

# Family files suit over immigrant postal worker who died in police custody

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Last November, Kingsley Fifi Bimpong, a 50-year-old immigrant postal worker, died after Eagan, Minnesota police arrested him on false suspicion of drunk driving and left him to suffer a fatal stroke on the floor of a jail cell.

On October 10, the family of Bimpong filed a lawsuit against the police and correction officers and Dakota County for violations of Bimpong's constitutional right against cruel and unusual punishment and due process violations. The lawsuit is demanding \$120 million in addition to policy changes. The attorney representing Bimpong's family told the local KARE11 news that it is "one of the worst jail deaths we've ever seen."

Bimpong, who worked at the United States Postal Service distribution center in Eagan, had complained of a severe headache as he left his shift on the night of November 16, 2024. Driving home, he was stopped by police for allegedly crossing the center line. Officers claimed he appeared intoxicated and took him into custody.

From bodycam footage, officers could be heard asking if he was having a stroke at the time of arrest, as he was displaying clear signs of a stroke, such as overall disorientation, inability to state his name, address or workplace (despite wearing a USPS vest). The question was cut off from body camera footage. Additionally, a specially trained "Drug Recognition Expert," Martin Jensen, was called to assess whether Bimpong was under the influence of drugs at the time of arrest. Jensen's response was that it would be "a whole bunch of time wasted." When the officer calling him followed up with a question of whether to take him to the hospital, Jensen replied "For what?"

In jail, Bimpong was left in a holding cell for hours in his own urine. Rather than call for medical attention, police and jail staff left him on the cell floor for hours.

When they finally checked on him, he was unresponsive.

Bimpong was later taken to the hospital and declared brain dead from an intraparenchymal hemorrhage. A toxicology report confirmed there were no drugs or alcohol in his system.

Bimpong's death in custody sheds light on several aspects of the brutality of American capitalist society.

First, there is the widespread police violence, which is a daily fact of life throughout the country. In 2024, there were over 1,270 recorded police killings by the Police Violence Report organization, more than any other year in the past decade. Most deaths by police violence involve shootings (96 percent), but beatings, the use of TASER weapons and negligence, make up the rest.

Second, there is the contempt and hostility of the government towards immigrants, who are being made the first target of Trump's attack on the Constitution through massive illegal deportations and lawless Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids. Nearly 60,000 immigrants are currently in custody, the most ever, according to NBC News. Nearly three-quarters have no criminal convictions.

The attack on immigrants' rights is an attack on all rights. The Trump administration is deploying troops to Chicago, Portland, Memphis and other cities and reportedly preparing to invoke the Insurrection Act. The constitutional rights which were violated in Bimpong's case, under the Trump administration, are being violated on a massive scale.

The government shutdown, now in its third week, shows the ultimate target of dictatorship is the working class. It is affecting hundreds of thousands of federal workers (postal workers are not affected because USPS is self-funded), while Trump is using the shutdown to

go after social programs like Social Security.

Third, there is America's industrial slaughterhouse, in which workplace deaths are a regular occurrence. The day after Bimpong's family filed suit, a massive fireball destroyed a Tennessee explosives plant, killing all 16 workers on the job at the time. Similar disasters include the Clairton Coke Works explosion, an explosion at a fireworks factory in California, and explosions at a Nebraska biofuel plant, a Louisiana petrochemical plant and Chevron's El Segundo refinery in Los Angeles.

At least two USPS letter carriers, Jacob Taylor and Dan Workman, have died this year due to heat-related causes. Heatstroke and similar issues have plagued carriers, especially due to speedup and harassment by management. In 2023, veteran carrier Eugene Gates died on the job shortly after having received the first disciplinary letter of his career.

In June, a worker at an Atlanta-area distribution center collapsed on the job. Last year, another worker, Shannon Barnes, died at the same facility of a brain aneurysm. There is no cell phone service inside the building, contributing to a loss of valuable time before paramedics arrived.

Conditions at USPS are worsening due to the "Delivering for America" campaign to consolidate and close post offices and reduce the size of the workforce. New Postmaster General David Steiner is a former "safety" executive at Amazon and UPS, which are notorious for unsafe working conditions. Amazon is a pioneer in the use of robotics and electronic surveillance to enforce dangerous speedup; UPS delivery vehicles do not have air conditioning. UPS is also going through its own "Network of the Future" restructuring, following a sellout contract two years ago by the Teamsters union.

The postal unions barely acknowledge the wave of deaths at USPS and tell workers to put their faith in the corporate-controlled courts. Meanwhile, they have actively collaborated in enforcing Delivering for America and other attacks on workers. None of the unions have proposed any independent action against Trump's dictatorship or the government shutdown.

This is not an isolated issue. The United Auto Workers has still kept silent on the April death of Ronald Adams Sr. at the Dundee Engine Plant near Detroit. Adams' death has been publicized and

investigated only through the efforts of the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees, which has launched a workers' inquest into the incident.

A similar initiative has been undertaken to expose those responsible for deaths at the post office. "Workers must not allow management and the union bureaucrats to sweep their deaths under the rug!" the USPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee declared in a June statement.

"The investigation will show how the lives of postal workers and other delivery workers are being sacrificed for the sake of profit," the statement continued. It "will be a critical element in building an independent movement from below to fight for workers' power. The goal is to empower rank-and-file committees to take control of safety conditions and line speed, abolish toothless joint labor-management safety committees and end the dictatorship of production for profit."



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