

**District Attorney's  
Office**

State of North Carolina  
26th Prosecutorial District  
Mecklenburg County

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# NEWS RELEASE

**May 30, 2025**

**Man sentenced to life in prison after pleading guilty to first-degree murder**

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – With jury selection underway in the trial of Juan Zamora for the 2019 shooting death of 17-year-old Alysha Johnson, he pled guilty to first-degree murder. The Honorable Craig R. Collins, Superior Court Judge, was presiding in courtroom 5110.

The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Homicide Team called Juan Zamora, 23, for trial on May 27, 2025. On Wednesday, he pled *guilty as charged* to first-degree murder. The defendant was under the age of 18 at the time of the offense. Under North Carolina law, a person under the age of 18 convicted of first-degree murder by premeditation and deliberation may be sentenced to life without the possibility of parole or to life with parole eligibility after 25 years. The statute allows the defendant to present mitigating factors for the court to consider in deciding the appropriate sentence. After a sentencing hearing today, Judge Collins sentenced the defendant to life without the possibility of parole.

On June 17, 2019, at approximately 1:00 p.m., Alysha Johnson was sitting in her parked car outside a convenience store near Beatties Ford Road, waiting for a friend who had gone inside. The defendant and two co-defendants approached the vehicle, and the defendant shot the victim multiple times. As he fled on foot, he fired additional shots toward the victim's car. There was no evidence that the victim and defendant knew each other or had any prior interaction.

Law enforcement responded quickly and apprehended the defendant and two co-defendants in a nearby wooded area. The firearm used in the shooting was recovered nearby, and DNA testing confirmed the defendant's DNA on the weapon. After his arrest, the defendant admitted to detectives that he owned the gun and that he had shot and killed Ms. Johnson.

Co-defendant, Andy Garcia, was previously convicted for charges related to these crimes. Charges against a juvenile co-defendant were previously disposed.

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