called a Consent Decree. If the City doesn't follow its promises, the Attorney General and a coalition of community groups will be able to ask the judge to force the City to follow through.

**What is a fairness hearing?** The judge needs to decide whether the settlement agreement is fair, adequate, reasonable and in the public interest. The hearing is your opportunity to help the judge make that decision—by telling him what you think of the proposed consent decree.

## Okay, I'm in. How do I participate?

**Where is the fairness hearing?** At the Ceremonial Courtroom on the 25<sup>th</sup> Floor of the Federal Dirksen Building, 219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago IL.

**When is the fairness hearing?** Wednesday, October 24 and Thursday, October 25 between 9:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. There will be a lunch break and other breaks throughout the day.

**How do I sign up to speak at the fairness hearing?** You can register to speak outside the Ceremonial Courtroom between 7 and 8:30 a.m. At 8:30 am, the court will run a lottery to pick who gets to speak and in what order. If you aren't present at your assigned time, then you may lose your spot.

**How long can I speak?** Each speaker will be limited to five minutes, even if you use a translator.

**What should I bring?** A government-issued photo ID (see [here](#)). You can bring your phone with you, but recording and photos are not allowed in the courthouse, and you will have to leave your phone in a lock box outside of the courtroom. No food, drinks, or gum in the courtroom. Don't bring signs, posters, weapons, and anything you don't want searched into the building.

**Are there rules about what I can do and say?** Yes. When it's not your turn to speak, you must be silent and not distract from the speaker. When it's your turn to speak, say your name and direct your comments to the judge. Court security will remove people who are disruptive.

**What accommodations will be available at the hearing?** There will be ASL interpreters and captioning, and the room will be wheelchair accessible. The court will not have foreign language interpreters.