

Autopsy shows man shot and killed by Chicago police was hit in the back

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FULL TEXT

A South Side man fatally shot by a Chicago police officer in June died from a single gunshot wound to the back that penetrated his spine and lungs, according to autopsy results released on Tuesday.

The findings come a little more than a week after attorneys for Maurice Granton Jr.'s family filed a lawsuit against the city, claiming officers overreacted when they shot him.

The autopsy by the Cook County medical examiner's office confirmed claims made by the family's attorney that Granton, 24, was shot in the back. After piercing the right side of Granton's back, the bullet penetrated his vertebra and his left lung, according to the report by Stephanie Powers, an assistant Cook County medical examiner who performed the autopsy the morning after Granton's death.

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The bullet traveled through Granton's torso from right to left and in an upward angle, the report stated. His death was ruled a homicide, meaning his death came at the hands of another person.

A toxicology report found marijuana in Granton's system at the time of his death.

Chicago police have previously said the Wentworth District tactical officers were in the area conducting a narcotics investigation when they were directed to the 300 block of East 47th Street. Surveillance footage showed Granton and others milling around under the CTA Green Line before a police car pulled up and the men scattered. Body camera footage, released by the Civilian Office of Police Accountability late last month, captured an officer telling Granton "Come here, man," and then chasing Granton, who jumped a wooden fence, leaving the view of that officer's body camera. That officer abandoned the chase, shouting in pain. The view from his camera indicated he was limping away.

But his camera captured the sound of a single gunshot, then a pause, followed by three more shots in quick succession.

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The body camera footage posted from the officer who appears to have opened fire did not include audio at the time of the shooting. That video showed Granton running across a vacant lot and darting onto a wrought iron fence with one leg raised. As both hands reached for the top of the fence, the officer can be seen raising his gun. The footage then showed Granton fall from the fence, stumble to his left a few feet and then drop to the ground, writhing in pain.

Granton was taken to an area hospital where he was later pronounced dead.

The suit, filed on behalf of the mother of Granton's two young children, claimed Granton cannot be seen carrying a gun or other weapon in the bodycam footage, adding that he posed no threat of harm to police or the public.

The case remains under investigation by COPA.

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Credit: William Lee

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