

# East Cleveland offers to drop charges against Cleveland police supervisors in exchange for \$5,000, report says

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CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Defense attorneys for five Cleveland police supervisors charged in connection with the fatal shootings of Timothy Russell and Malissa Williams say East Cleveland offered to drop their charges if they each paid \$5,000, Fox 8 [reports](#).

The supervisors could still go on trial on dereliction of duty charges, but Law Director Willa Hemmons made the offer to drop the charges if they paid that, the TV reports. Lawyer Henry Hilow told FOX 8 the offer was made to him twice.

"And there's no basis for it in law, no basis for a practicing attorney. In fact, to a lay person, this would be extortion," he told the station.

East Cleveland Mayor Brandon King told the station he was aware of it, but waited to comment until the law director was with him.

A letter from Hemmons says she intends to prosecute, but the city also looked to "mitigate charges," the station reports.

Hemmons [responded to Fox 8 a day later](#) and said, "I mean, if that's the way you want to characterize it, you can, but I think it's been grossly distorted."

The maximum fine, if the supervisors are convicted, is \$1,000, the station reports, but the city is asking for \$5,000. Fox 8 obtained letters sent by the attorneys which state, "forget it."

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Cleveland State University Law Professor Jonathan Witmer-Rich told the station that it's common for prosecutors to work out restitution payments if someone is going through a first offenders program. But, he added this situation is "much more unusual," the station reports.

The Nov. 29, 2012 chase started near the Justice Center and ended in a middle school parking lot in East Cleveland.

The chase started when an officer thought he heard a gunshot near the Justice Center. Prosecutors said during former police officer Michael Brelo's trial that the car backfired.

The chase ended at Heritage Middle School. Officers followed the car into the school parking lot and blocked the exit. The car almost hit an officer who was standing outside his cruiser and shots were fired, according to police.

Thirteen officers fired a total of 137 shots at a Chevrolet Malibu and killed Russell and Williams.

Michael Brelo is the only officer brought to trial to date. He was [acquitted](#) in May 2015 of two counts of involuntary manslaughter.

The city handed down discipline to [supervisors](#) and [officers](#) involved in the case. Brelo was fired.

The supervisors were terminated but got their jobs reinstated through arbitration and [other disciplinary actions against supervisors](#) were lessened or rescinded.