

## Utah Nurse Manhandled by Police for Not Drawing Blood May Sue

*Summary: The nurse arrested for refusing to draw blood from an unconsenting man may file a lawsuit.*

Last week, a video of a police officer roughing up a nurse for refusing to draw blood from an unconscious man went viral, and since then, people have wondered--what will happen to the officer and will the nurse take legal action? On Monday, nurse Alex Wubbels told *Today* on NBC that she is considering filing a lawsuit.

"I'm not here to police the police — the police need to do that if they're going to regain any kind of trust by me or, I think, the public," Wubbels said.

Wubbels was arrested on July 26 at Salt Lake City's University of Utah Hospital after refusing to draw blood. SLC Detective Jeff Payne was visibly angry with the nurse when she refused his order, and he grabbed her by the arms and handcuffed her before dragging her outside. In the video, released by Wubbels and her legal team, she can be seen crying and pleading that she is just doing her job.

Detective Payne wanted Wubbels to take the blood of a man who was unconscious, but the nurse told him that it was not allowed by the hospital to draw blood from a patient unless he consented, was under arrest, or the police had a warrant. The unconscious man was not a suspect in an investigation and was in a coma.

"We're done, you're under arrest," Payne said in the video.

"You're assaulting me. Stop. Stop. I've done nothing wrong," Wubbels replied as he slammed her against a wall.

Wubbels told *Today* that she hoped the video of her arrest led to greater police accountability. After the incident, Detective Payne was put on paid leave and a criminal investigation is pending. Another officer on the scene was also put on leave.

Wubbels said that she experienced "overwhelming" support after the video went viral and that she felt that "there needed to be accountability" in the police force.

"I feel a sense of urgency for this conversation," Wubbels told *Today*. "We need to make this better. This can't be happening."

Salt Lake City's mayor and police chief have apologized for the incident, but Wubbels attorney Karra Porter has said that may not be enough.

"Most people that this happens to don't have this kind of evidence," Porter said. "This kind of thing does happen, and can happen to anyone."

A spokesperson for the police station told *NBC News* that they were working with the hospital to make sure the incident was never repeated.

"We have a really strong tie to the nurses that we work with. The police interact with nurses multiple times a day sometimes, and we never want to fracture that relationship. We took the incident very seriously from the moment we found out about it and have been working really diligently with Wubbels' attorney and ... herself, and trying to make sure that no one in the medical profession ever needs to fear a police officer here," police spokeswoman Christina Judd said. "It's so sad that we've had this rift in our relationship with the medical community and we're working hard to fix that."

According to *The Salt Lake Tribune*, Payne wrote in his police report that the unconscious man had been in an accident, and Payne wanted to determine whether or not there were illegal substances in his blood. Since the video went viral, a hundred protesters had gathered in Salt Lake City, demanding his resignation or termination.

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**What do you think of this incident? Let us know in the comments below.**