

Autistic People Who Died in Police Custody or at Police Hands — Documented Cases

Compiled October 15, 2026. No government in the US, UK, or Canada tracks autism in custody-death statistics, so every list below is built from news reports, inquests, court records, and two volunteer memorial databases (the [Autism Memorial](#) and its companion [Memorial Annex](#)). Treat the totals as a floor, not a ceiling.

The count

Category	Confirmed autistic	Autism reported but unconfirmed/disputed
A. Died during or right after police restraint/detention (no shooting)	11	3
B. Died in jail or prison after arrest	7	0
C. Shot dead by police	29	2
Total	47	5

Categories A + B (the strict "died in custody" definition) = 18 confirmed, 21 including flagged cases. Period covered: 2005 – July 2026. Mostly US, with UK, Canada, Australia, Sweden, Israel, Japan, Philippines, and Greece.

A. Died during or after police restraint / detention (no gunfire)

These are the cases closest to a "died in custody" definition: the person was alive when police took control of them and died from what happened next.

#	Name	Age	Date	Place	What happened	Outcome
1	Hansel Cunningham	30	Nov 20, 2005	Des Plaines, IL	Autistic group-home resident bit a caregiver; police used Taser and restraint; died of suffocation after being restrained up to four minutes (Amnesty International)	Ruled homicide (Amnesty International)
2	Raymond Lee Mitchell	21	Jul 19, 2006	Perris, CA	Riverside County Sheriff's deputies; asphyxiated/restrained (Fatal Encounters ; Memorial Annex 2006)	n.a.

#	Name	Age	Date	Place	What happened	Outcome
3	Kevin Colindres	18	Jan 5, 2007 (injured Dec 12, 2006)	Miami, FL	Severely autistic; after cutting his head, officers handcuffed him behind his back, hobbled his ankles and held him prone ~15 min with pressure on his back; he stopped breathing after 10–12 min and nobody noticed (Florida Senate claim bill analysis)	\$2.75M judgment; ME found prone restraint contributed to cardiorespiratory arrest (Florida Senate)
4	Kenta Yasugana (spelling per source)	25	2007	Saga Prefecture, Japan	Autism and intellectual disability; asphyxia after being seized by police (Memorial Annex 2007)	n.a.
5	Roland Campbell	21	Apr 18, 2010	Lexington, KY	Nonverbal autistic man at an adult day-care; handcuffed by two officers, struggled, rolled prone, collapsed. Autopsy: "acute cardiorespiratory failure, acute hypoxia... autism-induced excited delirium during prone restraint" (US District Court, E.D. Ky.)	Officers granted qualified immunity, 2014 (US District Court)
6	Dainell Simmons	29	Jul 24, 2013	Middle Island, NY (Suffolk County PD)	Nonverbal autistic man at his group home; Tasers, pepper spray, handcuffed behind back, held partly prone ~9 min; went limp. ME: homicide, "abundant evidence of compression asphyxia" (Newsday)	No charges, no discipline; grand jury declined; county paid \$1.85M in 2018; two officers later promoted (Newsday)
7	David "Levi" Dehmann	33	Apr 23, 2015	Knox County Jail, Mount Vernon, OH	Autism, ADHD, Tourette's (Memorial Annex 2015); arrested for disorderly conduct, a deputy slammed him to the jail floor on video; died two days later of traumatic brain injury; manner "undetermined" (ABC6/FOX28 Columbus)	Referred to prosecutor; no further outcome in source
8	Paul Gianelos	45	Apr 20, 2016	Annandale, VA (Fairfax County)	Nonspeaking autistic man who wandered from a park outing; died after being restrained and injured by police (CommunicationFIRST); cause listed as cardiac arrhythmia associated with restraint (Memorial Annex 2016)	n.a.
9	Mzee Mohammed-Daley	18	Jul 13, 2016	Liverpool, England	Autistic teen in psychotic episode restrained by private security guards and police in a shopping centre (Institute of Race Relations)	Inquest verdict: natural causes (IRR)

#	Name	Age	Date	Place	What happened	Outcome
10	Eric Parsa	16	Jan 2020	Metairie, LA (Jefferson Parish SO)	Severely autistic, nonverbal; sensory meltdown in a parking lot; deputies sat on him and applied a chokehold for about nine minutes while he was handcuffed and shackled (AP ; CNN)	DOJ said deputies may have violated the ADA (Louisiana Illuminator); JPSO settled with the family in Sept 2023 (Louisiana Illuminator)
11	Ricky Swindells	28	Jul 25, 2026	Salford, England (Greater Manchester Police)	Family told officers he was autistic and in significant distress; found on the floor, handcuffed at 19:52 "for his own safety," officers concerned about breathing at 19:59, died in hospital. Initial post-mortem inconclusive (BBC)	IOPC investigating the necessity and proportionality of the handcuffing (BBC ; IOPC)

Flagged (autism reported but unconfirmed or police role limited):

