



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on July 2, 2021

Judge Rules City of Minneapolis Must Hire More Police

A Hennepin County judge on Thursday ordered Minneapolis leaders to keep the number of police officers at a level required in the city charter, saying that Mayor Jacob Frey and the City Council “failed to perform an official duty clearly imposed by law.”

District Judge

Jamie Anderson [mandated](#) local leaders employ 730 sworn officers by June 30, 2022, after it was found that the projected number of police officers for June 1, 2022, 669, was in violation of the city’s charter, which stipulates the area must have 0.0017 licensed peace officers per resident. Mayor Jacob Frey and the city council were ordered to “take any and all necessary action to ensure that they fund a police force.”



AP Images

The court also found that the city must be more proactive with calculating the proper number of police officers it needs to employ according to census numbers. For the ruling, the court decided to use the 2019 census numbers, which is 429,606. For its calculation, the city had used 2010 census [numbers](#), which are lower (382,578).

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“If the City is not proactive in anticipating what will be required of it in coming years, it will constantly be behind — constantly underperforming and, as a result, understaffing the police force,” Anderson wrote.

The court’s decision comes after Minnesota Democratic Governor Tim Walz on Monday [announced](#) an executive action aimed at implementing several policing reforms, including \$15 million in funding from the American Rescue Plan toward community safety and violence intervention programs.

The decision is a victory for the Petitioners, eight residents of Minneapolis’ Jordan and Hawthorne neighborhoods on its embattled North Side. The suit was filed in August 2020 against the City Council’s attempts to dismantle the police department.

“Minneapolis is in a crisis,” the eight plaintiffs wrote in their complaint, citing the rise in shootings, homicides, civil unrest, and riots, [FOX News reported](#).

One of the plaintiffs, Don Samuels, a former Minneapolis council member, said he and his co-petitioners demanded enough active-duty police officers to patrol the city’s streets. “We have made the emotional appeal,” said Samuels, “We have demonstrated the statistical uptick and now this is the legal action we are exercising because it seems as if the City Council cannot hear us and doesn’t feel what we feel.”

[The Star Tribune reported](#) that the petitioners testified that the lack of officers was connected to an increase in crime that has affected their daily lives. One family’s house was shot twice, with a bullet lodging near the window of a child’s room, they said. Another plaintiff shared, according to the outlet,



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she was going to homes to provide comfort to some families who had lost children to the violent crimes and that the pain for them and her became “unbearable.”

Following the violent riots in the wake of the death of overdosed George Floyd in police custody last May in Minneapolis, the city became the ground zero of the “Defund the Police” movement.

In June 2020, the Minneapolis City Council unanimously [passed](#) a resolution to abolish its police department and pursue a “community-led public safety system” instead. “The murder of George ... by Minneapolis police officers is a tragedy that shows that no amount of reforms will prevent lethal violence and abuse by some members of the Police Department against members of our community, especially Black people and people of color,” five council members argued in the resolution.

As a result of the anti-police sentiment, [numerous](#) police officers had resigned from the forces. City Mayor Jacob Frey, who indicated [opposition](#) to “abolishing the entire police department,” also warned the approach may have a detrimental effect on police accountability.

The City Council’s proposal to disband the police was [blocked](#) by the Minneapolis Charter Commission in August 2020.

Persistent in its goal, the Council in December approved an Orwellian “Safety for All” plan that redirected \$7.7 million of the Minneapolis Police Department budget towards community violence prevention and mental health response as part of an effort to “transform” public safety in the city.

Despite the skyrocketing crime rate, including a 250-percent [increase](#) in gunshot victims in January 2021, the Council [moved](#) again to abolish the police, but in February, in a dramatic face-off, the Council [voted](#) to spend \$6.4 million to hire more police, but the violence continued to plague the city.

In May, Mayor Frey [admitted](#) that there is a direct connection of the “Defund the Police” movement and crime surge. “When you make big, overarching statements that we’re going to defund or abolish and dismantle the police department and get rid of all the officers, there’s an impact to that,” Frey said.



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