



State of North Carolina
General Court of Justice
Twenty-Sixth Prosecutorial District
MECKLENBURG COUNTY

SPENCER B. MERRIWEATHER III
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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June 4, 2026

Special Agent in Charge Brandon Blackman
North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation
5994 Caldwell Park Dr.
Harrisburg, North Carolina 28075

Re: Tjamel Ali Hamlin II Death Investigation

Dear SAC Blackman:

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 7A-61, my office has reviewed the investigation surrounding the shooting death of Tjamel Ali Hamlin II on December 26, 2025. The case was investigated under case number 2025-04394. The documentation considered for the purposes of this review was provided by the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation in April of 2026. The purpose of this review was to examine whether the actions of Mint Hill Police Lieutenant Jacob Smith were unlawful in the incident leading to the death of Tjamel Ali Hamlin II.

These events occurred inside of a business located at 6832 Matthews-Mint Hill Road. On the morning of December 26, 2025, the decedent's mother (Witness 1) and the mother of the decedent's child (Witness 2) called 911 in reference to a disagreement regarding the decedent's concerns about the child's well-being on a trip to Florida.

Lieutenant Smith and Officer Nicholas Rosario arrived on scene at approximately the same time. Officer Rosario entered the business through the front door and encountered Witness 2 as she walked from the back kitchen area into the lobby area of the business. At the same time, the decedent moved from the back kitchen area of the business into the doorway separating the lobby and the kitchen. The decedent stood in the doorway with his arm around the child, holding the child tightly to his body. The decedent and Witness 2 began explaining the disagreement to Officer Rosario.

As Lieutenant Smith approached the business, he encountered Witness 1 who led him through the rear door and into the kitchen area of the business. Witness 1 proceeded past the decedent and the child into the lobby area of the business. Lieutenant Smith approached the decedent from behind as the decedent, Witness 1, and Witness 2 were speaking to Officer Rosario. Lieutenant Smith asked the decedent to let go of the child and let the child sit down. The decedent placed the child in a nearby seat and then suddenly and abruptly moved to close the door between the lobby and kitchen area separating Lieutenant Smith and Officer Rosario.

Both officers then briefly restrained the decedent and instructed him not to make erratic movements while Witness 1 re-opened the door between the lobby and kitchen. During the struggle, the decedent's child was able to move away from the decedent and left the kitchen area.

The officers briefly attempted to reinitiate a discussion with the decedent about what was occurring before the decedent abruptly tried to leave the kitchen to recover the child. Officers again restrained the decedent and struggled to place him in handcuffs. During this struggle, the decedent was able to break free. The decedent drew his firearm and fired twice, shooting Lieutenant Smith in the mouth and Officer Rosario in the forehead. Lieutenant Smith managed to return fire, striking the decedent in the chest and killing him. Officer Rosario also drew his firearm during the struggle but did not fire as Lieutenant Smith was able to re-holster Officer Rosario's gun for him after Lieutenant Smith shot the decedent.

Lieutenant Smith and Officer Rosario were transported for medical treatment where it was determined that Lieutenant Smith suffered a gunshot wound to the mouth, exiting his jaw, and Officer Rosario suffered a graze wound to the forehead. Medic pronounced the decedent deceased on scene.

The decedent's .22 caliber Kel-tec pistol was recovered on scene. [1]. A discharged cartridge case marked with the letter "A" on the headstamp was recovered from the pistol. An additional discharged cartridge case marked with the letter "A" on the headstamp was recovered from the floor of the kitchen area.

An autopsy conducted on the decedent determined the cause of death to be a single gunshot wound of the chest. Toxicology analysis of the decedent's blood showed the presence of THC and its metabolites.

I personally responded to the scene of this incident and monitored the investigation along with another senior Assistant District Attorney (ADA). I reviewed the investigative file as provided by the SBI. Finally, consistent with the District Attorney's Office Officer-Involved Shooting Protocol, this case was presented to the District Attorney's Officer-Involved Shooting Review Team, which is comprised of the office's most experienced prosecutors.

