

Alabama black man files \$50 million lawsuit against police officer that assaulted him



Florence, Alabama Dec 15, 2023 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Attorney for Demarcus Key, the 44-year old Black man was viciously attacked, stuck multiple times in the face, bloodying his nose and mouth, and threatened with a gun by Lieutenant Max Dotson from the Sheffield Police Department, announced today that they have filed a federal lawsuit against the officers (Max Dotson, Tyler Barnett, Ryan Wells, and Sergeant Brian Perry) who conspired together to have him jailed on Christmas Eve of 2022. Officer Tyler Barnett kneed Key in the side multiple times when placing him in the law enforcement vehicle. Key is represented by national Civil Rights attorney Roderick Van Daniel. Van Daniel also represents Marvin Long, the Sheffield resident who was brutally attacked by Max Dotson as well along with other Sheffield Police Officers and with their K9 Police Dog, plus Colbert County Sheriff's Deputies.

<https://youtu.be/CFBfj56nVxw?si=WhTxu8jvs9o3HfcM>

“This man was innocent,” said Van Daniel. “A citizen cannot go to the store without being assaulted, gun pulled on then framed by the Shoals areas police officers. This culture of police misconduct has to

change. The citizens are afraid to leave their homes even during the holidays. Look what happen to Demarcus Key; he was jailed on Christmas Eve while his children and family was suffering. He did nothing wrong that day. However, the City of Florence nor the City of Sheffield held these officers accountable.”

Attorney Roderick Van Daniel stated, “We will let the constitutional of the United States of America hold these officers accountable for their action of police misconduct and fight for justice for Demarcus Key plus for all of the citizens who have been impacted by this egregious culture of broken policy and procedures. Demarcus Key was taken to jail on Christmas Eve of 2022. This Christmas, we filed a \$50,000,000 lawsuit against the City of Florence and City of Sheffield not just for Mr. Key but for the egregious culture of police corruption towards the citizens in the Shoals community. These salvage officers need to be held accountable for their actions. This maybe your family member next. It’s time for a change entering the new year of 2024.”

This egregious culture of police misconduct is supported by Mayor Steve Stanley from Sheffield, Alabama. He stated during the Marvin Long arrest that “From what we could tell, the dog never broke the skin of the subject,” Mayor Steve Stanley told local outlets, according to the lawsuit. “The actions by our officers certainly got Mr. Long to stop and come into compliance with the arrest attempt.”

The lawsuit names three officers with the Florence Police Department (FPD). The officers include Tyler Barnett, Ryan Wells, and Sergeant Brian Perry. Further, the officer with Sheffield Police Department named is Lieutenant Max Dotson when this incident occurred. Additionally, City of Florence and City of Sheffield are named. Also, Good Spirits, Inc. is named as a defendant in this lawsuit.

“These officers conspired to arrest Mr. Key against his civil rights when the video from Good Spirits, Inc. was very clear that Max Dotson was the aggressor. Demarcus was attacked by Dotson and Barnett. Mr. Key told the officers to look at the video; so, they could make a through determination which they did look at the video but still unlawfully arrested Mr. Key.”

Van Daniel stated “hopefully filing this historic \$50,000,000 dollar lawsuit will help the leadership of the City of Sheffield and City of Florence will help them review the policy and procedures to help change the egregious culture of police misconduct to stop the inhuman treatment of the citizens in the Shoals area. The time for change is now. They took a father from his home intentionally on Christmas Eve. This has to stop. Mr. Key had to pay a lawyer to fight these charges for months. This was not only an emotional time for Demarcus during Christmas time and afterwards but also this impacted his children. Enough with the reckless disregard to the citizens in the Shoals area. Enough with the cover ups. Enough with this form of injustice. The time is now for this community to stand up and fight for their rights to let the Constitution be the voice hold these police officers accountable; if their local leaders of their community will not.”

“It is very clear and known in this community that these officers think that they are above the law,” said Van Daniel.

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