



# Black Philly Radical Collective

“We want freedom!”



## **We Want Freedom; End the War Against Black Philadelphians NOW!**

During this time of rebellion against police terrorism and state violence, we, the radical Black organizing community in Philadelphia, make the following immediately actionable demands upon the City of Philadelphia to abolish—by which we mean to permanently and holistically eliminate—the structures of policing and related state violence endangering our communities. These demands were written with the understanding that our more vulnerable family—our Black trans, disabled, and gender oppressed community members—are especially targeted by the systems of oppressions expressed in our demands. We center the most vulnerable within our community in this document and in our work.

*We will be in the streets demanding justice for the Black community until our demands are met.*

### **1. We Demand an Authentic Defunding of the Police Budget**

Since the uprisings began, the Philadelphia organizing community has made unequivocal demands for the City of Philadelphia to vote NO on a proposed increase to the police budget. In recent days, the city has responded to this public pressure and announced a reduction to the police budget by \$33 million dollars. This supposed decrease in funding is simply a ploy by city officials to mislead the public. City Council has merely moved the budget for crossing guards to another department of city government. This type of subterfuge is unacceptable. We demand an immediate and authentic reduction in the police budget by 20%. We want public funds to enrich our communities, not the police. We demand the originally proposed \$14 million police budget increase be augmented by \$11 million and go to the Philadelphia School District budget for the removal of environmental hazards from schools, namely, asbestos and lead paint, which is estimated to cost \$25 million per year.

### **2. Immediately Cease the Criminalization of Black Resistance**

We will not permit the Black community's legitimate struggle against white supremacy to be criminalized. Since the rebellion began, police have trapped and tear gassed protesters on I-676, they have unleashed rubber bullets and war munitions on 52nd Street in the heart of West Philadelphia, and they have brutalized protesters while arresting them as recently as Monday, June 22nd. The apologies of Mayor Kenney and Police Commissioner Outlaw about this treatment are not acceptable or accepted. We demand an end to the use of tear gas, grenades, assault rifles and surveillance in our neighborhoods and at the protests. We further demand that DA Larry Krasner drop all arrests and charges against community members and activists in relation to the rebellion and that no future detainment, arrests or charges be made. We demand an independent and transparent investigation into the use of force against protesters as well as the extreme disparities in the use of force by police when

confronting protests against police violence as opposed to white vigilantes in South Philadelphia and Fishtown.

### **3. Immediately & Permanently Remove All Symbols of State Violence**

After decades of work by Philadelphia's Black organizers and community members, Mayor Kenney finally conceded to the demand to remove the statue of Frank Rizzo. Mayor Kenney has also agreed to remove the Christopher Columbus statue. We demand the immediate public destruction of these white supremacist symbols of hate, oppression and violence so that they can never be erected elsewhere. The street sign honoring Wilson Goode is an equally flagrant symbol of state violence against Black Philadelphia, as former Mayor Goode presided over the bombing of our city and the murder of 11 members of the MOVE family, including 5 children in 1985. We demand that the street be reverted to its original name. We further demand legislation that removes all other existing monuments of state violence and ensures that no future symbols of state violence against Black, Indigenous, or Brown people be permitted in the city of Philadelphia.

***These first three demands require immediate action from the City of Philadelphia and are not negotiable. They represent immediate steps that the city must take to communicate its responsiveness to the demands of Black Philadelphians for justice for our communities.***

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***We recognize the prison as an extension of police violence and demand the release of our incarcerated community members:***

### **4. Immediate Permanent Release of Mumia Abu Jamal, Major Tillery, Arthur Cetawayo Johnson, Russell "Maroon" Shoatz, Omar Askia, Joseph "Jo-Jo" Bowen, and all Black Political Prisoners**

The Philadelphia "justice system" that arrested and tried Mumia Abu Jamal is the same racist and immoral system that dropped a bomb on 11 civilians including 5 children of the MOVE family 35 years ago. The fact that Mumia's trial was built on false evidence is without question, and serves as proof of the history of Philadelphia police targeting those who speak out against state violence. In this period of COVID19, we demand that Mumia, Major, Cetawayo, Maroon, Omar, Jo-Jo, and all Black political prisoners be immediately released. They are all seniors, members of a vulnerable population whose incarceration by any measure does not serve our communities or justice.

### **5. Immediate Release of All Vulnerable Individuals in Prison**

Accelerate the release of the 1,800 individuals eligible under the reprieve order signed April 10, 2020 and expand this order so that all eligible individuals are released by the end of July, 2020. Include in your reprieve all individuals who are medically vulnerable regardless of their offense. Secretary Wetzel estimated that there are approximately 12,000 people currently incarcerated that the CDC would be considered "medically vulnerable." The order signed April 10th states: "Vulnerable inmates shall include inmates at risk based upon age, anyone with autoimmune disorders, who is pregnant, or who has serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, bone marrow or organ

transplantation, severe obesity, kidney disease, liver disease, hepatitis, and cancer, or other medical condition that places them at higher risk for coronavirus, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.” All trans and disabled inmates are also vulnerable and we demand that they be recognized as such and also released under the reprieve order.

***We demand a complete overhaul of the structures of police accountability:***

## **6. Swift Firing of Killer Cops and Community Response**

We demand an end to superficial policies that assign desk duty and administrative leave for officer-involved shootings. If a police officer murders someone, they should be immediately and permanently fired and referred to counseling. The retirement funds of killer cops must be frozen during all parts of the legal process. If the officer is convicted, their pensions must be seized and transferred to the victim's families.