A. The role of the District Attorney under North Carolina law

The District Attorney (DA) for the 26th Prosecutorial District is a state official and, as such, does not answer to town or county governments within the prosecutorial district. The District Attorney is the chief law enforcement official of the 26th Judicial District, the boundaries of which are the same as the County of Mecklenburg. The District Attorney has no administrative authority or control over the personnel of the Mint Hill Police Department or other police agencies within the jurisdiction. That authority and control rests with each town or county government.

Pursuant to North Carolina statute, one of the District Attorney's obligations is to advise law enforcement agencies within the prosecutorial district. The DA does not arrest people or charge people with crimes. When the police charge a person with a crime, the DA decides whether or not to prosecute the charged crime. Generally, the DA does not review police decisions not to charge an individual with a crime. However, in officer-involved shooting cases, the DA reviews the complete investigative file of the investigating agency. The DA then decides

whether he agrees or disagrees with the charging decision made by the investigating agency. If the DA concludes that uncharged conduct should be prosecuted, the case will be submitted to a Grand Jury.

If no criminal charges are filed, that does not mean the District Attorney's Office believes the matter was in all respects handled appropriately from an administrative or tactical viewpoint. It is simply a determination that there is not a reasonable likelihood of proving criminal charges beyond a reasonable doubt unanimously to a jury. This is the limit of the DA's statutory authority in these matters. The fact that a shooting may be controversial does not mean that criminal prosecution is warranted. Even if the District Attorney believes a shooting was avoidable or an officer did not follow expected procedures or norms, this does not necessarily amount to a violation of criminal law. In these circumstances, remedies (if any are appropriate) may be pursued by administrative or civil means. The District Attorney has no administrative or civil authority in these matters. Those remedies are primarily in the purview of city and county governments, police departments, and private civil attorneys.

B. Legal standards

The law recognizes an inherent right to use deadly force to protect oneself or others from death or great bodily harm. This core legal principle is referred to as the right to "self-defense." A police officer does not lose the right to self-defense by virtue of becoming a police officer. Officers are entitled to the same protections of the law as every other individual. An imminent threat to the life of a police officer or others entitles the officer to respond in such a way as to stop that threat.

Under North Carolina law, the burden of proof is on the State to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that a defendant did not act in defense of himself or others. N.C.G.S. §14-51.3 provides that a person is justified in the use of deadly force and does not have a duty to retreat in any place he or she has the lawful right to be if he or she reasonably believes that such force is necessary to prevent imminent death or great bodily harm to himself or herself or another.

C. Use of deadly force by a law enforcement officer

The same legal standards apply to law enforcement officers and private citizens alike. However, officers fulfilling their sworn duty to enforce the laws of this State are often placed in situations in which they are required to confront rather than avoid potentially dangerous people and situations.

The United States Supreme Court stated, "[t]he 'reasonableness' of a particular use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, rather than with the 20/20 vision of hindsight." Graham v. Connor, 490 U.S. 386, 396 (1989). The Court further explained that "[t]he calculus of reasonableness must embody allowance for the fact that police officers are often forced to make split-second judgments – in circumstances that are tense, uncertain, and rapidly evolving – about the amount of force that is necessary in a particular situation." Id. at 396–97. Moreover, the analysis "requires careful attention to the facts and circumstances of each particular case," including "whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the officers or others," as well as "the severity of the crime at issue" and whether the suspect "is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight." Id. at 396.

A situation in which an officer is confronting an armed person with uncertain motives is, by definition, dangerous, and such a circumstance will almost always be tense, uncertain, and rapidly evolving. In these circumstances, we are not deciding whether the officer's belief in the need to use deadly force was correct but only whether his belief in the necessity of such force was reasonable.

In conducting a legal analysis, this office must take its guidance from the law, and a decision must not be based upon public sentiment or outcry. The obligation of a District Attorney is clear; he must simply apply the law to the known facts.

What the law demands is an evaluation of the reasonableness of the officer's decision at the moment he fired the shot. The Supreme Court of the United States has provided guidance on what is objectively reasonable and how such an analysis should be conducted. That guidance indicates that it is inappropriate to employ "the 20/20 vision of hindsight," and an analysis must make "allowance for the fact that police officers are often forced to make split-second judgments." See Graham v. Connor, 490 U.S. at 396. The Court suggests that when reviewing use of force cases, caution should be used to avoid analysis "more reflective of the 'peace of a judge's chambers' than of a dangerous and threatening situation on the street." Elliot v. Leavitt, 99 F.3d. 640, 643 (4th Cir. 1996).

