

December 1, 2019

Office for Civil Rights  
Office of Justice Programs  
U.S. Department of Justice  
810 Seventh Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20531

**Re:                   Violations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and/or the Omnibus  
                          Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968**

**Dear Sir/Madam:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am filing this complaint against \_\_\_\_\_ for violating Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) and the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (Safe Streets Act). \_\_\_\_\_ [insert police department and/or names of officers] \_\_\_\_\_ [insert a short description of what happened] because of my race, color, religion, national origin, or sex [choose all that apply].

**I.       The Facts**

In this section, please describe the incident(s) in detail, including the date(s), names of the persons involved and any witnesses, and why you believe the police department's actions were discriminatory. Please consider the following questions:

- 1) Are there any facts that may show that you were treated differently when compared to persons of another race, color, national origin, religion, or sex who were involved in a similar situation? If so, this may support a claim of discrimination based on disparate treatment.
- 2) Did officers say anything that would lead you to believe that their actions were discriminatory, such as a racial slur? If so, this may be direct evidence of discrimination.
- 3) Is there any information that may show that the police department has treated other persons of color differently when compared to white persons in similar situations, for example? If so, this information may be additional evidence of discrimination and may support a claim of discrimination based on disparate impact.

**II.       Jurisdiction: The Office for Civil Rights has the Authority to Investigate this Complaint**

In this section, please provide any information you have showing that the police department, city or county has received federal funding. You may do so by visiting the following websites:

- The Thurgood Marshall Institute at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund's National Police Funding Database at <https://policefundingdatabase.tminstituteldf.org>;
- Office of Justice Programs at <http://ojp.gov/index.htm>, select Grants/Funding, and then click on Explore OJP Award data;
- Office of Community Oriented Policing Services Program at

*This sample complaint is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute the provision of legal advice or establish an attorney-client relationship with NAACP LDF/Thurgood Marshall Institute.*

<https://cops.usdoj.gov/grants>, select Grants, select Program Documents, select a grant program and click on Awards List;

- Office on Violence Against Women at <https://www.justice.gov/ovw>, select OVW Grants and Programs and click on Awards; and
- USA Spending at <https://www.usaspending.gov/#/> and click on Award Search.

Also, you may contact the local offices of your U.S. Senators or Representatives who could determine whether law enforcement agencies in their districts have received federal funding.

Under federal law and regulations, you must file the [Title VI complaint within 180 days](#) of the incident and a complaint raising violations of the [Safe Streets Act within a year](#) of the incident.

### **III. Remedies**

In this section, please list the changes you would like to see if the Office for Civil Rights finds that the police department discriminated against you and/or others in violation of Title VI and the Safe Streets Act. For example:

I respectfully request that the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) require the \_\_\_\_\_ [*insert name of police department*] to end its discriminatory practices. Additionally, OCR could require the police department to:

1. Annually collect, analyze, and publicly distribute police data on interactions with the public disaggregated by race, color, national origin, religion, and sex.
2. Retrain officers on the legal requirements for traffic stops, vehicle searches, use of force, and/or racial profiling.
3. Develop an anti-bias policy.
4. Revamp its internal complaint procedures in accordance with national professional standards, including notifying civilians of the outcome of an investigation of their complaints.

Finally, OCR should suspend or terminate funding if the department does not cooperate with your effort to assist it with complying with Title VI and the Safe Streets Act.

### **IV. Conclusion**

For the reasons stated above, I urge the OCR to investigate \_\_\_\_\_ [*insert name of police department*] practices and remedy violations of Title VI and Safe Streets Act. Please acknowledge receipt of this complaint and notify me of its resolution.

Sincerely yours,