

Police Officers Cleared of Wrongdoing, New Jersey Criminal Defense Attorneys Report

The [New Jersey criminal defense attorneys](#) at Helmer, Paul, Conley, and Kasselmann, P.A. have been following the public dissent surrounding the December 2011 death of Malik Williams, and the grand jury has finally reached a consensus on the accountability of the officers who shot Williams. Sgt. Jose A. Brito of the Garfield police department and Kenneth Keenan of the Bergen County police department were cleared of all charges of wrongdoing in Malik Williams' death, in a statement released by Bergen County Prosecutor John Molinelli.

19-year-old Williams was detained on domestic violence charges and fled the Garfield police station during processing. In the chase that followed, Williams barricaded himself in a garage on Dahnert Park Road, and when the officers arrived, Williams rushed at them with a claw hammer and a 16-inch hand saw. He was killed by two shots fired by Keenan and Brito.

Williams' death sparked numerous marches and protests by his family and the Garfield community. A New Jersey grand jury opened an investigation into the shooting in March. The jury's decision, announced this month, made public details about the case that had been previously undisclosed, such as Williams' attack on the police with a hammer and saw. According to [New Jersey criminal defense attorneys](#), an attack with these weapons justified the response of Brito and Keenan in shooting Williams.

Although Williams' family and supporters claimed that the officers shot Williams in the back, [New Jersey criminal defense attorneys](#) for Brito and Keenan declared this allegation untrue, based on crime scene evidence, and argued that the police officers had acted in self-defense against an escaped criminal.

If you or a loved one has been charged with a criminal act, the NJ criminal attorneys at Helmer, Paul, Conley, and Kasselmann can offer you counsel and defense in court. Contact our law firm at 1-877-435-6371 today for a free, no-strings-attached consultation.