



PRO BONO CASE STUDY

# Compass Lexecon's Pro Bono Client, the Estate of George P. Floyd, Reaches Historic USD\$27 Million Wrongful Death Settlement

The death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota sparked widespread protests that later spread to cities throughout the U.S. and globally. In the wake of his death, a federal civil rights lawsuit was filed by the Trustee of the family of George P. Floyd, Jr. against the City of Minneapolis, and the four police officers accused of causing Mr. Floyd's death. The ability of the city to pay a substantial settlement or judgment was expected to be a major source of contention between the parties.

## SITUATION

In 2020, Counsel for the Trustee approached FTI Consulting's Compass Lexecon subsidiary about being an expert for the family on the ability to pay issue. Compass Lexecon's Chairman and President, Professor Daniel Fischel, accepted the engagement and offered under the circumstances for Compass Lexecon to take on this work on a pro bono basis.

## OUR ROLE

With that understanding, Professor Fischel, together with Compass Lexecon Executive Vice Presidents Andria van der Merwe and Todd D. Kendall, prepared an analysis based on a detailed review and evaluation of the City's finances, outstanding debt, and other liabilities which also compared the City along these dimensions with other large cities. The Compass Lexecon team also analyzed market evidence, including commentary from credit agencies, and concluded that the City had the ability to pay a settlement well in excess of a typical wrongful death payment. Compass Lexecon worked with Nicolette Ward of Romanucci & Blandin, LLC, who represented the Trustee for the Next of Kin of Mr. Floyd.

## OUR IMPACT



On March 12, 2021, the parties reached a USD\$27 million settlement, which attracted national attention when it was announced. The commentary focused on the societal significance of the settlement including its historic size. For example, *The New York Times* reported that “the settlement was among the largest in a case of police misconduct,” and substantially larger than settlements in other well-publicized cases of police killings in recent years.

Counsel for Mr. Floyd's family said that the settlement was “the largest pretrial settlement ever for a civil rights claim.” A portion of the settlement amount will be used to benefit the neighborhood where Mr. Floyd was killed.

*“It was an honor for all of us at Compass Lexecon to have assisted in providing some compensation to George Floyd's family as a remedy for this tragic injustice.”*

**Daniel Fischel**

Compass Lexecon Chairman and President, Chicago