

COPA releases video showing fatal shooting of - Chicago Sun-Times (IL) - July 25, 2018

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The Civilian Office of Police Accountability released several videos on Wednesday showing the fatal shooting of **Maurice Granton Jr.** by a Chicago police officer last month in Bronzeville.

COPA showed the video to Granton's family and their attorneys shortly before the video was made public.

In one video taken from an officer's body camera, the 24-year-old Granton appears to try to hop a wrought iron fence.

As he is in the air, an officer — whose bodycam captured the shooting — opens fire and Granton collapses into the gravel of a vacant lot. Nothing could be seen in his hands as he neared the fence.

Granton can be seen writhing on the ground, bleeding for several minutes as officers swarm the area without giving him aid. Within minutes, dozens of onlookers gather and begin yelling at police.

The officer who shot Granton instructs several of his colleagues to guard a pistol in the vacant lot, laying several yards away from where Granton was when he was shot.

Maurice Granton | Facebook photo

COPA has a self-imposed policy of releasing recordings of shootings 60 days after the incidents, but the agency opted to release footage of the Granton shooting after only 49 days.

Andrew M. Stroth, one of the attorneys representing Granton's family, said the footage depicts the "unjustifiable, unconstitutional execution of **Maurice Granton**."

"**Maurice Granton** is running away and, without cause or provocation, the officer shoots multiple times, killing him," Stroth said. "Some of the family members had to leave the room because the video was so devastating."

Granton, a father of two girls, previously had been convicted of robbery and theft, court records show. Family members and friends described him as a loving person.

"He was silly, goofy, fun," Granton's sister Joanna Varnado, said at a vigil shortly after his death. "He cared about his family. Everything was about family."

After seeing the video, Stroth said he and his co-counsel, Tony Romanucci, will be pursuing "every legal remedy on behalf of the family."

Just after the video footage was released, COPA released a statement saying, in part, "COPA also has a duty to preserve investigative integrity and be prudent in its release to not compromise the investigation. COPA's commitment to transparency also includes the release of all available audio and OEMC/911 recordings."

A vigil for **Maurice Granton Jr.**, who was fatally shot by Chicago Police. | Rick Majewski/For the Sun-Times

Officers were on a narcotics mission about 8:15 p.m. on June 6 when, officials said, Granton pulled a gun on tactical officers who were trying to stop him. One officer opened fire during the "armed encounter," according to a police statement, striking Granton in the back.

Paramedics took Granton to the University of Chicago Medicine trauma center, and he was pronounced dead at 8:41 p.m., police said. An autopsy Thursday found Granton suffered a gunshot wound to his back, according to the medical examiner's office.

Chicago police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi shared the video, as well as a photo of a gun allegedly recovered from Granton at the scene -- "in response to claims that offender was unarmed and the weapon was planted by CPD officers," he said.

COPA's decision to release footage of the Granton shooting comes shortly after police opted to release limited footage of an officer fatally shooting Harith Augustus in South Shore earlier this month.

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