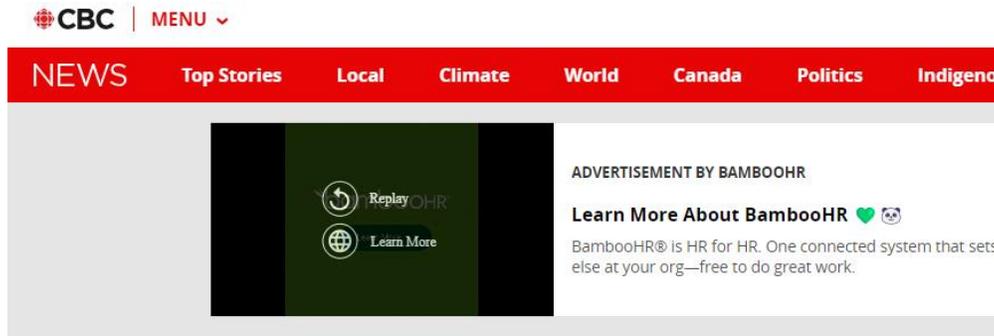


## GRUS, Helen – MSM NEWS publications for December 7, 2023

- Articles collected from CBC, CTV, Ottawa Sun, Ottawa Citizen, and MSN amplification of Ottawa Citizen story:

CBC – December 7, 2023

[https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/ottawa-police-board-settles-with-family-over-invasion-of-privacy-1.7052010?fbclid=IwAR2n4oa6AhDixBT2muDKc3o-SZ59QDwk3ZyyVWQtXWNXRJYwfhx8\\_tAkCJc](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/ottawa-police-board-settles-with-family-over-invasion-of-privacy-1.7052010?fbclid=IwAR2n4oa6AhDixBT2muDKc3o-SZ59QDwk3ZyyVWQtXWNXRJYwfhx8_tAkCJc)



The image shows a screenshot of the CBC News website. At the top left is the CBC logo and a 'MENU' dropdown. Below this is a red navigation bar with the following categories: NEWS, Top Stories, Local, Climate, World, Canada, Politics, and Indigenous. Below the navigation bar is a large advertisement for BambooHR. The ad features a dark green background with a 'Replay OHR' icon and a 'Learn More' link. To the right of the ad, the text reads: 'ADVERTISEMENT BY BAMBOOHR', 'Learn More About BambooHR' with a heart icon, and 'BambooHR® is HR for HR. One connected system that sets else at your org—free to do great work.'

Ottawa

### Ottawa police board settles with family over invasion of privacy

Const. Helen Grus accused of improperly accessing records to determine parents' vaccination status

CBC News · Posted: Dec 07, 2023 1:15 PM EST | Last Updated: December 7



The Ottawa Police Service suspended Const. Helen Grus with pay in February 2022 after she was accused under the Police Services Act of improperly accessing records in an attempt to determine whether the parents of deceased children had been vaccinated against COVID-19. (Avanthika Anand/CBC)

The Ottawa Police Services Board has settled a lawsuit involving an officer accused of invading a grieving family's privacy by trying to determine the vaccination status of a recently deceased infant's mother.

Const. Helen Grus, a detective with the Ottawa Police Service's sexual assault and child abuse unit, was accused of discreditable conduct under the Police Services Act for allegedly accessing records related to infant and child deaths for no investigative purpose.

- [Detective tried to uncover vaccine status of dead children's parents, sources say](#)
- [Grieving mother not told nature of misconduct in probe of baby's death: lawyer](#)

Grus is alleged to have contacted a deceased baby's father on Jan. 30, 2022, to ask about the mother's COVID-19 vaccination status. She was suspended with pay a few days later, on Feb. 4.

The police disciplinary proceedings against her are ongoing and expected to resume in January.

In a media release Thursday, lawyer Lawrence Greenspon said a family wishing to remain anonymous has settled a civil claim against the police board in "relation to the invasion of privacy of their deceased child's records by Constable Helen Grus."

Grus is accused under the Police Services Act of improperly accessing records related to several infant deaths in Ottawa for the purpose of trying to find out if the parents of the deceased children had been vaccinated against COVID-19.

In settling the civil claim, the police board did not admit any liability. The amount of the settlement hasn't been disclosed.

The anonymous family is quoted in the media release saying the "blatant disregard shown for the families involved shows just how far some people are willing to go to push their own agendas.

"Targeting grieving families who have experienced the worst tragedy any parent can face in this lifetime is truly abhorrent and should be condemned in the strongest way possible."

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CTV – December 7, 2023

[https://ottawa.ctvnews.ca/ottawa-police-board-settles-with-family-over-officer-who-accessed-dead-child-s-vaccine-records-1.6678298?fbclid=IwAR1FYh8efdXP7-cwsv\\_NqtcV-N\\_wSBZyRYSke7wjyh1DNUT2VEuHoHX6fHw](https://ottawa.ctvnews.ca/ottawa-police-board-settles-with-family-over-officer-who-accessed-dead-child-s-vaccine-records-1.6678298?fbclid=IwAR1FYh8efdXP7-cwsv_NqtcV-N_wSBZyRYSke7wjyh1DNUT2VEuHoHX6fHw)

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OTTAWA | News

## Ottawa police board settles with family over officer who accessed dead child's vaccine records



The sign outside Ottawa Police headquarters on Elgin St. is seen in this undated photo. (CTV News Ottawa)



William Eltherington  
CTV News Ottawa Digital  
Multi-Skilled Journalist

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Published Dec. 7, 2023 5:31  
p.m. EST

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The Ottawa Police Services Board has settled a case involving a police officer who was accused of wrongfully accessing a deceased child's vaccination status.

