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## City Settles Lawsuit Brought by Family of Mother Killed by Ex-Boyfriend

Written by Stacey Cohan



Two children of a DC woman murdered by her ex-boyfriend are getting money from the District.

The Corporation Counsel is settling a lawsuit brought by the family of Nicole McNeil.

The Counsel says police failed to protect McNeil from her abusive ex-boyfriend.

Nicole McNeil did everything she could to get away from James Moore. She went to court and got a civil protection order to keep him from herself and her family. So when Moore showed up at Nicole's mother's home on October 17, 2000, her mother Catherine called police - repeatedly.

But nobody came.

That was Catherine McNeil's second call to police in the early morning hours of October 17th. Her daughter Nicole was out with a date and Nicole's ex-boyfriend was lurking outside the family's home.

Less than two hours after McNeil's third call to 911, her daughter arrived home and the ex-boyfriend, James Moore, was waiting.

Nicole was stabbed 30 times, by a man with a long, documented history of abusing her. Even on the night Nicole gave birth to James Moore's daughter Jada, police had to be called to remove a violent James Moore from the hospital. A civil protection order had been granted to keep Moore away from Nicole and her family. And lawyer Doug Sparks says DC police failed Nicole when they didn't respond to her mother's calls that night.

In a police report, an officer admits he had been called to the area hours before the murder but says: "I arrived at the scene...however it was nothing found." Sparks says the officer never even stopped his car. But it's not easy to sue the police for failing to protect someone.

But Sparks used a legal strategy never tried here before he says, hinging the case on the department's duties involving domestic violence cases. And in an unusual move, the city settled out of court,

But the settlement is not enough to move Nicole's children to a better neighborhood and McNeil worries what will happen to Jada and other girls in her daughter's situation.

We did speak to the Corporation Counsel who handled the case for the city. They said its office looked at all of the facts and acted in the appropriate manner by settling the case. And we spoke to Ayuda - a local organization that helps domestic violence victims. They say the city has had a problem enforcing civil protection orders, but that the police department is making an effort to improve.

### NICOLE MCNEIL MEMORIAL FUND

(All donations to benefit Nicole's minor children)

Riggs Bank, N.A.  
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