

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
EASTERN DIVISION

Jovan Petrovic,)
) No _____
)
) *Plaintiff,*)
) *(Jury Demand)*
)
 -vs-)
)
)
 Village of Elwood, Illinois and)
 Elwood Police Officer Drin)
 Bajrami,)
)
) *Defendants.*)

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff, by counsel, alleges as follows:

1. This is a civil action arising under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 and the Illinois Civil Rights Act, 740 ILCS 23/5. The jurisdiction of this Court is conferred by 28 U.S.C. § 1343 and § 1367.

2. Plaintiff Jovan Petrovic is a resident of the Northern District of Illinois. Plaintiff is of Serbian ethnicity.

3. Defendant Drin Bajrami was at all times relevant acting within the scope of his employment, and under color of his authority, as a police officer of the Village of Elwood, Illinois. Defendant is of Albanian ethnicity.

4. Defendant Village of Elwood, Illinois is an Illinois municipal corporation, joined in this action as the potential indemnitor of defendant Bajrami and as the defendant in plaintiff's claim under the Illinois Civil Rights Act.

5. On July 30, 2025, defendant Bajrami arrested plaintiff for two misdemeanor offenses. Plaintiff does not challenge the legality of the arrest in the present complaint.

6. In the course of arresting plaintiff, Defendant Bajrami used excessive and unreasonable force, causing plaintiff to sustain personal injuries, and thereby depriving plaintiff of clearly established rights secured by the Fourth Amendment.

7. Before transporting plaintiff to the police station, defendant Bajrami learned that plaintiff was lawfully in possession of a motor vehicle that was parked in the vicinity of the arrest. Bajrami also learned that the car was locked.

8. Acting without a warrant or any other legal basis, defendant Bajrami seized, or caused to be seized, the above-described vehicle, thereby causing plaintiff to be deprived of clearly established rights secured by the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

9. In the early morning hours of July 31, 2024, after plaintiff had been processed at the police station and was lawfully entitled to be released, defendant Bajrami refused to permit plaintiff to leave the police station.

10. Instead, defendant Bajrami ordered plaintiff into his police vehicle and drove him to Route 53 and West Laraway Road, about two and a half miles from the police station.

11. By refusing to permit plaintiff to leave the police after he had become legally entitled to release, defendant Bajrami caused plaintiff to be deprived of clearly established rights secured by the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

12. Defendant Bajrami did not have any law enforcement purpose in transporting plaintiff to the rural intersection at Route 53 and West Laraway Road.

13. Defendant Bajrami ordered plaintiff to get out of the vehicle while making disparaging remarks about plaintiff's Serbian ethnicity.

14. Plaintiff complied with Bajrami's order to exit the vehicle. He then walked along the highway to a gas station where he telephoned a family member who picked him up.

15. Plaintiff was upset, scared, and angry during this dangerous ordeal.

16. Defendant Bajrami's conduct described above in paragraphs 9-15 constituted discriminatory treatment in a government activity on the basis of national origin, thereby violating 42 U.S.C. § 1981, as enforceable against

Bajrami under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, and against defendant Village of Elwood under the Illinois Civil Rights Act, 740 ILCS 23/5,

17. Plaintiff hereby demands trial by jury.

WHEREFORE plaintiff requests that the Court enter judgment for appropriate compensatory and punitive damages against defendant Bajrami, enter an order requiring defendant Village of Elwood to indemnify defendant Bajrami for any award of compensatory damages, and order that the costs of this action, including fees, costs and expert expenses incurred on plaintiff's claim under the Illinois Civil Rights Act, be taxed against defendants.

/s/ Kenneth N. Flaxman
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