

## **Suit: Sacramento police shot unarmed black man - Sacramento Bee, The (CA) - March 7, 2019 - page 2A**

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As Sacramento officials grapple with protests over the Stephon Clark case, the family of another young black man shot to death by Sacramento police have sued the city alleging that officers shot him while he was in the midst of a mental health crisis and holding his hands in the air.

The lawsuit was filed Monday in U.S. District Court on behalf of the family of **Darell Richards**, a Sacramento teenager shot to death Sept. 6, 2018, in a Curtis Park backyard after a 911 call reported a man walking along Broadway wearing a hospital mask and pointing a gun at people.

The call prompted an hours-long search that stretched from Broadway and 20th Street to Curtis Park, where streets were blocked off and a K-9 police dog and California Highway Patrol helicopter were used to locate him hiding under a stairwell.

Police said at the time that Richards, who the suit says was 18, was shot after he pointed a gun at them. The gun later was found to be a pellet pistol that resembled a 9 mm handgun, and police video showed he had a gun but did not show where he had pointed it.

The lawsuit, filed by attorney John Burris, disputes that, saying that Richards was "cowering under the raised deck" as SWAT officers "screamed commands at the confused teenager and immediately opened fire. ..."

The suit also claims that Richards was holding his hands up "and positioned in a surrender posture, with his palms open and facing the officers at the time that defendants began to shoot him," a claim that the suit says is bolstered by the fact that he was shot through his right palm.

"... Decedent was not holding a firearm at the time that he was shot to death," the suit claims.

The city had no immediate comment on the lawsuit, which claims that officers "made a series of tactical errors in attempting to detain him while he was in the midst of a mental health crisis," including a failure to try and contact him to de-escalate the incident or bring in a hostage negotiation team to talk him out of the backyard.

The Richards shooting has been controversial, with Black Lives Matters activists criticizing the fact that some officers' body cameras were turned off at the time of the shooting - including one worn by a SWAT officer who fired at him. The city later said it was changing its policy on where the cameras are worn to prevent them from accidentally being turned off when officers aimed their rifles.

The filing of the lawsuit comes as activists have laid siege to police department headquarters and City Hall over announcements in the past week that the district attorney and attorney general will

not file charges against the officers who shot Clark, an unarmed 22-year-old killed in his grandparents' backyard March 18, 2018, by officers who said they thought he was pointing a gun at them. Clark was later found to be carrying only a cell phone.

The Clark shooting has spawned demonstrations that have lasted for a year, and that intensified in the past week with protests at the police department, at a City Hall meeting Tuesday night that was repeatedly disrupted and with a march through East Sacramento's Fab 40s neighborhood that resulted in 84 people being arrested, including clergy, lawyers and journalists.

A sit-in at Arden Fair, the city's largest shopping center, prompted management to keep the mall closed Sunday, and Sacramento Kings officials worried about protest marches have surrounded the Golden 1 Center downtown with fencing and gates.

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