

CRIME

September 11, 2017 11:03 pm
Updated: September 12, 2017 1:00 am

Durham police change procedure for notifying SIU after reviewing Dafonte Miller case



By [Briana Carnegie](#) News Anchor AM640



Dafonte Miller was seriously injured after an alleged assault by an off-duty Toronto police officer in Whitby, Ont. on Dec. 28, 2016.

Global News / Handout

Editor's note: This story has been updated to reflect when the Special Investigations Unit was notified in Dafonte Miller's case.

Durham Regional Police have changed their procedure for notifying Ontario's police watchdog of incidents involving police, after reviewing their role in the case of a young black man who was allegedly beaten by an off-duty Toronto police officer in Whitby last December.

Toronto Const. Michael Theriault and his brother, Christian, are charged in Dafonte Miller's case. They are accused of chasing down Miller in Whitby on Dec. 28, 2016 and allegedly assaulting him with a steel pipe.

The incident was not immediately reported to the [Special Investigations Unit](#) until this past April and has sparked accusations of a cover-up.

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Durham Police Chief Paul Martin says he is confident his department followed the established procedures but feels those procedures "need to be changed."

"Specifically, the standard protocols we followed failed to ensure the public trust and transparency they were designed to enhance, and which every member of this community has a right to expect," Martin said in a statement on Monday.

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The SIU, a provincial law enforcement agency, exists to independently investigate incidents involving police officers and civilians that have resulted in serious injury. Currently, it is up to the police service of the involved officer to decide whether there are sufficient grounds to call in the SIU.

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Martin says in cases where another police service officer is involved in an incident in Durham, the responsibility would fall on that officer's police department.

“In my opinion, this standard does not serve our community,” the chief said.

From here on, Durham's police chief says he will notify the SIU of any conflict between one of their citizens and a police officer, no exceptions.

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“If the officer is from our police service, the procedure will apply. If they are from another service, the procedure will apply, on duty or off,” he said.

“Whatever happens in Durham will be the responsibility of the Durham Regional Police Service. As the Chief, I guarantee it.”

With files from Global News and The Canadian Press.