

# Suit seeks millions in death of Richmond man tasered by South Boston police

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A federal lawsuit is alleging that South Boston police fatally tased a Richmond man two years ago, denying him immediate care at the doors of a South Boston medical facility by transporting him instead to jail.

Filed in U.S. District Court in Danville, the suit is seeking \$25 million in damages on each of eleven counts in the death of Linwood Raymond Lambert Jr., 46, in May 2013.

The suit filed by a Philadelphia law firm on behalf of Lambert's sister alleges a broad cover-up of details leading up to Lambert's death. It also includes

sweeping allegations of a failure on the part of South Boston authorities to reveal details of the case and to properly train their officers to use Taser stun guns.

"The death of Linwood Lambert Jr. is tragic because it could have been prevented," lawyer Ramon A. Arreola said in a press release issued Friday. "The use of TASER weapons by law enforcement officers has resulted in hundreds of unnecessary deaths across the United States."

A representative for the South Boston town police declined comment, saying the case from two years ago remains under investigation. Efforts to reach South Boston's town attorney were unsuccessful.

Press releases issued by the Virginia State Police and South Boston authorities in the weeks after Lambert's death did not mention that he had been tased. The cause of death has been listed as cardiac arrest but the suit claims that key details and people involved in the case remain a mystery.

Filed late last month, the suit, for instance, names South Boston Police Chief James W. Binner and Deputy Chief Brian K. Lovelace. But it also lists 15 male and 15 female "John Doe" officers.

Lambert was taken into custody after reports of loud noises at a South Boston motel in the early morning hours of May 4, 2013. Police responded three times to the facility, finally approaching Lambert who was unarmed and "voluntarily agreed to go with the police officers to the Halifax Regional Hospital for treatment of an apparent medical/psychiatric condition," according to the suit.



Gavel

But the suit claims that outside the hospital doors Lambert was tased. The suit further alleges that instead of providing medical care to Lambert, the officers “left the hospital grounds with him” sometime between 5 and 6 a.m. to an undisclosed location.

The “deliberate indifference to the health, welfare and safety of Lambert constitutes a serious violation of his constitutional rights,” the suit alleges.

The suit alleges that Lambert’s death was preventable and unwarranted, and was precipitated by inadequately trained police officers and a failure to timely provide nearby medical care. It further alleges that the police department’s failure to provide information about details of Lambert’s death “constitutes a conspiracy” to deprive Lambert and his family of their constitutional rights.

Citing medical records from the hospital, the suit alleges that Lambert was tased outside the hospital sometime before he went into cardiac arrest at the jail, only to be transferred back to the hospital by rescue units.

The suit further argues that police purposely misled the public by not mentioning in news releases that Lambert had been tased.