D. The officer-involved shooting of Tjamel Ali Hamlin II

Lieutenant Jacob Smith

Lieutenant Smith was interviewed by SBI agents on January 2, 2026, at the CMPD Law Enforcement Center in Charlotte, North Carolina. Lieutenant Smith had been employed with the Mint Hill Police Department for 13 years.

Lieutenant Smith reported that on December 26, 2025, at approximately 10:45 a.m., he responded to a child custody disagreement call at a business on Matthews-Mint Hill Road to assist Officer Nicholas Rosario. Lieutenant Smith drove to the store and parked in the back parking lot. He was wearing his police-issued uniform with Mint Hill Police patches and Police markings.

Lieutenant Smith reported that he met the decedent's mother, Witness 2, in the back lot and they entered the store through the back door. Lieutenant Smith recounted that he saw the decedent holding onto a child tightly like a hostage and Witness 2 moved to the front of the store. Lieutenant Smith recalled that the decedent had a black bag wrapped around him. Lieutenant Smith advised that he told the decedent to let the child go, and the decedent let the child sit down in a nearby chair. During that time, a comment was made between Witness 2 and the decedent, and the decedent became aggressive and agitated and tried to shut the door between Lieutenant Smith and Officer Rosario.

At that time, Lieutenant Smith and Officer Rosario physically engaged the decedent and Lieutenant Smith called over the radio for an additional officer to assist. Officer Rosario and Lieutenant Smith tried to put the decedent in handcuffs, but the decedent managed to break free. Lieutenant Smith advised that, during the struggle, he saw a semi-automatic pistol come over the decedent's left shoulder aimed at Lieutenant Smith's face. Lieutenant Smith heard a gunshot and saw the flash from the gun.

Lieutenant Smith explained that he grabbed the gun with his left hand and pulled his gun out with his right. During the struggle, the decedent reached for Lieutenant Smith's gun and Lieutenant Smith shot one round into the decedent's chest. At this time, Lieutenant Smith noticed that Officer Rosario had his gun out and Lieutenant Smith lowered it.

Lieutenant Smith recalled that he asked for the Fire Department and EMS to respond, and Officers McChesney, Heaton, and Garrison arrived shortly after. He estimated that the entire incident lasted about two minutes.

Lieutenant Smith recounted that he told Officer Garrison that he shot the decedent in the chest. Lieutenant Smith recalled that there was blood pouring out of his mouth and his ear was ringing. Lieutenant Smith recalled that Officer Rosario said he could not see, and Lieutenant Smith saw there was a hole in Officer Rosario's head above his right eye. Officer Rosario also said that he could not hear out of his right ear.

Lieutenant Smith advised that he gave his gun to Officer Garrison or Officer McChesney and was transported to CMC Main by ambulance along with two firefighters and a medic. Lieutenant Smith was not aware of any medical care given to the decedent.

Lieutenant Smith had no recollection of having dealt with the decedent in the past. He explained that he shot the decedent because he believed he was going to die. The decedent had shot him and was attempting to grab Lieutenant Smith's gun. Lieutenant Smith believed that if the decedent got his gun, the decedent would shoot him again.

A round count conducted on Lieutenant Smith's service weapon showed him to be missing one round.

Officer Nicholas Rosario

Officer Nicholas Rosario was interviewed by SBI agents on January 2, 2026, at the CMPD Law Enforcement Center in Charlotte, North Carolina. Officer Rosario had been employed with the Mint Hill Police Department since January 2025.

Officer Rosario responded to this December 26, 2025, call for service in full uniform. He could not remember how dispatch originally described the call but remembered that the call notes instructed that he should look for a silver pick-up truck in the rear parking lot of the business. Officer Rosario recalled that he initially had some difficulties locating the rear parking lot due to being unfamiliar with that area, but he found it after approximately five minutes and located the silver pick-up parked in the lot. He proceeded to park his marked Ford Explorer behind the truck. Officer Rosario advised that when he got out of his vehicle, dispatch advised that the caller was inside the business, so he walked through a breezeway to get to the front of the store. As he was walking, Lieutenant Smith arrived on scene and told Officer Rosario that he would park his marked Ford F-150 in the back lot.