Name	Age	Date	Place	Why flagged
Abdirahman Abdi	37	Jul 24, 2016	Ottawa, Canada	Died after beating/restraint by two Ottawa officers; listed as "mental illness, developmental disability, possibly autism" (Memorial Annex 2016)
Paul Gladwell (a.k.a. Paul Reynolds)	38	Feb 14, 2017	Lowestoft, England	Died after restraint by Pontins security and contact with Suffolk Police (INQUEST); Asperger's is stated by the Memorial Annex but not in the INQUEST notice
Eric Liao	30	Sep 9, 2021	Omaha, NE	911 caller described him as autistic; bowling-alley staff were restraining him on the ground; the officer handcuffed him, then found him unresponsive. Police say body-cam shows officers used no force; OPD classified it as an in-custody death (KMTV)

Not counted: Elijah McClain (Aurora, CO, 2019) is frequently cited in autism-and-policing literature ([Criminal Legal News](#)), but no source in this research confirms a diagnosis. Daniel McDonnell (Suffolk County, 2011) died in near-identical circumstances to Dainell Simmons but had bipolar disorder, not autism ([Newsday](#)).

B. Died in jail or prison after arrest

#	Name	Age	Date	Facility	What happened
1	John David Davenport	25	Sep 13, 2018	Sebastian County Detention Center, Fort Smith, AR	Arrested during a meltdown on a missed-court-date warrant; found on his cell floor about two days later with severe head injuries, died the next day; cause of injuries unknown (Autism Memorial)
2	Shane Kendall	19	Feb 1, 2021	Fulton County Jail, Atlanta, GA	Autistic with bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and intellectual impairment; lawsuit alleges medical staff let him "waste away and die" (The Appeal)

#	Name	Age	Date	Facility	What happened
3	Esias Johnson	24	Sep 7, 2021	Rikers Island, NYC	Diagnosed with Asperger's in childhood; held on a New Jersey fugitive warrant; one of 15 Rikers deaths that year (New York Times ; New York Magazine)
4	Jeremie Simmons	21	May 4, 2022	HMP Wakefield, England	PTSD, autism, learning disability; self-inflicted death attributed to systemic failures in care continuity (Memorial Annex 2022)
5	Kayleigh "Kay" Melhuish	36	Jul 7, 2022	HMP Eastwood Park, England	Autism, ADHD, CPTSD; no support for sensory overload, medication cut too fast; inquest jury found neglect contributed (Memorial Annex 2022)
6	Anthony Talotta	57	Sep 21, 2022	Allegheny County Jail, Pittsburgh, PA	Autism and intellectual disability; died 11 days after arrival from an untreated foot infection that became sepsis; family was working to get him released (AP ; Prison Legal News)
7	Isaiah Trammell	19	Mar 16, 2023	Montgomery County Jail, Dayton, OH	Arrested on a misdemeanor warrant after a family welfare call; stripped, strapped in a restraint chair twice, taunted by guards, begged for medication; banged his head for hours until unconscious; died three days later. Sheriff called it suicide; video undercut that (Columbus Dispatch ; Prison Legal News); family sued in 2025 (Cincinnati Enquirer)

C. Shot dead by police

Not "custody" in the strict sense, but these are the cases most often cited when people say "autistic people killed by police." Unless otherwise linked, the row data is from the Memorial Annex year page for that year.

Year	Name	Age	Place	Notes
2008	Mohammad Usman Chaudhry	21	Hollywood, CA (LAPD)	Found sleeping outside a building; \$1.7M verdict reinstated by Ninth Circuit (National Trial Lawyers ; Annex 2008)
2009	Trevor Varinecz	16	Myrtle Beach, SC	Listed as suicide by cop (Annex 2009)
2010	Steven Eugene Washington	27	Los Angeles, CA (LAPD)	Unarmed, autistic, stopped while walking in Koreatown (Police1/ACLU ; LA Times Homicide Report)
2011	Nicholas Pesare	18	Largo, FL	Autism, depression (Annex 2011)
2011	Ernest Vassell	56	North Miami Beach, FL	Autism, TBI (Annex 2011)
2012	Stephon Watts	15	Calumet City, IL	Shot in his basement by two officers (CommunicationFIRST ; Police1)
2012	David Jordan	20	Long Beach, CA	Possibly suicide by cop (Annex 2012)
2012	Michael Camberdella	18	Boynton Beach, FL	Autism, Tourette's, ADHD, bipolar (Annex 2012)
2012	Jeremiah Moore	19 (Annex) / 29 (KOED)	Vallejo, CA	Naked and unarmed during a drug-induced episode; parents' civil-rights suit allowed to proceed (Courthouse News)

