

\$10M lawsuit filed in fatal Royal Oak police - Oakland Press, The (Pontiac, MI) - November 27, 2018

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Parents of a Royal Oak man fatally shot by police are seeking \$10 million in a lawsuit, claiming police used excessive force and violated his civil rights when he was was shot.

Cody Reynolds, 20, was shot May 14 on Hudson Street near South Wilson in Royal Oak. The incidents leading up to the fatal shooting started after 3 a.m. when Reynolds' mother called 911 from their house in the 1000 block of Hoffman.

She told police Reynolds had stabbed her with a knife and struck his father in the head with a guitar.

"Reynolds was the victim of unlawful deadly force while unarmed, having been shot multiple times, with the fatal gunshot wound to his back," the family's attorney A. Vince Colella said in the lawsuit, which was filed Monday in U.S. District Court in Detroit.

The suit names the city and Royal Oak Officer Ryan Addis as defendants.

City Attorney Dave Gillam said the city would make no comment on the suit.

"We're not going to litigate the case in the press," he said.

Police Chief Corrigan O'Donohue said he had no comments beyond those he made Aug. 16, when the Oakland County prosecutor's office ruled that the shooting was a justifiable homicide. At that time he said "the events that occurred on May 14 can only be described as heartbreaking ... our thoughts and prayers go out to the Reynolds family."

Oakland County Sheriff's detectives investigated the shooting, reviewing police-car video and audio recordings before turning the case over to prosecutors for review.

Addis, a four-year veteran of the department, spotted Reynolds on nearby Hudson Street as the officer was driving to investigate the stabbing, authorities said at the time.

Prosecutors said Addis tried to back away from Reynolds and ordered him to the ground. Reynolds briefly complied, then suddenly sprang up and lunged at the officer. Prosecutors said the officer believed Reynolds posed a deadly threat.

Later was it discovered that Reynolds no longer had the knife he used to stab his mother, prosecutors said.

An autopsy by Dr. Bernardino Pacris, Oakland County's deputy medical examiner, said Reynolds

was shot in the chest and back a total of four times. Blood tests showed that Reynolds had the hallucinogenic drug psilocin in his system, an illegal substance.

Colella said in a statement Monday that the medical examiner determined the first shot struck Reynolds in the chest and was non-fatal.

"Three other bullet wounds were found in his back," he said. "Why? The report does not explain this use of excessive and deadly force."

The suit alleges that evidence -- including the autopsy report -- supports the claim that the officer unlawfully shot Reynolds multiple times in his back without cause.

Reynolds' death came just over a month after motorist Antonino Gordon, 28, was fatally shot by a Royal Oak officer April 10 at the White Castle at 13 Mile Road and Coolidge. Genesee County prosecutors reviewed the case and ruled Aug. 1 that the shooting was justified.

The two fatal police shootings by Royal Oak police this year were the first the department has seen since an officer fatally shot a fraud suspect on Main Street in 1998. That shooting was ruled accidental by the Oakland County prosecutor's office.

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