Officer Rosario reported that he entered through the front door of the business and saw the 911 caller standing behind the customer service counter. He recalled that the decedent was standing to the right of the counter with his arm around--and slouched over onto--a child. Officer Rosario asked the 911 caller what was going on and the decedent responded. The decedent told Officer Rosario that the 911 caller, the child's mother, prevented him from being a father to his

child and that he was not allowed to be there for the birth of his child. Officer Rosario advised that he told the decedent to stop talking because he was trying to figure out who had custody of the child. Officer Rosario explained that the decedent's mother then came from the back kitchen and said that the decedent did not have custody of the child and that the child belonged to his mother, the 911 caller. Officer Rosario recalled that the decedent continued talking about not being allowed to be a father. Officer Rosario noticed that the decedent appeared to get anxious and began leaning more on the child.

Officer Rosario reported that he observed Lieutenant Smith enter the back of the store. He recalled that Lieutenant Smith approached the door separating the kitchen and lobby area and propped it open to begin assisting with the situation. Officer Rosario recounted that it seemed like the decedent "got spooked" and tried to run by Lieutenant Smith and into the back kitchen. Lieutenant Smith grabbed the decedent and put his back against a counter to the left of the door. Lieutenant Smith tried to get control of the decedent's upper body while Officer Rosario tried to control the decedent's left hand.

Officer Rosario stated that he, Lieutenant Smith, and the decedent struggled along the counter further into the kitchen and that, throughout the struggle, Officer Rosario and Lieutenant Smith were telling the decedent to calm down. At some point, the decedent was turned around so that his stomach was against the counter. Officer Rosario recalled that he had the decedent's right hand behind his back and was getting his handcuffs out to restrain him. Lieutenant Smith and Officer Rosario then lost control of the decedent's right side. He recounted that Lieutenant Smith still had some control over the decedent's left side. Officer Rosario advised that he was trying to get the decedent back under control when he saw a gun in the air in the decedent's right hand. He recalled that the gun was approximately twelve inches away from him.

Officer Rosario recounted that he heard one shot and could smell the gunpowder. He heard Lieutenant Smith scream. Officer Rosario reported that he then lost consciousness for an unknown length of time. When he came to, Officer Rosario saw Lieutenant Smith on the ground on top of the decedent. Officer Rosario realized that he was also lying on the ground and that he had been shot. He recalled that he touched the back of his head to check that it was still there. He then called in to dispatch over the radio to report that shots had been fired and he was hit.

Officer Rosario advised he drew his weapon and pointed it at the decedent's right side. Lieutenant Smith then re-holstered Officer Rosario's gun by pushing his hand back toward his holster. Officer Rosario reported that the next thing he remembered was Officer Heaton arriving and getting him up and out of the store. He noted that Officer Heaton was critical incident-trained and began providing medical care to Officer Rosario in front of the store while he was lying on the sidewalk.

Officer Rosario reported that he did not see Lieutenant Smith fire his duty weapon due to being unconscious at the time.

Witness 1¹

Witness 1 was interviewed by SBI Agents on December 26, 2025, at the Mint Hill Police Department. Witness 1 was the business owner and the mother of the decedent.

Witness 1 reported that she made arrangements for her grandson to travel to Florida with her brother for a vacation trip. Witness 1 discussed the arrangements with the decedent and Witness 2, the child's mother. Witness 1 reported that on December 26, 2025, the decedent sent a text message to the family group chat that stated, "If something happens with Jacob, you will pay, and this is a threat." Witness 1 ignored the text message from the decedent and continued preparing her grandson for his trip to Florida. Witness 1 stated that her grandson and Witness 2 were waiting at the business for her brother to pick the child up for the trip and she received a text from Witness 2 asking her to come to the business because the decedent had arrived and was attempting to interfere with the vacation plan. Witness 1 stated she texted the decedent that she was on her way to the business and that she was bringing the police with her. The decedent replied to her text message saying, "good, they can hear the whole story."

