



# Kentucky Criminal Justice Forum

Our city and others in Kentucky quake with the voices of those demanding justice. Louisville streets are filled with activists, using heavy falling steps to communicate heavy, wounded hearts. We, the members of the Kentucky Criminal Justice Forum (KCJF) stand with the family of Breonna Taylor and the citizens of Kentucky. We seek justice for Breonna Taylor and other persons who have been killed by law enforcement in our streets and in streets across the country. We desire consequences for those responsible and the soothing of wounds created not only by this tragedy, but those rooted in our nation's history, as well.

As a result of Ms. Taylor's murder and considering current events throughout the country, citizens demand action, accountability, and unbiased justice.

KCJF's stance, as a data-driven voice of the people on Criminal Justice Reform issues, places us in lockstep with demands for a restructured system. Findings from our recent community forum held in Louisville in July of 2019 echo the recurring demands of citizens fighting to achieve criminal justice reform in the Commonwealth. Challenges to successful criminal justice system reform, including policing, were seen in forum participants' written comments:

“The continued racial bias that has systematically affected and infected our system... [calls for] training law enforcement, judicial, corrections professionals in anti-racism/pro-reconciliation”

Problems with “police officer discretion” persist, and participants desire “restorative justice” to counter these and related challenges.

In fact, the following themes emerged as challenges to criminal justice reform in Kentucky based on analysis of participant comments.

- **Public and policy-makers attitudes shape legislation and legislation shapes access. Therefore, these attitudes need revision, including the failure to embrace second chances for persons with criminal justice system involvement**
- **Funding is critical to assuring both access and individual and agency accountability**
- **Individualized, comprehensive programming is needed to prevent entrance into the criminal justice system and to ease the transition from corrections to community**

The honorable Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. remarked “the ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” KCJF stands with the family and citizens of the Commonwealth, on behalf of Breonna Taylor, and encourage our city and state leadership to do likewise. KCJF encourages local and state officials as well as our partners to stand for equitable legislative change that is inclusive of the concerns and demands of all Commonwealth citizens. KCJF will be releasing the first analysis from the Louisville forum with emerging themes on Kentucky criminal justice reform during the latter part of June 2020.