Year	Name	Age	Place	Notes
2014	Kajieme Powell	25	St. Louis, MO	Autism per Annex 2014 ; mother sued for wrongful death (Courthouse News)
2015	Courtney Topic	22	Sydney, Australia	Asperger syndrome (Annex 2015)
2015	Jeremy Mardis	6	Marksville, LA	Shot while his stepfather fled police; two officers charged (Annex 2015)
2016	Kayden Clarke	24	Mesa, AZ	Autistic trans man in suicidal crisis; police say he lunged with a knife (CNN ; ASAN)
2016	Lane Lesko	19	Peterborough, NH	Autism, bipolar; shot during escape from a wilderness-therapy program (Annex 2016)
2016	Joseph "Joey" Weber	36	Hays, KS	Autistic, limited speech, unarmed; led police on a low-speed drive to his disability services home; Kansas later passed "Joey's Law" (Change.org.petition ; Kansas Senate Resolution 1718)
2017	Keith Wade	23	Arlington, TX	Asperger's; shot after a carjacking (Annex 2017)
2018	Eric Torell	20	Stockholm, Sweden	Down syndrome and autism; holding a toy gun (Annex 2018)
2019	Osaze Osagie	29	State College, PA	Autism and schizophrenia; family called for a welfare check; first fatal shooting in the department's 103-year history (State College Magazine ; CCD statement)
2019	Kenneth French	32	Corona, CA	Nonverbal, intellectual disability with autistic traits; shot by an off-duty LAPD officer in a Costco (CommunicationFIRST ; Annex 2019) — flagged, diagnosis described as "traits"
2019	Kobe Dimock-Heisler	21	Brooklyn Center, MN	Grandfather called 911 after an argument; wrongful-death suit dismissed in 2024 (CBS Minnesota ; MinnPost)
2020	Eyad al-Hallaq	32	Jerusalem	Unarmed autistic Palestinian; officer charged (AP)
2021	Jenoah Donald	30	Hazel Dell, WA	Traffic stop; Clark County deputy; federal suit filed (Autism Memorial)
2021	Edwin Arrigo	18	Valenzuela City, Philippines	Killed in a police raid (Annex 2021)
2021	Dustin Paradis	34	Augusta, ME	Shot in a homeless shelter; AG found officers justified (Bangor Daily News)
2024	Ryan Gainer	15	Apple Valley, CA	Black autistic teen ran toward deputies holding a gardening tool; federal civil-rights suit filed (NPR ; Victorville Daily Press)
2025	Chase de Balinhard	15	Surrey, BC, Canada	Holding an unloaded BB gun, limping away after surgery (Autism Memorial)
2025	Victor Perez	17	Pocatello, ID	Nonverbal, autistic, cerebral palsy; shot nine times within seconds while holding a knife behind a fence; removed from life support Apr 12 (Wikipedia ; CNN ; ASAN)

Year	Name	Age	Place	Notes
2026	Alexander LaMorie	25	Columbia, MD (Howard County)	Called 911 himself as an extortion-scam victim, per his wellness plan; shot when officers saw him with a knife; Maryland AG declined charges (USA Today ; Baltimore Banner)
2026	Theodoris Zavrados Karampampas	20	Argos, Greece	Unarmed; shot during a 35-minute car chase, roughly 20 rounds fired; two officers jailed pending trial for attempted intentional homicide (Autism-Europe ; WSWS)

Deaths excluded from the count (police present, but not the cause)

- Jake Porter, 32, Cary, IL, Jul 29, 2025 — autistic; shot himself when a deputy and a conservation officer tried to pull him over; police did not fire ([Shaw Local](#)).
- Sean Harris, 19, Central Nyack, NY, 2023 — suicide while police were on scene ([Memorial Annex 2023](#)).
- Anthony "AJ" Mitchell, 19, Fulton County, GA, 2019 — died after a confrontation with restaurant staff and police; cause unresolved ([Memorial Annex 2019](#)).

Why the real number is higher

- The Memorial Annex is volunteer-maintained and English-language-biased; its 2026 page could not be retrieved, so 2026 cases come from news only.
- UK regulators count custody deaths (27 in 2025/26 alone) but do not publish autism status ([IOPC](#)).
- Over half of US police-related deaths are misclassified or unreported in national vital statistics, and a 2016 Ruderman Foundation estimate put disabled people at roughly half of high-profile police killings ([CommunicationFIRST](#)).
- Deaths where autism was never diagnosed, or where families did not disclose it to reporters, do not appear anywhere.

Patterns worth noting

- The restraint deaths (Category A) share a signature: a family member or caregiver calls for help during a meltdown, officers handcuff and hold the person prone, and the person stops breathing within minutes. Medical examiners repeatedly cited compression asphyxia ([Newsday](#); [Florida Senate](#)), while agencies leaned on "excited delirium" ([US District Court, E.D. Ky.](#)), a diagnosis emergency physicians have since abandoned ([KFF Health News](#)).
- In none of the Category A or B cases found here was an officer or jail staff member criminally convicted. Outcomes were civil settlements (Colindres \$2.75M, Simmons \$1.85M, Parsa settled), qualified immunity (Campbell), or still-open investigations (Swindells).
- The jail deaths (Category B) cluster around minor charges — a missed court date (Davenport), a misdemeanor domestic warrant tied to an earlier meltdown (Trammell), a

fugitive warrant (Johnson) — followed by denial of medication, restraint chairs, or untreated infections.