Witness 1 recalled that when she arrived at the business, she waited outside for her police escort; however, she received a text message from Witness 2 stating that the decedent had locked himself inside a room with the child, so she entered the business without a police escort.

Witness 1 stated that she told the decedent he should leave the business. The decedent replied that she should be the one to leave and that he would be leaving with the child. The decedent and Witness 1 began arguing. Witness 1 reported that Witness 2 called the police again and that officers responded and began talking with the decedent.

Witness 1 stated that the decedent became agitated while talking with officers and, while officers were telling the decedent to remain calm, the decedent lunged toward the area of the business where Witness 2 was located. Witness 1 reported that the decedent began resisting the two officers as they were attempting to restrain him, and she heard approximately two gunshots. Witness 1 then grabbed the child and Witness 2 and ran out of the business. Witness 1 stated that she heard the officers telling the decedent to calm down, relax, and stop resisting.

Witness 1 stated that she, the child, and Witness 2 got into Witness 1's vehicle and began driving away from the area. At that time, she noticed a police officer had exited from the business and was bleeding from the head. Witness 1 asked the officer if he was okay and he told her that he was shot.

Witness 2

Witness 2 was interviewed by SBI Agents on December 26, 2025, at the Mint Hill Police Department. Witness 2 is the mother of the child at the center of the dispute and an employee of Witness 1 at the business.

¹ Witnesses who did not identify themselves publicly in media interviews or otherwise are not identified by name in this document. To name those who did not publicly identify themselves could have a chilling effect on witness cooperation in other cases.

Witness 2 reported that she gave her son a trip to SeaWorld for Christmas. On December 26, 2025, Witness 2 woke up around 7:00 a.m. and saw that she had received a group text from the decedent to Witness 1, Witness 2, and Witness 1's brother. The decedent texted that he was not sure what gave them the right to make plans with his son, but if anything happened to him, they would pay for it severely. The decedent texted that, "this was a threat."

Witness 2 decided to take her son to work with her because the decedent was acting unusual. She reported that she and the child arrived at the business at approximately 9:20 a.m. At some point, the decedent called her son and told him that the decedent was coming to the business. When the decedent arrived, Witness 2 texted Witness 1 to get her to come to the store.

Witness 2 recalled that the decedent closed the door of the office leaving him with the child in the back. When Witness 1 arrived at the store, she asked the decedent why he closed the door and the decedent replied that he did not know why they were making plans without him. Witness 1 told the decedent to leave, he refused, then pushed Witness 1. Witness 2 called the police again and Witness 1 left to find the officers.

Witness 2 recalled that a uniformed Hispanic male officer entered the business through the front door. The decedent was hanging onto the child and said, "You're not taking him, he's my son." Witness 1 tried to keep the decedent from shutting the door and the two officers started to restrain the decedent, but he resisted. She recalled that the decedent put his hands up and said he was calm. She then went to the front of the store near the register where she heard two gunshots.

Witness 2 reported that she, Witness 1, and the child ran out of the store, and she heard another gunshot that sounded far away. They ran to Witness 1's truck and saw a white officer with blood on his face who said that he had been shot.

Witness 2 reported that she never saw anyone shoot and only heard the gunshots.

Witness 3

Witness 3 was interviewed by SBI Agents on December 26, 2025, at the Mint Hill Police Department. Witness 3 was an employee of the business.

Witness 3 stated that she was working at the business when the decedent arrived at about 10:00 a.m. Witness 3 recalled that she had a brief conversation with the decedent, and then he went to the office where the child was located. Witness 3 recalled that Witness 2 texted Witness 1 that the decedent was at the business. Witness 1 responded that she was on her way. When Witness 1 arrived at the business, she attempted to go into the office where the child was located, but the decedent closed the door. Witness 3 recalled that Witness 1 told the decedent to leave, but he refused.

