

Protesters march after Omari Cryer shot and killed by US Marshal in Louisville, Kentucky

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Protesters marched through downtown Louisville, Kentucky on Monday to demand justice for Omari Cryer, a twenty-five-year-old African American man who was shot and killed by a deputy with the US Marshals Task Force on Friday morning. The demonstrators observed a moment of silence before releasing balloons into the air and chanting “Justice for Omari.”

While law enforcement officials have released few details about the shooting, the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) released a statement on Saturday that US Marshals were “attempting to serve an arrest warrant on a suspect in the 800 block of Sutcliffe Avenue for domestic violence, strangulation and assault when an altercation ensued with the suspect.”

The statement said that a deputy US Marshal “discharged his weapon striking the suspect,” and officers on the scene “rendered aid, but the suspect was pronounced deceased.”

Subsequent information from the coroner’s office confirmed that Cryer was shot more than once. People at the scene also told the *Louisville Courier Journal* that the US Marshals Task Force raided the house where Cryer was a guest of a friend and he “ran from the home toward Sutcliffe Avenue.” They also reported that even though the shooting took place at 9:00 a.m., Cryer’s body was still at the location where he was shot as of 1:30 p.m.

On Sunday, family, friends and supporters organized a protest at Jefferson Square Park across from Louisville Metro Hall and the Jefferson County District Court. They demanded city officials provide an explanation to Cryer’s mother, who has yet to be allowed to view the body of her son. Family members said that Cryer had several children of his own.

Ansong McGhee, Cryer’s cousin, said, “We want to

know what happened to Omari Cryer, we want to know.” McGhee added, according to WDRB, “They’re killing our kids and we’re sick of it. I’m sick and tired of being sick and tired. We’re out here saying another name. Another name. Another black man is dead.”

On Monday, LMPD Police Chief Erika Shields held a press conference to answer questions. Shields said, “There was a brief foot pursuit. They ran upon a fence. Subsequently, the Marshals opened fire, striking Mr. Cryer.”

Shields declined to elaborate on the original claim that there was an altercation between the US Marshal and Cryer. Instead, Shields said that Cryer was armed with a gun although she did not say if he brandished the weapon or if the agents chasing him were aware that he was armed.

When asked if Cryer was shot in the back, she said it was too early in the investigation to provide that information. Shields also said that surveillance and bodycam video would be made available in the “near future” along with the full coroner’s report.

Shields was also asked why the US Marshals Task Force was involved in serving an arrest warrant on state charges, to which she replied that LMPD has a partnership with the US Marshals Service. “[The Marshals] work with us to serve high-risk felony warrants,” she said.

Shields also used the press conference to review the details of the warrant being served on Cryer as well as his prior felony charges.

With the memory of the brutal murder of Breonna Taylor by LMPD officers in March 2020 still fresh in the minds of the public, Louisville city officials are concerned that the shooting of Cryer will lead to wider protests. The officer who fired 16 rounds into Taylor’s apartment and killed her, following the serving of a no-

knock warrant, was never charged with a crime.



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