



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on September 10, 2015

Anti-Police Sentiment Growing; Cop Initially Denied Service at Restaurant

There is a growing anti-police sentiment in  the United States as the result of the slanted, incendiary mainstream media coverage in the wake of the events in Ferguson and Baltimore, as demonstrated by police officers being killed and [attacked](#) in increasing numbers over the past several months. It was also recently demonstrated when a police officer in the small south Florida city of Pembroke Pines was initially denied service by a fast-food employee simply because she was in uniform and driving her patrol car.

It happened on the evening of September 2 when Sergeant Jennifer Martin — who has been with the Pembroke Pines Police Department for most of her 12-year law enforcement career — went through the drive-thru window at a local Arby's. According to the report she later filed with the department, the employee, 19-year-old Kenneth Davenport, seemed distant and rude, but she chalked it up to distraction. When she pulled forward to pay and receive her order, however, she realized there was more to it than that.

As Davenport took her credit card for the payment, he walked away. His manager, 22-year-old Angel Mirabal, came to the window to take his place and told Sergeant Martin, "He [Davenport] doesn't want to serve you because you are a police officer." He laughed about it when she told him she was "extremely uncomfortable" and did not think she wanted to eat anything from there. Mirabel told the officer that it was alright and assured her that Davenport was allowed to refuse to serve her. He handed her her order and laughed again about Davenport refusing to serve her.

Concerned about her safety, Sergeant Martin decided not to eat the food, not knowing if either of the young men or someone else at the restaurant had done anything to it. She parked and went inside for a refund. Mirabel refunded her money and provided his contact information; Davenport refused to speak with her or provide his information.

Pembroke Pines Police Chief Dan Giustino issued a statement which said, "I am offended and appalled that an individual within our community would treat a police officer in such a manner. It is unacceptable, and I will be contacting the Arby's CEO to demand an apology." When he contacted Arby's CEO, Paul Brown, the executive did offer an apology and Arby's issued a statement saying:

We take this isolated matter very seriously as we respect and support police officers in our local communities. As soon as the issue was brought to our attention, our CEO spoke with the Police Chief who expressed his gratitude for our quick action and indicates the case is closed. We will be following up with our team members to be sure that our policy of inclusion is understood and adhered to.

Chief Giustino said he considered the matter closed.



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Jeff Marano from the Police Benevolent Association was not so forgiving. He insisted that a simple apology was not enough, saying, "This is inexcusable behavior for an employee in an establishment to be treating a uniformed police officer or anybody in the public like that." He also said that the employees should both be fired. John Rivera, the president of the Miami-Dade Police Union, agreed and said that until both the clerk and his manager were fired, he was calling for a boycott of Arby's. In his statement, he said:

It is beyond comprehension and deeply troubling that a business would deny service to a law enforcement officer just for being a law enforcement officer. This is yet another example of the hostile treatment of our brave men and women simply because they wear a badge. It is unacceptable and warrants much more than an apology.

The next day, Davenport said the whole thing was a joke. According to [nbc-miami.com](#), he said:

[My manager] just made a joke and she couldn't take it the right way, she has no sense of humor. It was busy and then she was probably one of the last cars we had, she wasn't for the joke I guess. We're too busy so my manager's like "oh, I get to serve you instead of him," like he's getting overboard for that?

When asked if he dislikes the police, Davenport replied:

No, not at all, never had a problem but, is this, this kind of changes me now, I'm starting to think like, could it be a publicity stunt, or what is it, racism, something, I didn't do anything to this lady. Why is this so worldwide, like you guys say? To me I'm just gonna keep living my life and whatever happens happens. There's nothing I can do at this point.

What has not been explained is why Mirabel — seeing that Sergeant Martin was bothered by the treatment she received — never told her he was only joking. Also, why did Davenport refuse to speak with her or provide his contact information?

As pressure increased, Arby's CEO decided to take the whole thing more seriously than he had initially appeared to do. The company issued another statement that Mirabel had been fired and Davenport had been "indefinitely suspended." The CEO made a trip to Pembroke Pines and the local Arby's restaurants offered free combo meals to all police officers in the area.

Many officers have claimed those free meals, and various reports indicate that several of them have passed the meals along to homeless people in the area.

Davenport's grandfather, Thomas McCutcheon — who raised Davenport — claims his grandson is the victim here. "His life is just starting, and a black mark against him is not going to help."

Perhaps his grandson can learn a valuable lesson from this: Actions have consequences.

This case is similar in some ways to the story of the [police officer who was attacked](#) while surrounded by an angry crowd in Madison, Wisconsin. Both incidents happened on the same evening, though hundreds of miles apart. Both police departments told *The New American* that they work hard to maintain a good relationship with the local community and that the outpouring of support from their citizens in the wake of these events was a reminder that it is working.

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