Witness 3 recalled that a police officer entered through the front door of the business and, as he did, the decedent sat his son down in a chair. The decedent then tried to close the door that separated the front and the back of the business, but Witness 1 told him not to close the door. Witness 3 reported that as that was happening, another officer came in through the back of the business. Witness 3 stated that the decedent tried to shut the door again, and she heard officers tell the decedent not to do that. She recalled that the officers tried to place handcuffs on the

decedent, but he resisted. Witness 3 stated that she pleaded with the decedent not to fight with the officers and, as she pleaded, she saw the decedent pull a gun, reach over his shoulder with it, and shoot at the officers. Witness 3 stated that she ran out of the business when the decedent fired. As she ran around the building, she saw other officers arriving on scene. Witness 3 advised that she saw an officer who had been on scene exit the business with blood on his face.

E. Video evidence

Officer Rosario's body-worn camera recorded his arrival on scene and his interaction with the decedent. As Officer Rosario arrived on scene, dispatch informed him that the 911 caller was inside the business. Officer Rosario proceeded into the business, making contact with Lieutenant Smith as Lieutenant Smith arrived on scene in his patrol car. Officer Rosario entered the front door of the business and was met by Witness 2 as she walked from the kitchen into the lobby of the business. Officer Rosario's body-worn camera recorded the decedent, who was holding the child very closely, move into the doorway that separated the kitchen and the lobby. As Officer Rosario attempted to determine who had custody of the child, Witness 1 was recorded entering the kitchen through the back door of the business, walking past the decedent and child, and entering the lobby of the business with Officer Rosario and Witness 2. Shortly thereafter, Lieutenant Smith entered through the back door and stood behind the decedent as the decedent continued to hold closely onto the child.

Officer Rosario's body-worn camera recorded Lieutenant Smith asking the decedent if the child could sit down and the decedent moved the child to a nearby chair. The decedent then began talking to Lieutenant Smith before abruptly attempting to close the door between Officer Rosario and Lieutenant Smith. The officers attempted to restrain the decedent, telling him to calm down and to not make erratic movements. The officers then released the decedent and again attempted to discuss the situation with him. The decedent was recorded asking for his son to be brought back into the room, then abruptly attempting to leave the room in what appears to be an attempt to recover control of the child.

The body-worn camera recorded Lieutenant Smith and Officer Rosario again attempting to restrain the decedent and calling for backup during which time Officer Rosario's body-worn camera fell to the ground, face down, where it continued to capture audio, but not video. The camera recorded the sounds of a struggle and the officers telling the decedent to put his hands behind his back. The camera recorded the sound of handcuffs, possible gunshots, screaming, Lieutenant Smith reporting that shots had been fired, additional struggling, then Officer Rosario saying he had been hit and Lieutenant Smith stating that he had been shot in the face. The camera continued to record the audio of backup officers arriving on scene.

Lieutenant Smith's body-worn camera recorded his arrival on scene, meeting with Witness 1, and walking into the back door of the business. His camera recorded him asking the decedent if the child could sit down, followed by the abrupt movement by the decedent to shut the door between Officer Rosario and Lieutenant Smith. Lieutenant Smith's camera recorded the initial restraint of the decedent, followed by his release as the officers warned him not to make erratic movements. The decedent then attempted to chase after his son, at which point he was again restrained by the officers. Lieutenant Smith's camera recorded the officers attempting to place the decedent in handcuffs, which the decedent resisted. During the struggle, the audio recorded an apparent gunshot followed by screaming. Lieutenant Smith reported that he had been

shot, and a significant struggle between Lieutenant Smith and the decedent followed, knocking Lieutenant Smith's body-worn camera off his chest and onto the floor. Lieutenant Smith then radioed out that he had been shot in the face, and Officer Rosario reported that he had been hit as well. The two officers appeared to stay in the room until additional officers arrived.

F. Physical evidence

The decedent's loaded Kel-tec .22 caliber handgun was located on the floor of the kitchen. A discharged cartridge case containing a letter "A" on the headstamp was inside the chamber of the weapon. The magazine contained fourteen live rounds. An additional discharged cartridge case containing a letter "A" on the headstamp was located on the floor of the kitchen.

A single discharged Win 9mm Luger round consistent with those loaded in Lieutenant Smith's service weapon was found on the floor of the kitchen.