## **7. Abolish the Fraternal Order of Police & the Police Advisory Committee**

The city government announced plans to create a Civilian Oversight Commission. Government officials have not been transparent about how this Commission will function or the amount of funding it will receive. We again demand that the PAC not be simply reformed, repackaged, and presented to the community as a progressive change. The Police Advisory Commission must be abolished, and replaced with a fully funded Community Control Board provided from the budget of the Philadelphia police. The Board must have the exclusive power to hire and fire police officers. Board members must be elected through a transparent process that is created by individuals whose leadership is accepted by the community they will be representing. The members of this Board cannot be law enforcement or elected officials. The Board must also comprise community members most directly impacted by the system of policing. Their ultimate charge must be to remove all cops from our neighborhoods within five years. We also demand the FOP be dissolved immediately and police bargaining shifted into the municipal unions of the City of Philadelphia until the police are disbanded. The Fraternal Order of Police, its President, and agenda is more committed to defending police violence, terror and mass incarceration than it is in protecting and serving Black Philadelphians. Through intimidation, bullying and political intrigue it has set itself up as an unaccountable power bloc and political lobby that is a threat to our city's democracy.

***The Black Community has the right to live safely without the threat of violence:***

## **8. End the Military Occupation of the Black Community**

We demand the complete demilitarization of the Philadelphia police and the police occupation of Black communities. The Black community is consistently targeted by SWAT teams armed with military grade equipment. We demand the city end any participation in the US Department of Defense's 1033 Program, and return any equipment acquired through it, and refuse any participation in Operation Relentless Pursuit, the Department of Justice's newest "war on crime" tactic. A local police force should not have the ability to engage with community members like enemy combatants.

## **9. Protection for Black Philadelphia**

We acknowledge the severity of gun violence in our communities. Dismantling the structural violence of poverty, and not applying discriminatory gun laws is the only way to create safe communities. Anti-Black violence, which is emboldened in the current white supremacist climate, is an ever increasing threat to Black communities. Pockets of white vigilantes are currently roaming the city with guns, axes, and other deadly weapons in the wake of the rebellion. These extralegal white terrorist groups pose a significant risk to the Black community. We assert that Black Philadelphians have the ability to defend ourselves. We will no longer be criminalized for enjoying the 2nd Amendment rights that are permitted to all other Pennsylvanians. We demand that no current or future conceal/carry violations are registered as a felony in Philadelphia.

***Systems of carcerality and policing must be dismantled in all their forms:***

## **10. End All Carceral Systems**

The destructive effect of mass incarceration on individuals, families, and communities extends beyond the prison walls. We demand an immediate end to the criminalization of race, poverty, mental health, ability and immigration status through the multiple carceral systems that target Black Philadelphians. We demand the dismissal of warrants, cash bail, and the end to probation and parole systems that target our community members for prison retraumatization rather than provide support for individual and communal restoration. We demand the decriminalization of sex work. It is time to end the stigmatization and traumatization of sex workers through arrest and incarceration. We demand an end to the separation of Black families through the forcible removal of our children by the Department of Human Services. Children must be returned to willing parents and caregivers without ransoming their return with bureaucracy. We demand the City of Philadelphia live up to its promise as a Sanctuary City, immediately disband all Immigration and Customs Enforcement activities, and reunite individuals and families that have been separated as a result of ICE detentions in Philadelphia. We also demand that mental illness be decriminalized, and those with such disabilities be identified and provided the mental health care they require rather than assaulted by police and incarcerated.

## **11. Disband All Private Police Departments**

Black Philadelphians are policed in virtually every area of our lives. Due to jurisdiction overlaps, a Philadelphian may be policed by PHA police, transit police, university police departments, and city police simultaneously. We demand that the Philadelphia Police Department immediately end all Memorandums of Understanding with private police which allows access to JBAND frequency. We further demand that legislation be passed that mandates all public and private institutions, including educational institutions and transit and housing authorities, disband their police forces in the interest of public safety.

***Racist systems of oppression from slavery to the present must be addressed through economic justice:***

## **12. Fund Communities, Not Cops**

We demand an immediate decrease in the Philadelphia Police Department's budget over five years until the PPD is fully defunded. We demand these resources be diverted from policing to longstanding community-led organizations working to support returning citizens and build strategies that enable Black people to address their own conflicts and struggles in a manner that centers transformative justice and eliminates punitive systems of behavior change. We demand the redistribution of these funds be decided by those who are directly impacted by the criminal legal system, including returning citizens, sex workers, our members of the disabled community, our LGBTQIA+ communities, and members of undocumented communities.

## **13. Economic Justice NOW!**

We demand reparative economic justice for the aforementioned harms to Black communities. The government must repair the damage it has done. Current policies are designed to perpetuate racial and economic injustice against Black communities. We demand a participatory approach to public budgets that is under community control to ensure that resources are equitably distributed and meet the needs of Black communities which have been purposefully and systematically under-resourced. This is a critical step toward the realization of true reparative economic justice.

### CONFIRMED SIGNATORIES

Philly for Real Justice  
Black Lives Matter Philly  
The Black Alliance for Peace  
Black And Brown Workers Cooperative  
Abolitionist Law Center Philadelphia  
Abolitionist Law Center Pittsburgh  
Human Rights Coalition Philadelphia  
Human Rights Coalition Pittsburgh  
Mike Africa Jr. of MOVE  
Mobilization for Mumia  
International Family and Friends of Mumia Abu Jamal  
Malcolm X Grassroots Movement