

No guns on men shot by Fulton police

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A local civil rights activist and the family of a 26-year-old man fatally shot by Fulton County police are calling for a state and federal investigation into the death.

The Rev. Markel Hutchins, a spokesman for Ron Pettaway's family, said Monday the case deserves the attention of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Georgia Bureau of Investigation and the Fulton District Attorney's Office.

a.m. Sunday when police responded to a call about a fight at the Frozen Palace, a bar at 2395 Flat Shoals Road near College Park.

Police confirmed Monday afternoon that neither man had weapons.

"There is no justification for police to wound and shoot two unarmed men," Hutchins said at a news conference while flanked by members of Pettaway's immediate family. "It's nothing short of murder. These young people were shot for no reason."

Coleman said the two officers who shot the Pettaway brothers have less than two years on the force. Both men are on administrative leave pending the outcome of the probe. Their names have not been released.

LaShonda Dennis, 33, of Marietta, a patron of the Frozen Palace, said a fight started inside the bar when Ron Pettaway told her another patron looked like rapper Lil' Wayne. The patron took offense to the description, and the two men fought inside the club, Dennis said.

Bar security ushered the men outside, Dennis said, and when they returned, both men were calm. Minutes later, a police officer arrived and asked Ron Pettaway to come outside, Dennis said.

Five seconds later, Dennis said, she heard at least five gunshots. Dennis said she ran out the back door and returned later to find Ron Pettaway covered in a white sheet.

Roy Pettaway, according to Hutchins, saw his brother on the ground being beaten by police. He was shot in the back as he tried to stop them. He heard a second shot, but didn't know his brother had been fatally shot until told Sunday night, Hutchins said.

Ron Pettaway was shot in the back of the head, according to family members and the Fulton Medical Examiner's Office.

Roy Pettaway III, 27, remains at Grady Hospital in stable condition and could undergo surgery. Ron Pettaway's funeral will be held Saturday, on what would have been his 27th birthday, family members said. Details on the service are being worked out.

Hutchins promised additional action, including public protests, to bring the officers responsible to justice and to deal with a climate in metro Atlanta and elsewhere in which, he said, "police officers are now shooting first and asking questions later."

Hutchins said the Pettaway shootings are another example of excessive police force by metro Atlanta police. Twelve people were shot by police in DeKalb County last year alone.

He and family members were scheduled to talk with the lawyers at the Cochran Law Firm this morning. They also are miffed that no Fulton police or government official, so far, has offered condolences