G. Autopsy report

The Mecklenburg County Medical Examiner's Office performed an autopsy of the decedent on December 29, 2025. The autopsy determined the cause of death to be a single gunshot wound of the chest. Toxicology analysis of the decedent's blood showed the presence of THC and THC metabolites.

H. Conclusion

It is undisputed that Lieutenant Smith fired his weapon at the decedent. The central issue in this review is whether Lieutenant Smith was justified under North Carolina law in using deadly force in the protection of himself or others. A police officer – or any other person – is justified in using deadly force if they, in fact, believed that themselves or another person was in imminent danger of great bodily harm or death from the actions of the person who was shot, and if their belief was reasonable.

Graham v. Connor directs consideration of the following factors: (1) "whether the suspect posed an immediate threat to the safety of the officers or others," as well as (2) "the severity of the crime at issue" and (3) whether the suspect "is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight." Graham v. Connor, 490 U.S. 386, 396 (1989).

The available evidence is that Lieutenant Smith and Officer Rosario were responding to a child custody dispute at a Mint Hill business. As the officers tried to speak with those involved and discern the basis for the disagreement, the decedent abruptly attempted to close a door that would have separated him from Officer Rosario and Lieutenant Smith. The officers briefly restrained the decedent, then released him after he appeared to calm down. The officers warned the decedent not to make sudden movements. Despite the warning, the decedent then abruptly attempted to leave the room in what appears to have been an attempt to recover control of the child. Lieutenant Smith and Officer Rosario attempted to restrain the decedent, but the decedent resisted and struggled with officers. During the struggle, the decedent shot Lieutenant Smith in the mouth and Officer Rosario in the head. Lieutenant Smith then fired one round into the decedent's chest, killing him.

The available evidence in this case suggests Lieutenant Smith was justified in firing his service weapon at the decedent in defense of himself and Officer Rosario. At the time Lieutenant Smith fired his weapon, he was engaged in a struggle with the decedent who had just shot and seriously injured Lieutenant Smith and another law enforcement officer. As such, the evidence suggests that Lieutenant Smith acted justifiably in defense of himself and Officer Rosario. Accordingly, the State will not pursue criminal charges related to the death of Tjamel Ali Hamlin II.

If you have any questions, please contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Spencer B. Merriweather III".

Spencer B. Merriweather III
District Attorney

CC: Chief Joseph Hatley, Mint Hill Police Department

Exhibits:

The decedent's .22 caliber Kel-tec was recovered from the floor in the kitchen area.

[Return](#)



Mecklenburg County Medical Examiners' Office

3440 Reno Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28216

Telephone 7043362005

Fax 7043368353



REPORT OF AUTOPSY EXAMINATION

DECEDENT

Document Identifier: B25-5738

Name: Tjamel Hamlin

Age: 36

Race: Black

Sex: Male

AUTHORIZATION

Authorized By Benjamin Ross Daggett, MD. Received from Mecklenburg County.

IDENTIFICATION

Body Identified by Tags/Papers

ENVIRONMENT

Date of Exam: 12/29/25 Time of Exam: 0900

Persons Present: Linnelle Banks

CERTIFICATION

Cause of Death: Gunshot wound of the chest.

Manner of Death: Homicide.

Forensic Pathologist: Benjamin R. Daggett, MD

Date of Final Report: 3/4/2026

SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATION

The decedent is a 36-year-old male who was involved in an altercation with law enforcement officers. Autopsy examination reveals a single gunshot wound to the chest with injury of the heart, esophagus, and spinal cord.

11-hydroxy-THC, Delta-9 Carboxy THC, and Delta-9-THC were identified on toxicological exam.

It is my opinion, based on the circumstances surrounding death and the findings at autopsy, that Mr. Tjamel Hamlin died as a result of gunshot wound of the chest.

DIAGNOSES

1. Gunshot wound of the chest.
--Injury of the heart, esophagus, and spinal cord.
2. 11-hydroxy-THC, Delta-9 Carboxy THC, and Delta-9-THC were identified in the decedent's blood on postmortem toxicologic analysis.