The board settled the case for the conduct of Const. Helen Grus, a detective who was accused of discreditable conduct under the Police Services Act for [asking about the vaccination records related to nine infant and child deaths](#)<sup>↗</sup>.

Grus allegedly investigated the records without permission from police.

The Ottawa Police Services Board settled with one of the families whose baby was born and died in June 2021.

#### RELATED STORIES

- [Ottawa police officer accused of accessing police databases in death of infant and child cases](#)

Grus allegedly contacted the deceased baby's father on Jan. 30, 2022 to ask about the mother's COVID-19 vaccination status, according to police documents.

After a complaint was filed against Grus with OPS, Grus was suspended with pay on Feb. 4, 2022.

Lawrence Greenspon, the family's lawyer, said the case was settled this week for an undisclosed amount.

"Parents are not put on this earth to bury their children," he told CTV News Ottawa.

"When a tragedy happens, the family's privacy must be respected."

Greenspon said the family would like to thank the Ottawa Police Service for acknowledging their grief and recognizing the importance of privacy.

The police disciplinary hearings against Grus will continue in January.

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Ottawa Sun – December 7, 2023

[https://ottawasun.com/news/local-news/family-settles-privacy-complaint-with-ottawa-police-services-board/wcm/12b32a8e-ae04-46d8-8d1a-f2c9336de0ce?fbclid=IwAR2SzhRgghNNodQNxSFhBb-07-x5AE1QeFZzQzj1BzdVIG\\_aspCplIbc6wk](https://ottawasun.com/news/local-news/family-settles-privacy-complaint-with-ottawa-police-services-board/wcm/12b32a8e-ae04-46d8-8d1a-f2c9336de0ce?fbclid=IwAR2SzhRgghNNodQNxSFhBb-07-x5AE1QeFZzQzj1BzdVIG_aspCplIbc6wk)



Ottawa / News



# UNDISCLOSED SETTLEMENT: Family settles privacy complaint with Ottawa Police Services Board

*The family never filed a statement of claim in the civil lawsuit. Instead, the claim was settled in pre-litigation.*

Joanne Laucius

Published Dec 07, 2023 • Last updated 22 hours ago • 2 minute read

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As part of the settlement, the family and the police services board agreed that the amount of the settlement would not be disclosed. PHOTO BY ERROL MCGIHON /POSTMEDIA

An unnamed family has won a settlement from the Ottawa Police Services Board after an Ottawa police officer was accused of taking it upon herself to investigate the COVID-19 vaccination status of the parents of babies who had died.

The amount of the settlement has not been made public.

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Const. Helen Grus, a detective with the sexual assault and child abuse unit, is accused of discreditable conduct under the Police Services Act. Investigators with the Ottawa Police Service professional standards unit alleged that Grus accessed nine child or infant death cases in which she had no investigative role and also that she contacted the father of a deceased baby directly on Jan. 30, 2022, to inquire about the mother's COVID-19 vaccination status.

Grus was suspended on Feb. 4, 2022. Hearings into those allegations are to continue in January.

In settling the claim, there was no admission of liability, said Lawrence Greenspon, a lawyer for the family. As part of the settlement, the parties agreed that the amount of the settlement would not be disclosed.

The family's name is not part of court records because the family never filed a statement of claim in the civil lawsuit. The claim was settled in pre-litigation after lawyers for the family sent a letter to the police services board claiming "intrusion upon seclusion" under civil law, Greenspon said.

The family's baby died in June 2021, he said. In March 2022, the family heard from a representative with the professional standards unit of the Ottawa Police Service, advising them there had been a privacy breach.

Because of the disciplinary proceedings against Grus, there was little flow of information to the family, Greenspon said. An investigation into the baby's death was concluded in May 2023. "The almost two years of investigation made it worse," the lawyer said.

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In a statement, the family thanked the Ottawa Police Services Board for acknowledging their grief and for recognizing the importance of privacy rights.

“The blatant disregard shown for the families involved shows just how far some people are willing to go to push their own agendas,” the family’s statement said. “Targeting grieving families who have experienced the worst tragedy any parent can face in this lifetime is truly abhorrent and should be condemned in the strongest way possible.”

The family appreciates that the police services board has settled their claim, Greenspon said.

“Their privacy should never have been intruded upon.”

The Ottawa Police Services Board said it did not comment on civil matters.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW



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Police board chair Dr. Gail Beck also declined to comment “in order to respect the confidentiality of the settlement.”

Discreditable conduct hearings for Grus under the Police Services Act began this fall and are set to resume on Jan. 8. If she is found guilty of discreditable conduct, the Ottawa Police Service may seek dismissal or demotion as a penalty.

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Ottawa Citizen – December 7, 2023

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### Family settles privacy complaint with Ottawa Police Services Board

Story by Joanne Laucius • 1d



As part of the settlement, the family and the police services board agreed that the amount of the settlement would not be disclosed.  
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