

# Mom sues Royal Oak police for \$10M

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## FULL TEXT

The family of a young man who was fatally shot by a Royal Oak police officer has filed a lawsuit seeking \$10 million, alleging he was shot multiple times in the back in an unlawful use of force.

The lawsuit was filed Monday in U.S. District Court in Detroit by Michelle Reynolds in the death of her 20-year-old son, Cody Reynolds. The lawsuit claims police used excessive force and violated her son's civil rights during the early morning confrontation on May 14 outside the family's home on Hoffman Avenue.

At the time, police said they were responding to reports that Reynolds had stabbed his mother and assaulted his father with a guitar. Police say they encountered Reynolds walking away from the scene. An officer ordered the 20-year-old to the ground, but he rushed at the officer, who then fired multiple shots.

Reynolds wasn't armed at the time he was shot, police said.

Part of the encounter was recorded on police dash cam video, which showed Reynolds momentarily complying with the officer's order to get on the ground, but then springing up and lunging at the officer.

The Oakland County Prosecutor's Office in August cleared Officer Ryan Addis of any wrongdoing, ruling the shooting by the four-year veteran police officer was justified.

"Believing that he was about to be stabbed by Reynolds, Officer Addis began firing and continued firing until Reynolds no longer posed an apparently deadly threat," said a report on the investigation by the prosecutor's office.

"The officer's use of force was therefore reasonable under the circumstances, even though it turned out later that Reynolds was no longer armed with the knife that he had used to stab his mother," said the report signed by Jason Pernick, chief of the warrants division of the prosecutor's office.

The investigation also found that the youth had a history of depression and at least one suicide attempt, and that he'd consumed intoxicating mushrooms on the night of the shooting, according to the Prosecutor's Office.

The lawsuit, however, contends the shooting was unnecessary and an unlawful use of deadly force.

"In official reports, Officer Addis alleged that Reynolds attempted to attack him by charging forward toward him, upon his arrival at the scene," the lawsuit alleges. "However, the evidence, including the autopsy report, supports that Officer Addis unlawfully shot Reynolds multiple times in his back without cause, resulting in his death."

The lawsuit claims Addis was "not in imminent or immediate harm" and Reynolds "did not pose a physical threat to his safety or that of other officers or civilians."

Citing another fatal shooting by Royal Oak Police just a month earlier, the lawsuit alleges the city failed to train its officers in the proper use of force and to "adequately investigate and discipline police officers who used excessive and/or deadly force on citizens."

Royal Oak City Attorney David Gillam declined to comment on the lawsuit on Monday.

Free Press staff writer Bill Laitner and the Associated Press contributed to this report.

Cody Reynolds

CREDIT: Steve Pepple

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