

Derek Chauvin Sentenced to 22 1/2 Years in Death of George Floyd

Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis police officer who was convicted of the murder of George Floyd, received a sentence of 22 1/2 years in prison Friday. The video recorded by a bystander of Floyd's May 25, 2020, death sparked a widespread cry against racial injustice.

The sentencing fell short of the 30 years prosecutors had requested but is one of the longest prison terms ever imposed on a U.S. police officer in the killing of a Black person, per AP News. With good behavior, Chauvin, 45, could receive parole after serving two-thirds of his sentence, or about 15 years.

Judge Peter Cahill cited Chauvin's "abuse of a position of trust and authority and also the particular cruelty" shown to Floyd in going beyond state guidelines of a suggested 12 1/2-year sentence.

The sentencing occurred after an emotional day in court in which Chauvin, 45, addressed the Floyd family for the first time, saying that because of other pending legal matters, he was "unable to give a full formal statement." He had maintained public silence since Floyd's death and chose not to testify at his trial.

"But briefly, I do want to give my condolences to the Floyd family," Chauvin said Friday, adding that he hopes other information that will come out later "will give you some peace of mind." He was returned to prison immediately after the sentencing.

Floyd's 7-year-old daughter also spoke at the sentencing in one of several impact videos by family members. "I miss you

and I love you,” Gianna Floyd said when asked what she would say to her father. She also said she believed he was still with her in spirit and said, “We used to have dinner meals every single night before we went to bed. My daddy always used to help me brush my teeth.”

She also gave a list of things she would have liked to do with her father: “I want to play with him, have fun, go on a plane ride.”

The Floyd family’s response to the sentence was mixed. Rodney Floyd, one of Floyd’s brothers, called it “a slap on the wrist.”

“We’ve suffered a life sentence for not having him in our life, and that hurts me to death,” he said.

Another brother, Terrence Floyd, said he was “a little leery about the sentencing” until he had a dream in which his father appeared.

“I knew my father was saying, ‘You’re good. He’s good. Keep doing what you’re doing. For me, for your brother, for your name,’” he said. “We’re Floyd strong, and we’re going to stay strong.”

George Floyd’s sister Bridgett Floyd, founder of the George Floyd Memorial Foundation, said the sentence “shows that matters of police brutality are finally being taken seriously.” {eoa}

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