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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, December 9, 2021
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City Reaches Settlement Agreement with Plaintiffs in *Alsaada v. Columbus*

If passed by City Council, Columbus will pay plaintiffs \$5.75 Million settlement

COLUMBUS, OH—The Columbus City Attorney’s Office announced today that the City has reached an agreement with the plaintiffs in the case of *Alsaada v. City of Columbus*. Subject to Council approval, the City has agreed to deliver a settlement of \$5,750,000.00. The funds to pay for this settlement, if passed, will come from the City’s General Fund Account.

On May 25, 2020, Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin killed George Floyd by kneeling on his neck. In the days following Mr. Floyd’s death, protests erupted across the country, including in Columbus. During those protests, the Columbus Division of Police made arrests and used force including, but not limited to, pepper spray, tear gas, wooden baton rounds, and sponge rounds. Each of the Plaintiffs in this case alleged that their constitutional rights were violated by members of CPD during the events.

“During the protests in Columbus, some plaintiffs were significantly injured. Therefore, it’s incumbent upon the City to accept responsibility and pay restitution. Many Columbus Division of Police officers did perform their jobs professionally during that time, but this litigation highlighted serious issues that must be addressed,” said City Attorney Zach Klein. **“While this has certainly been a difficult and painful moment for our community, it has yielded important, and in some instances long overdue, reforms to policing practices, policies, and oversight. This settlement is a good step forward for both the Division of Police and for the entire community because it sets defined parameters and clear expectations for all when exercising and protecting First Amendment rights in Columbus.”**

In the lawsuit, at least three of the Plaintiffs alleged that they suffered broken bones. Earlier this year, after a seven day evidentiary hearing, Chief U.S. District Judge Algenon L. Marbley granted a preliminary injunction against the City that bars officers from using non-lethal force including tear gas, pepper spray, rubber bullets, wooden pellets, and more on nonviolent protesters to clear streets and sidewalks or enforce dispersal orders “not committed with actual

or imminently threatened physical harm or property destruction.” As part of this settlement, the City will agree to a permanent injunction.

“We have implemented significant changes in protest response and training since last year’s protests. We recognize what a painful chapter this has been for everyone involved, including the women and men of the Columbus Division of Police and the community we serve,” said Columbus Department of Public Safety Director Robert Clark. “Before there can be healing, there must be accountability. Where we have missed the mark and relationships have been damaged, we must strive to make it right. This settlement is a step toward that, while also protecting the interests of Columbus taxpayers.”

[The language of the permanent injunction is attached.](#)

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