

MINNEAPOLIS

Minneapolis police officer who shot and killed man identified; man had shot his girlfriend

Investigators say Mario Benjamin, 32, shot his girlfriend in front of the couple's children before police arrived.

By **Liz Sawyer** (<https://www.startribune.com/liz-sawyer/6370533/>) Star Tribune |

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Mario Philip Benjamin shot and wounded his girlfriend during a domestic dispute last week in front of her four children and was kneeling next to her when police arrived, authorities say.

Within moments, a Minneapolis police officer [shot Benjamin](http://www.startribune.com/minneapolis-police-fatally-shoot-man-after-apparent-domestic-call/513537322/) (<http://www.startribune.com/minneapolis-police-fatally-shoot-man-after-apparent-domestic-call/513537322/>), 32, after repeatedly ordering him to drop his weapon, police said. He died at the scene in north Minneapolis' Jordan neighborhood.

A firearm was found near his body, according to the state Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. Body cameras captured video of the incident.

On Thursday, the BCA identified the officer who shot Benjamin as Jason Wolff, a seven-year veteran. Department records identified his partner as [Officer Ryan Davis](http://www.startribune.com/officers-recount-efforts-to-save-victims-of-fiery-i-94-crash/437961173/) (<http://www.startribune.com/officers-recount-efforts-to-save-victims-of-fiery-i-94-crash/437961173/>), a four-year veteran. Both remain on paid administrative leave, standard procedure after an on-duty shooting.

The altercation began before 3 a.m. Aug. 2, when sources familiar with the investigation say the woman had driven up to the 2400 block of N. Emerson Avenue in her minivan with her four children in tow. She got out of the van, the sources said, and a confrontation broke out between her and Benjamin outside of a home near the end of the block.

Soon after, police responded to two ShotSpotter activations in the area and a report of a woman lying in the road. Benjamin shot the woman in the upper body within view of the children — two of whom were his own, authorities say. All four children witnessed the fatal police shooting that followed.

An autopsy by the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office determined that Benjamin died of gunshot wounds. The manner of death was ruled a homicide. He has no permanent address on record, but friends say he lived in Minneapolis.

Benjamin was convicted of being a felon in possession of a firearm in 2004 but had no serious criminal record for the past 15 years.

The woman, who has not been identified, remains hospitalized at North Memorial Health Hospital in Robbinsdale. She is expected to survive, authorities said.



LEILA NAVIDI - STAR TRIBUNE

The state Bureau of Criminal Apprehension investigated the scene after Minneapolis police shot and killed a man last week on the 2400

Liz Sawyer covers breaking news, crime and corrections for the Star Tribune. She previously wrote about suburban life in the south metro.

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