

**September 8, 2021**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL OPENS INVESTIGATION INTO  
JOLIET POLICE DEPARTMENT**

***Attorney General's Office to Investigate Possible Patterns or Practices of Unlawful Policing***

**Chicago** — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced that the Attorney General's office is launching an investigation into possible patterns or practices of unconstitutional or unlawful policing by the Joliet Police Department. The civil investigation follows requests made by the Joliet mayor and members of the Joliet City Council.

The Attorney General's office will examine the Joliet Police Department's policies, training, practices and supervision as they relate to traffic and pedestrian stops, searches, arrests, and uses of force. Career attorneys from Raoul's Civil Rights and Special Litigation bureaus will conduct a thorough review of the department's policies, reports, documents and trainings. In addition, the investigative team will conduct interviews and meetings with Joliet law enforcement officers, city government officials, Joliet residents, advocates, and other stakeholders.

"After receiving the request from Joliet's mayor and city officials, my office began a preliminary review of Joliet Police Department records and other information. It is clear that a formal investigation is needed to look at whether the department has engaged in patterns or practices of unlawful or unconstitutional policing," Raoul said. "In the coming weeks, the Attorney General's office will conduct a thorough, impartial and independent review of whether reforms are needed under the law."

Attorney General Raoul's investigation follows a request by Joliet Mayor Bob O'Dekirk and members of the Joliet City Council in June 2020 to conduct an investigation. In response to this request, the Attorney General's office requested information from the city of Joliet and the Joliet Police Department, and both have been fully cooperative in providing this information. Following a preliminary review of department of the information provided as well as publicly-available records, Raoul's office is now initiating a formal investigation. The Attorney General's office will take specific incidents into account during the investigation; however, the investigation's questions, findings and conclusions will be focused on whether systemic problems exist within the Joliet Police Department. The investigation is civil in nature and will not reconsider criminal charging decisions within the jurisdiction of local prosecutors.

Attorneys and subject matter experts from the Attorney General's office will conduct a detailed review of the Joliet Police Department's policies and training. Raoul's office will also inspect department reports resulting from traffic and pedestrian stops, searches and arrests. Of particular interest will be the Joliet Police Department's policies and practices related to the use of force and supervisory and department reviews of these incidents. In addition, Raoul's attorneys and experts will investigate the department's handling of misconduct allegations against officers by reviewing complaints from the public, the department's investigations into those complaints, as well as any resulting corrective or disciplinary action.

Raoul and career attorneys from the office's Civil Rights and Special Litigation bureaus have met with Mayor O'Dekirk, Joliet Police Department Chief Dawn M. Malec, Joliet City Manager Jim Capparelli, Joliet City Attorney Sabrina Spano and the Will County State's Attorney's office.

"We have begun meeting with government officials, law enforcement personnel, community advocates and people directly affected by policing in Joliet," Raoul added. "I appreciate the cooperative approach expressed

by city and departmental leadership, as well as the proactive steps initiated by Chief Malec since her recent promotion I am committed to conducting an independent and unbiased investigation that prioritizes public and officer safety and the lived experiences of all areas of the Joliet community.”

Raoul and members of his staff have also met privately with the family of Eric D. Lurry Jr.. Later today, Attorney General Raoul’s attorneys will meet with community groups, department leadership and union representatives. In addition, Attorney General Raoul’s staff will seek input from the public on their interactions with Joliet law enforcement in public and private meetings. Raoul’s office will convene a virtual town hall meeting in the coming weeks, and additional information will be released to the public at a later date.

Attorney General Raoul’s investigation into possible patterns or practices of unlawful policing by the Joliet Police Department is being conducted using the office’s authority under the Illinois Attorney General Act, the Illinois Human Rights Act, and the Illinois Civil and Equal Rights Enforcement Act. The investigation is the first of its kind since the 2021 Illinois Safety, Accountability, Fairness and Equity-Today (SAFE-T) Act went into effect July 1, 2021. The SAFE-T Act gives the Attorney General’s office authority to investigate and take civil action to address patterns or practices of unconstitutional or unlawful policing.

Attorney General Raoul is encouraging individuals who have information relevant to the investigation to email [input.joliet@ilag.gov](mailto:input.joliet@ilag.gov) or call the Attorney General’s office at 833-243-1498. Additional information about the investigation is available on the [Attorney General's website](#).