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## 'Excited Delirium' Is Pseudoscience. Police Often Cite It to Justify Brutality

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[Anton Black](#) was 19 years old when police officers chased him, shackled him, and left him face-down on the ground, struggling to breathe. He died from asphyxiation. Despite tireless objections from his family, the Maryland Medical Examiner called his death an accident.

Until now. After Maryland's former head medical examiner testified in 2021 that Derek Chauvin was not responsible for George Floyd's death, concerns arose that his [pro-law enforcement bias](#) may have affected his office's decisions during his seventeen-year tenure. The resulting [independent audit](#) released in May 2025 revealed Mr. Black is not alone — almost forty additional in-custody deaths that had been deemed accidental or undetermined should have been categorized as homicides.