

# Detroit police killed 33-year-old mother one week before Christmas

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On Sunday, December 19, police shot and killed Nakita Williams, 33, in Detroit, Michigan. She allegedly brandished a weapon—later determined to be an airsoft gun—at customers and employees at a Sunoco gas station on the city’s east side during an apparent mental health crisis.

Four Detroit police officers arrived at the gas station after receiving multiple 911 calls and opened fire on Williams, who succumbed to her wounds on the way to the hospital.

Williams left behind four children to grieve just a week before the Christmas holidays. “They been crying all day. I’m trying to make them understand, but that’s something you’ll never get over,” Eddie Dobbs, the father of her children told ClickOnDetroit.

According to Detroit Police Chief James White, an independent investigation is being conducted by the Michigan State Police. DPD has released stills from body cam footage but not the entire video itself.

“As one of the customers was coming up to the store, she encountered that customer, pointed a gun at that customer, (and) that customer turned and walks away. She exits the store,” White explained. “At that precise moment, officers encountered her. She turns and aims the weapon at the officer. The officers engaged her,” he continued.

White said the officers fired shots, hit the suspect, and then kicked the weapon away from her—upon which they discovered the “weapon” was just an airsoft gun.

The chief says Williams never fired the airsoft gun but had threatened people for at least seven minutes. The 911 call came in around 6:02 p.m. and police showed up and confronted her around 6:09 p.m.

“This is someone’s sister, perhaps someone’s mother, certainly someone’s daughter. So, this is a tragic day. Here we are, and now we look at our

policies, our practices and ensure that they were followed. But from what I can see, she was pointing a weapon and the officers engaged her. That’s just a tragic situation we had to engage in,” White said, feigning sympathy to tamp down popular outrage while excusing the killing.

In the United States, police deploy lethal force against the working class on a regular basis, killing over 1,000 individuals each year with near full impunity.

Police have killed at least 1,051 people in 2021 alone according to Mapping Police Violence. There were only 12 days in 2021 where a police killing was not recorded in the United States. Between 2013 and 2021, officers from the Detroit Police Department have killed 23 people, including 19-year-old Michael Adams III, who was shot and killed by undercover cops in August 2021.

Despite the largest protest wave against police violence in US history following the murder of George Floyd in May 2020 police killings have continued unabated and funding for departments across the country has only increased. This includes efforts to hire even more police officers by easing requirements.

Already, an applicant must only meet the following standards to be considered for a position as a Detroit police officer: be 18 years old, a US citizen, have a high school graduation or GED, 20/20 eyesight (or 20/20 vision corrected), a valid Michigan driver’s license and a clean driving record, and have no felony convictions on your record (even if expunged). Accepted candidates must attend basic training at the Detroit Metropolitan Police Academy after passing the screening process. A minimum of 19 weeks of classes is required for basic training. Therefore, it takes roughly 4-5 months to become a police officer while in

Detroit it takes longer, 11-22 months, clocking in 1,800 hours, to become a licensed barber.

The total police spending in Detroit's 2022 budget is \$341 million while the health department budget is \$42.8 million, and its housing department budget is \$69.9 million. The focus of the ruling class is not on allocating necessary resources to mitigate and eliminate the spread of COVID-19 but to ensure the working class stays in their place including by suppressing protests and strikes with a well funded police force.



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