



# Township of O'Hara

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## *Township Council*

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## *An Open Letter to Our Residents, Neighbors and Visitors from Township Council*

As a Council, Police Department, Township staff and community we are all shocked and outraged by the actions of Police Officers in Minneapolis that led to the tragic death of Mr. George Floyd. We witnessed a man in distress pleading desperately for help and none was given by those charged to render that aid. These former officers acted outside of any known acceptable training, policy or tactics used by police departments.

As your Township representatives, we felt we could not remain silent on this heinous behavior. Law enforcement officers are empowered and trained to use reasonable force if needed when apprehending individuals who are involved in some type of criminal behavior. Our officers have received extensive training on the Township's Use of Force Policy to ensure the safest outcome possible for all parties in an arrest situation. Our Police Policies and Procedures clearly and explicitly prohibit the use of unnecessary and/or excessive use of force of any kind. Please be assured that deviations from our Police Policies and Procedures would not be tolerated.

A key focus of our Police Superintendent and the Township has been, and will continue to be, training. As is relevant to this discussion, topics on which our police officers have been trained include diversity, inclusivity and use of de-escalation tactics. Our current training program will continue to feature and prioritize training on diversity, inclusivity and de-escalation.

In O'Hara Township, our Police Officers' oath states that the officer "acknowledges that they will uphold, obey and enforce the law without consideration to a person's race, color, sex, religious creed, sexual orientation, sexual identity, age, national origin, ancestry, handicap or disability." We believe that all lives should be treated with dignity and respect, even those that may be being arrested. But even with all we are doing, we will strive to do more. We will continue to be committed to a culture of respect for each and every individual.

We as a Township grieve for Mr. Floyd and with his family, friends and community.

***Township Council***