

Quakers have a long history of supporting the end of oppression and racism while promoting peaceful, non-militaristic means of solving societal problems. We are called to condemn police violence against persons of color and confront racism and white privilege as we were called in the past to advocate against slavery. The murder of George Floyd is sadly one of many deaths occurring from systemic racism.

The Quaker service organization, American Friends Service Committee states, "The brutal murder of George Floyd is the consequence of a racism system that disproportionately targets people of color for violence, imprisonment, and premature death."

There are means of educating our peace officers and of promoting peaceful conflict resolution.

We urge City and County officials to implement or strengthen these proven means of conflict de-escalation and peace officer review:

1. Abolish the most harmful restraint practices , such as chokeholds and strongholds.
2. Institute talks with neighboring communities immediately to de-escalate current protests.
3. Implement or revitalize citizen review committees of police incidents.
4. Examine diversity and de-escalation practices within police and sheriffs offices.
5. Stop militarized responses to conflicts by peace officers.
6. Discontinue the practice of granting qualified immunity to peace officers.

Additionally, we recognize that police violence against persons of color is a problem whose roots began in white supremacy and and we join with people of all ethnicities and backgrounds solve this problem. Inaction has allowed these deaths to continue. We ask you to take steps implement these practices within our government. We ask you to monitor the systems responsible for community safety as if the lives or our friends, family, and neighbors depend on it. They do.

In peace,
Ojai Friends Worship Group (Quakers)