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Man files suit after being shot and paralyzed by Florida police officer who used firearm instead of Taser | KRDO

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By Raja Razek, CNN

A man paralyzed after being shot by a Hollywood, Florida, police officer who [mistook his own gun for a Taser](#) has filed a federal lawsuit, court records show.

On July 3, 2021, police shot Michael Ortiz in the back while he was on the ground naked and in handcuffs, according to the complaint filed in US District Court for the Southern District of Florida.

Ortiz had called 911 from his mother's house after having a "mental health emergency and chest pains," according to the complaint. When first responders arrived, Ortiz had taken a shower and was speaking incoherently, and was placed on the ground where he was "flailing his arms and legs helplessly," the complaint says.

Ortiz was tased by one officer and became alarmed after "regaining conscience," and was still under the effects of the mental health crisis when a second officer then placed a gun on Ortiz's back and shot him, according to the complaint.

The officer mistakenly fired a gun instead of a Taser, the Hollywood Police Department said in a statement.

“An initial review suggests the officer intended to deploy his taser, but instead discharged his firearm,” the statement said.

Ortiz is now paralyzed and requires round-the-clock care, the complaint alleges.

Last September, the officer who fired his gun was charged with a crime “involving the shooting of a man who was seriously injured,” Broward State Attorney Harold F. Pryor announced.

The officer “is charged with one count of culpable negligence, inflicting actual personal injury, a first-degree misdemeanor,” according to the release.

Civil rights attorney Benjamin Crump filed the federal suit on Ortiz’s behalf.

“We are seeking greater justice for Michael Ortiz,” Crump said, alongside other attorneys at a news conference Wednesday.

Co-counsel attorney Hunter Shkolnik discussed a video that he says shows a “police officer step off an elevator, pull his gun out of his — and you are watching this in slow motion — pulling the gun out, putting it right to the back of Michael when he is laying on the ground naked and handcuffed behind his back.”

That video has not been publicly released by a misdemeanor court judge, attorneys say.

The complaint, filed on Tuesday against the City of Hollywood, Hollywood Police Department, Hollywood Fire Rescue and Beach Safety Department and others, is requesting compensation and a jury trial.

According to Shkolnik, Ortiz owes \$3 million in medical bills “to date.”

CNN has reached out to the City of Hollywood and its police and fire departments for comment.

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