

'Sad day in Norwalk': Popular community police officer dies at 71

By [Pat Tomlinson](#) 4:49 pm EST, Tuesday, January 21, 2020

NORWALK — Cesar Ramirez, a 32-year city police veteran recently diagnosed with an aggressive form of brain cancer, died on Tuesday.

The 71-year-old's death comes just one month after [he signed off from Norwalk Police Department for the final time](#) and was sent off by a full honor guard and police escort.

"Needless to say that we are all heartbroken over his loss," Norwalk Police Chief Thomas Kulhawik said Tuesday. "Our thoughts and prayers are with his family during this difficult time."

Ramirez was a longtime South Norwalk community police officer who worked for decades in collaboration with Columbus and Side By Side elementary schools.

Following his glioblastoma diagnosis, Ramirez had taken an extended medical leave from the department on Dec. 13. In honor of his legacy, Mayor Harry Rilling declared that day as "Cesar Ramirez Day."

"Cesar Ramirez was a really special person and Norwalk police officer. This is a great loss for our Norwalk police family. It was my honor to know him well," said Rilling, who was deputy police chief when Ramirez was hired.

"He cared deeply about the community he served. He was a dedicated public servant in every sense of the word. His passing is a huge loss for our city, which I know he loved dearly. It is a sad day in Norwalk, but I know his legacy will live on through the programs he started and the difference he made in the lives of residents."

As a mix of police officers and community members watched on his final day in uniform, Ramirez accepted a key to the city. He told those gathered that his diagnosis was only another trial in his life and urged those he left behind at the department to keep compassion in mind during their own travails.

“Stay strong, focus on your family and your health, do the right thing without expecting anything in return, and please respect others as you would like to be respected,” Ramirez said.

Earlier this month, Norwalk police started [a GoFundMe campaign](#) on behalf of Ramirez’s wife, Ana Ramirez, to [help with medical costs](#).

Ramirez leaves behind a long legacy of dedicated community service in Norwalk. During his time with the department, he introduced the Columbus Magnet School’s Community Police Christmas Party, which has since become an annual tradition.

“Volunteering and community service were always a priority for him,” Rilling said.

In addition to his work as an officer, Ramirez also served as the chairman of the Norwalk Housing Authority, which he joined in 1992. He also served on the Second Taxing Commission.

Prior to joining the Norwalk police force, Ramirez worked for the New York Police Department.