

Cause of death ruled in fatal shooting

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FULL TEXT

The Greenville County Coroner's Office has released an official cause of death in a deputy-involved shooting in the Poe Mill community Monday.

Jermaine Massey, 35, of Greenville, died of a gunshot wound to the torso.

It remains unclear how many times Massey was struck.

"We're not saying he was only shot one time. What we're saying is that a shot to the torso is what caused his death," Deputy Coroner Jeff Fowler said.

Massey was shot Monday evening outside his home after deputies responded there for a reported disturbance, according to the Sheriff's Office.

Four deputies involved in the incident have been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of an investigation.

The State Law Enforcement Division is investigating the shooting. Massey was treated on scene before being taken to Greenville Memorial Hospital, where he died, according to the Coroner's Office.

Massey leaves behind three children and a longtime girlfriend.

His family has claimed that the shooting was racially motivated and that Massey was profiled at a nearby convenience store hours before the shooting. His family also said there was no disturbance, despite Sheriff's Office claims, and family members are unsure what led to the deputies responding to the home.

Sheriff Will Lewis has said that after trying to apprehend Massey using less-than-lethal tactics, Massey charged them with what appeared to be a butcher's knife. He said there were other people inside the home at the time, indicating that there was a hostage situation, so deputies attempted to remove the others from the home prior to the shooting, Lewis said.

Family spokesman U.A. Thompson has also challenged the claim of Massey having a knife, stating there were no butcher knives missing from the kitchen and that Massey had a Black & Mild cigar in his hand.

Thom Berry, a SLED spokesman, said body camera footage was taken from the scene, but that footage is not being released to the public.

The investigation is ongoing.

DETAILS

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