



DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INCORPORATED

A Service Sorority Founded in 1913

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SOCIAL ACTION POLICY REMINDER AND CALL-TO-ACTION

Dear Sorors,

On Thursday, May 28, I issued a public statement on behalf of the Sorority, condemning law enforcement's actions in the deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd. Today, I am writing to further our call to action by providing necessary information that will equip all sorors in our response during this difficult time. There is no better opportunity for us to use the power in our voice as a sisterhood rooted in social action than now, and as such, we must be on one accord.

At its heart, social action is grassroots work executed in local communities where decisions affecting the lives of everyday people are made. The following information will help you as you work in your community by outlining Delta's policies and call-to-action to address the current issues facing communities around the country.

Protesting

Protests have long been a part of how we raise our voices to the world. Sorors have organized, led, and participated in protests since 1913. **Members may wear paraphernalia when participating in peaceful protests. However, please remove yourself from protests that become destructive and violent. Members of Delta Sigma Theta, nor the presence of our symbols, should be in the midst of any activity that causes property damage or becomes detrimental to anyone's safety and the organization's fidelity.** As a reminder, the National President is the only person authorized to speak on behalf of the Sorority. Further questions regarding the policies outlined should be directed to the National Social Action Commission at socialaction@deltasigmatheta.org.

Assisting Our Communities

Black communities may experience a lack of essential resources in the aftermath of the various protests and demonstrations. Many of our neighbors are still recovering from COVID-19's economic impact, and we must continue to stand in the gap for them during this time. Collecting necessities for distribution and working with grocers, pharmacies, and other essential businesses across your service area to provide support and access to those impacted will help move your community forward.

Engaging With Local and State Leaders

Now is the time to redouble our relationship with local and state leaders, including your governor's office, down to your sheriff. Chapters should partner and raise your collective voices to demand policy reforms and garner a seat at the table in all discussions. It is important that not only are Deltas at the table representing the underserved and overlooked communities but that we also bring our partners and collaborators with us. You can do this by creating partnerships with local organizations doing similar work and engaging directly with community members to gather their thoughts, concerns, and experiences. By working together, we are guaranteeing that all voices are being heard in the crucial conversations that will move our country forward.

The following issues can be an essential part of the discussions, depending on what reforms have been adopted in your local jurisdiction:

- Requiring police to wear body cameras
- Implementation of de-escalation training for law enforcement
- Requiring psychological evaluation of police officers before hiring
- Review of your jurisdiction's use of force policy and a review of its alignment to best practices
- Requiring the collection of statistical information on excessive use of force complaints
- Mandating the creation of a citizen review board to review police misconduct complaints
- Requiring unconscious bias training for all police officers

My sorors, I recognize that there is very little I can say to calm the feelings of anger and angst that you may have at this moment. Like many of you, I am struggling to make sense of all that is occurring around me. I'm calling on you to pray for healing in our communities and to calm the range in the hearts and minds of so many. What I know for sure is that our communities need us now more than ever. Please continue to adhere to the above-stated policies while using the power in your voice to bring about the change our country so desperately needs during a time such as this.

Yours in the bond of sisterhood,

Beverly E. Smith

National President & CEO