



Maryland Coalition for Justice and Police Accountability

# REPEAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' BILL OF RIGHTS

## WHAT IS THE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' BILL OF RIGHTS (LEOBR)?

LEOBR<sup>1</sup> is the state law that governs the disciplinary process for Maryland police officers. Maryland was the first state to pass such a law, enacting LEOBR in 1974.<sup>2</sup> While some states have similar laws on the books, most states do not. Maryland's law is considered one of most extreme in the country.

## WHY IS LEOBR A PROBLEM?

LEOBR gives special rights to police officers that ordinary people do not get, and prevents communities from investigating misconduct that could lead to discipline.

<sup>1</sup> MD Code, Public Safety, § 3-101 to § 3-113.

<sup>2</sup> LEOBR was enacted after the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and the urban uprisings of the 60s and 70s, which were a direct result of high profile police-involved killings and brutality cases.

## These special rights include:

- Generous protections during the investigation of misconduct
- Limits on what discipline can be imposed for certain infractions
- Strict time limits on alleging a complaint, including for police brutality.
- Allowing only other law enforcement officers to investigate misconduct
- Allowing a delay before questioning an officer about misconduct
- Expungement of disciplinary records

As a result, only a very small percentage of complaints actually result in discipline. At the very least, we must know that law enforcement agencies are taking police discipline seriously, and not protecting officers who engage in misconduct.

### REPEAL LEOBR

**A coalition of over 75 groups from across the state are calling on Maryland legislators to support strong, renewed demands for police reform and accountability:**

- 1 **Repeal in full the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights.**
- 2 Reform the Public Information Act to allow disclosure of all complaints of police misconduct.
- 3 Establish a statewide use of force policy that will prevent officers from using force unless it is necessary.
- 4 Remove school resource officers from schools.
- 5 Return control of the Baltimore City Police Department to Baltimore City residents.

## WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

We need to repeal LEOBR so that it is easier to hold police officers accountable for their misconduct that harms communities and creates distrust. While we need to do more, repealing LEOBR is a necessary step toward accountability by making sure that officers facing discipline do not get extra rights that are not afforded to other state government and civilian employees.

## HOW WILL REPEALING LEOBR AFFECT OFFICERS' RIGHTS?

Police officers will be treated just like every other state and local government employee and have the same rights in the workplace that other employees do.

## WOULD THIS AFFECT CURRENT POLICE UNION CONTRACTS?

No. LEOBR is a state law that limits police chiefs' ability to discipline officers. After LEOBR is repeal, police chiefs will have more flexibility in negotiating contracts and administering discipline.

## SOME OF THE ORGANIZATIONS CALLING FOR IMPACTFUL POLICE REFORM IN MARYLAND:

Advocates for Children and Youth	InterFaith Action for Human Rights	Office of the Public Defender
ACLU of Maryland	Jews United For Justice	Organizing Black
ACLU of Maryland, Montgomery County Chapter	Job Opportunities Task Force	Our Maryland
Amnesty International	Justice Policy Institute	Our Prince George's
Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS) Alliance	Law Enforcement Action Partnership	Our Revolution Maryland
Baltimore Action Legal Team	Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle	Out For Justice
Baltimore Bern Unit	League of Women Voters Maryland	Planned Parenthood of Maryland
Baltimore City Civilian Review Board	LGBTQ Dignity Project	Power Inside
Baltimore for Border Justice	Life After Release	Prevent Gun Violence Ministry, River Road
Be More Unified	Making Changes	Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) Office in Maryland	Mama Sisterhood of Prince George's County	Prince George's People's Coalition
CASA	March for Our Lives Maryland	Prisons to Professionals
Caucus of African-Americans Leaders	Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform	Progressive Maryland
Citizens Policing Project	Maryland Center on Economic Policy	Public Justice Center
Coalition for Justice for Anton Black	Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition	Racial Justice NOW!
Coalition of Concerned Mothers	Maryland Justice Project	Rebuild, Overcome, and Rise (ROAR) Center at UMB
Coalition of people Opposed Violence and Extremism	Maryland Poor People's Campaign	Reproductive Justice Inside
Common Cause Maryland	Maryland Prisoners' Rights Coalition	Sanctuary DMV
Community Actively Seeking Transparency (C.A.S.T.)	Maryland Restorative Justice Initiative	SEIU 1199
Disability Rights Maryland	Maryland State Conference of NAACP Branches	Showing up for racial justice Annapolis and Anne Arundel county (SURJ3A)
Do the Most Good	Marylanders to Prevent Gun Violence	Showing Up for Racial Justice, Baltimore
Drug Policy Alliance	Montgomery County Civil Rights Coalition	Showing Up for Racial Justice, Montgomery County
For Kathy's Sake	Montgomery County Democratic Socialists of America	Sierra Club Maryland Chapter
FreeState Justice	Mothers on the Move	Silver Spring Justice Coalition
Greater Baltimore Democratic Socialists of America - Steering Committee	NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland	Takoma Park Mobilization
Hispanic National Law Enforcement Association	NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund	West Wednesdays
Homeless Persons Representation Project	National Coalition for Drug Legalization	Wicomico County NAACP Branch 7028
Innocence Project	Nigerian American Lawyers Association-Washington DC Chapter	Women's Law Center

Find more information about the five necessary police reforms in Maryland, and the more than 75 organizations calling for them: [aclu-md.org/reimaginepolicing](https://aclu-md.org/reimaginepolicing)