

Suit: Police who gunned down man used excessive force

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FULL TEXT

The family of a 21-year-old man, who was shot at more than 20 times by police after an alleged robbery in April, is suing Louisville Metro Police officers in federal court for his wrongful death.

The lawsuit claims three officers and a detective used excessive force against Demonjhea Jordan, who was shot and killed on April 24 after police say he fled from a robbery and pointed a handgun at officers in the Portland neighborhood. One officer fired his gun through the window of his squad car at Jordan.

Jordan's mother and father filed the suit on Sept. 18 in Jefferson County Court, but it was ordered to be moved to federal court on Wednesday, according to court documents.

The suit alleges that the four men involved in the shooting —officers Joshua Weyer, Benjamin Dean and Kody Despain, and detective Joseph Fox —"breached the duty of care by utilizing unauthorized and unnecessary deadly force against him," according to the lawsuit.

Body camera video released after Jordan's death shows they all fired their weapons at Jordan.

In the video, Jordan appeared to be holding an object covered by what looked like a red cloth. When the cloth fell to the ground, Jordan was still holding the object that police said was a handgun.

In April, police Chief Steve Conrad said officers are able to "use force, in this case deadly force, to protect themselves and others from death or serious physical injury."

Lt. Aaron Crowell of the department's public integrity unit previously said police believed Jordan also fired his weapon, citing "multiple sources of information" that lead them to that conclusion. He declined to specify what the sources were, how many shots were fired or who fired first. It's not clear in the body camera footage when the suspect fired his weapon, but a gun is visible between Jordan's legs when he is lying on the ground wounded. Weyer, Dean, Despain and Fox are still on administrative reassignment and are not patrolling the streets. The investigation into the incident is ongoing, according to LMPD.

The lawsuit seeks an unspecified amount for damages.

Joshua Abner, a spokesman for the Jefferson County attorney's office, did not immediately return a request for comment about why the case was moved into the Western District of Kentucky on Wednesday.

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Lt. Aaron Crowell of Louisville Metro Police's public integrity unit discusses the shooting by police that left a robbery suspect dead.

Darcy Costello/Courier Journal

Body camera video shows all officers fired their weapons at Demonjhea Jordan.

Provided photo

CREDIT: Thomas Novelly

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