

# Minneapolis agrees to \$27 million settlement for family of George Floyd

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The city of Minneapolis, Minnesota, will pay \$27 million to settle a civil lawsuit filed by George Floyd's family. The city council unanimously approved the settlement on Friday amid the ongoing trial of Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis police officer who is charged with murder and manslaughter for killing Floyd by kneeling on his neck for nearly nine minutes on May 25, 2020.

The Floyd family filed a civil rights lawsuit against Minneapolis, Chauvin and the three other former officers charged in Floyd's death. The suit declared that the Minneapolis Police Department violated Floyd's constitutional rights when they restrained him, and that the city created a culture of excessive force and impunity in its police department.

Ben Crump, the attorney for George Floyd's family, called the deal the largest known pretrial civil rights settlement in US history. The Floyd family's settlement surpassed the \$20 million Minneapolis paid to the family of Justine Damond, the 40-year-old Australian-American woman who was killed by a police officer in 2017 after she called 911 to report a possible crime.

The latest settlement includes \$500,000 to be spent on the south Minneapolis neighborhood that includes the intersection of 38th Street and Chicago Avenue where Floyd was killed, which has become known as George Floyd Square. Since his death, a massive metal sculpture and murals have been constructed in Floyd's honor.

During a news conference Friday, Philonise Floyd, the brother of George Floyd, said he would return the money if he could see his brother again.

"I thank the state of Minnesota for getting this settlement taken care of," he said. "But even though my brother is not here, he's here with me in my heart. Because if I could get him back, I would give all of this

back."

He also expressed gratitude for the demonstrations against police brutality following his brother's death.

"I want to be able to thank all the supporters, all the protesters for standing, especially during a pandemic," Philonise Floyd said. "You put your lives on the line."

George Floyd's sister, Bridgett Floyd, said in a statement, "Our family suffered an irreplaceable loss May 25 when George's life was senselessly taken by a Minneapolis police officer. While we will never get our beloved George back, we will continue to work tirelessly to make this world a better, and safer, place for all."

Bridgette Floyd founded the George Floyd Memorial Foundation, which will honor her brother's legacy as a "community-minded volunteer who would truly give the shirt off his back to someone who needed it."

The news of the settlement comes amid jury selection in Chauvin's trial. Chauvin is charged with second-degree murder and manslaughter charges, and a third-degree murder charge reinstated on Thursday. Chauvin has pleaded not guilty to the charges.

Defense attorney Eric Nelson said he was worried that the announcement of the settlement would make it impossible for Chauvin to get a fair trial.

"I am gravely concerned with the news that broke on Friday," Nelson said, adding that the settlement announcement "has incredible potential to taint the jury pool."

Nelson asked Hennepin County District Judge Peter Cahill to postpone the trial and asked if the trial could be moved to another city. Nelson also asked that the defense and prosecution be given extra "strikes" to remove jurors that might be biased after hearing of the settlement. Cahill stated he did not think it was appropriate to grant additional strikes but agreed to

recall the seven jurors already selected for further questioning.

The seven jurors selected so far include five men and two women, ranging in age from their 20s to their 50s. Four of the jurors are white, one is multiracial, one is African American and one is Hispanic.

Meanwhile, Nelson dismissed a potential juror Friday after she acknowledged she had a negative view of Chauvin. In response to the questionnaire issued to jurors, the woman said she had a “somewhat negative” view of Chauvin and thought he held his knee on Floyd’s neck for too long.

“I could only watch part of the video, and from what I saw as a human, I, that did not give me a good impression,” she said. She said she did not watch the bystander video in its entirety because “I just couldn’t watch it anymore.”

The woman stated that she could set her opinions aside and judge the case objectively but was nonetheless dismissed.

The first potential juror questioned Monday told Judge Cahill she had inadvertently heard about the settlement and knew that it was a record sum. She said she guessed it meant the city did not think it would win the civil lawsuit.

“When I heard that I almost gasped at the amount,” she said, adding that she could not promise she could disregard it. Cahill excused the woman from the case.

Minneapolis remains prepared for potential demonstrations during the trial and in its aftermath. The city’s government center has been blockaded with concrete barriers, fencing, and barbed wire and is being guarded by National Guard troops. The earliest date for opening statements in Chauvin’s trial is March 29.



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