

## Governor Calls for Special Session on Policing Accountability and Transparency

Written by GOV Press Wisconsin  
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<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/jacob-blake-shooting-protest-s5.jpg>



***Action needed on statewide use of force standards, officer training, no-knock search warrants, and other areas to ensure our state starts to live up to our promises of equity and justice in all communities says Evers.***

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers and Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes on Monday announced [Executive Order #84](#)

, calling the Wisconsin State Legislature into a Special Session on policing accountability and transparency convening at noon on Aug. 31, 2020. The announcement comes after Jacob Blake, a Black man, was shot repeatedly in the back by a law enforcement officer in Kenosha.



“Today I am calling for a Special Session of the Legislature to take up the package of legislation we announced earlier this year,” said Gov. Evers. “We must begin the long but important path toward ensuring our state and our country start to live up to our promises of equity and justice. I am urging the Legislature to rise to this occasion and give this special session the urgent and

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productive effort this moment demands and that the people of Wisconsin deserve.”

On June 19, 2020, in the wake of widespread pleas for justice following the murders of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, Gov. Evers [called](#) for the legislature to take up a series of policing accountability and transparency measures. As of August 24, 2020, more than 130 days since the Wisconsin State Legislature last passed a bill, the Legislature has not convened to take up the measures.

In [a letter then to the legislature](#), the governor indicated the Legislature’s failure to take up these measures would prompt executive action, stating, “As we move forward, if there is an unwillingness to do this important work, conversations with legislative leaders break down, or there are talks of delays until the next legislative session, as governor, I am ready and willing to use my power to call on the Legislature into special session to act.”



“We know we cannot remedy the systemic racism built into all of our systems with just this package of bills, but that does not mean we should stand still,” said Lt. Gov. Barnes. “For over two months, our legislative leaders have ignored the calls for change from people in every part of our state, and now another Black man is fighting for his life due to the actions of law enforcement. The people of our state are done waiting for the Legislature to act, and so are we.”

“I know folks across our state will be making their voices heard in communities across Wisconsin. Every person should be able to make their voices heard and report on these calls to action without any fear of being unsafe. If you are exercising that right today and in the days ahead, please do so peacefully, and please wear your masks and keep physical distance as best as you can,” Gov. Evers concluded.

The package of legislation included in the governor’s special session call includes:

- [LRB 6273/LRB 6424](#) :
- Establishes statewide use of force standards for all law enforcement agencies that includes that the primary duty of law enforcement is to preserve the life of all individuals; that deadly force is to be used only as the last resort; that officers should use skills and tactics that

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minimize the likelihood that force will become necessary; that, if officers must use physical force, it should be the least amount of force necessary to safely address the threat; and that law enforcement officers must take reasonable action to stop or prevent any unreasonable use of force by their colleagues;

- Prohibits discipline of a law enforcement officer for reporting a violation of a law enforcement agency's use of force policy; and
- Requires the Law Enforcement Standards Board (LESB) to develop a model use of force policy for law enforcement agencies.

- [LRB 6274/ LRB 6425](#) :
  - Requires each law enforcement officer to annually complete at least eight hours of training on use of force options and de-escalation techniques.

- [LRB 6275/LRB 6426](#) :
  - Creates a \$1,000,000 grant program, administered by the Department of Justice, to fund community organizations that are utilizing evidence-based outreach and violence interruption strategies to mediate conflicts, prevent retaliation and other potentially violent situations, and connect individuals to community supports.

- [LRB 6276/LRB 6427](#) :
  - Requires law enforcement agencies to develop policies prohibiting the use of chokeholds.

- [LRB 6277/LRB 6428](#) :
  - Requires each law enforcement agency to not only prepare a policy regarding the use of force by its law enforcement officers, but to make it available publicly online.

- [LRB 6281/LRB 6429](#) :
  - Creates a civil cause of action for unnecessarily summoning a law enforcement officer with intent to infringe upon a right of the person under the Wisconsin Constitution or the U.S. Constitution; unlawfully discriminate against the person; cause the person to feel harassed, humiliated, or embarrassed; cause the person to be expelled from a place in which the person is lawfully located; damage the person's reputation or standing within the community; or damage the person's financial, economic, consumer, or business prospects or interests.

- [LRB 6283/LRB 6430](#) :
  - Requires that the Department of Justice publish an annual report on use of force incidents, including incidents where there was a shooting, where a firearm was discharged in the direction of a person (even if there was no injury), and where other serious bodily harm

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resulted from the incident; and

- Requires certain demographic information to be collected about each incident and reported annually by DOJ on its website.

- [LRB 6289/LRB 6431](#) :

- Prohibits no-knock search warrants.

- [LRB 6292/LRB 6432](#) :

- Makes certain changes to the responsibilities of the LESB, including requiring LESB to also regulate jail and juvenile detention officer training standards and regulate recruitment standards for the recruiting of new law enforcement, jail, and juvenile detention officers;

- Requires each law enforcement agency to maintain an employment file for each employee; and

- Requires each potential candidate for a position in an agency, jail, or facility that is or has been employed by a different agency, jail, or facility to authorize their previous employer to disclose his or her employment files to the hiring entity.