

Taneka Talley's Injured Worker Horror Story

Taneka Talley was stabbed to death while working at The Dollar Tree. The killer may have targeted Taneka because of her race. The insurance company has refused to pay death benefits to Taneka's 11-year-old son because the slaying may have been racially motivated. The insurer claims that makes it "personal" and not work-related!



About Taneka: Taneka Talley, 26, was a single mother with one son, Larry, now 11 years old. She was working at The Dollar Tree in Fairfield trying to provide a better life for him. Taneka's wish for her son was for him to graduate from college.

Taneka's Job and What Happened: Taneka went to work early on March 29, 2006, to help open the store. Shortly after opening, Taneka, who was African-American, was stabbed in the chest by a white man she had never met. According to a court-appointed psychiatrist, the man had determined to kill the first black person he saw that day, and that person was Taneka. The insurance company, Specialty Risk Services, denied death benefits to Larry, claiming the hate crime aspect made the death "personal," and therefore not work-related. California law requires payment of death benefits if the employee was killed on the job as a result of employment. A "personal" connection would cover an attack, such as by a husband who kills his wife on company grounds. This denial of death benefits for Taneka's son is astounding. Why would the fact that the attack was racially-motivated be grounds to penalize Taneka's surviving son? "Taneka loved her son and wanted him to have more in life, then she goes to work, is murdered and her benefits are denied because of the color of her skin? That's ridiculous." said Carol Frazier, Taneka's mother.

How the Workers' Comp Law Affects Taneka's Family

How Workers' Comp was supposed to help her: Workers compensation insurance is supposed to provide death benefits for the survivors of workers who die on the job. Instead, more than two years after Taneka's murder, the insurance company still has not paid compensation to Taneka's surviving son. Larry's grandmother is left to bear the financial burden resulting from this horrible hate crime without the death benefits due Taneka's surviving family.

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