

**District Attorney's
Office**
State of North Carolina
26th Prosecutorial District
Mecklenburg County

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NEWS RELEASE

**Spencer B. Merriweather
III**
District Attorney

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Jury convicts man of first-degree murder

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Yesterday, Joshua McClain was sentenced to life in prison after a Mecklenburg County jury found him guilty of the March 2020 shooting death of 43-year-old LaMar McNeil. The trial, which began on April 27, 2026, and concluded with yesterday's verdict, was held in courtroom 5370 before the Honorable Carla N. Archie, Superior Court Judge.

Joshua McClain, 32, was tried for first-degree murder. The jury found him *guilty as charged*. Judge Archie sentenced McClain to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Around 8:45 p.m. on March 10, 2020, LaMar McNeil and an acquaintance arrived at an apartment complex off Wit Way in Charlotte. The location was the meeting point for a pre-arranged drug transaction with Joshua McClain. Shortly after McNeil and his acquaintance arrived, McClain got into the back seat of their vehicle. Moments later, McClain's co-defendant, Darian Huffman, opened the driver's side door and attempted to steal a backpack from the victim. After a brief struggle, Huffman fired one shot that struck McNeil in the chest, then he fled on foot. McClain took the backpack and also fled on foot. The victim was able to make it to a nearby apartment where residents called 911. He was later transported to the hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. During their investigation, detectives with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department executed search warrants at McClain's residence. There they found the backpack in a wooded area just outside the home, as well as a Kel Tec 9mm handgun in McClain's car. DNA analysis done on the firearm showed the presence of DNA belonging to both defendants. The gun was also matched through ballistics testing to a bullet recovered from the victim.

Darian Huffman was previously convicted of charges related to these crimes.

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