EXTERNAL DESCRIPTION

Length: 64 inches

Weight: 132 pounds

Body Condition: Intact

Rigor: 3+

Lividity: Posterior

Hair: Black

Eyes: Brown

Teeth: Natural upper and lower

Body Development: Normal

Body Nourishment: Normal

Clothing: A jacket, a t-shirt, a pair of pants with belt, a pair of socks, and a pair of shoes

Accompanies the body: A white-and-brown metal ring

Identifying Marks: All tattoos and scars are as recorded on the body diagrams

Medical Intervention: As documented on the body diagrams.

Other: N/A

INJURIES

The body bears injuries due to a single gunshot wound. For orientation purposes, the top of the head is designated as 12:00.

GUNSHOT WOUND OF THE LEFT SIDE OF THE CHEST

Entrance: On the left side of the chest is a 0.2 x 0.2 inch entrance-type gunshot wound. An abrasion collar surrounds the wound, measuring up to 0.2 inches, and is most pronounced from the 2:00-5:00 direction. The wound is centered 13.7 inches below the vertex of the scalp and 3.7 inches to the left of midline. Possible soot is identified on the decedent's jacket.

Path: The bullet entered the chest through the left third rib anteriorly where it perforated the heart, entering through the left atrium and left ventricle and exiting through the right atrium, causing damage to the septum and all four cardiac valves. The bullet then lacerated the esophagus and perforated the eighth thoracic vertebral body and transected the spinal cord at the level of the 8th thoracic vertebral body. There is a hemo-pericardium and left-sided hemothorax.

Exit: None

Bullet: A bullet is recovered from within the spinal canal at the level of the 8th vertebral body.

Course: With the body in standard anatomic position, the course of the bullet is backward, leftward, and downward.

INTERNAL EXAMINATION

Body Cavities

Any injuries/hemorrhage as described in the INJURIES section above

Organ positions: Normal and present unless stated below

Abnormal fluid collections: See "Evidence of Injury."

Adhesions: None

Cardiovascular System

Heart Weight: 300 grams

Pericardium: See "Evidence of Injury."

Coronary arteries: See "Evidence of Injury."

Chamber and valves: See "Evidence of Injury."

Myocardium: See "Evidence of Injury."

Aorta and major branches: Normal

Respiratory System

Right Lung Weight: 600 grams

Left Lung Weight: 250 grams

Neck Soft tissues: Normal

Hyoid bone and laryngeal cartilages: Normal

Trachea and bronchi: Unremarkable without obstructions

Lung parenchyma: Normal

Pulmonary arteries: Unobstructed

Gastrointestinal System

Oral cavity, esophagus, stomach, and intestines all grossly unremarkable.

Liver

Liver Weight: 1180 grams

Grossly unremarkable

Spleen

Spleen Weight: 90 grams

Grossly unremarkable

Pancreas

Grossly unremarkable

Urinary

Right Kidney Weight: 130 grams

Left Kidney Weight: 150 grams

Grossly unremarkable

Reproductive

Grossly unremarkable

Endocrine

Thyroid gland: Normal

Adrenal glands: Normal

Neurologic

Brain Weight: 1430 grams

Scalp: Normal

Skull: Normal

Vasculature: Normal

Leptomeninges: There is subarachnoid hemorrhage originating from within the spinal cord.

Brain: Normal

Immunologic System

Grossly unremarkable

Musculoskeletal System

See "Evidence of Injury."

OTHER PROCEDURES

Radiographs: Full-body anterior/posterior and lateral radiographs are performed.

Evidence Collected: Bullet, blood card, a jacket, a t-shirt, a pair of pants with belt, a pair of socks, a pair of shoes, and a white-and-brown, metal ring.

Cultures: None

MICROSCOPIC EXAMINATION

Sections submitted: None

Findings: N/A

DISPOSITION OF PERSONAL EFFECTS AND EVIDENCE

The following items are released with the body: None.

The following items are preserved as evidence: Bullet, blood card, a jacket, a t-shirt, a pair of pants with belt, a pair of socks, a pair of shoes, and a white- and brown-metal ring.

END OF REPORT- Diagrams attached

BRD/km

DID #: 41002558

State of North Carolina

Name of Decedent: TJamel Hamlin II

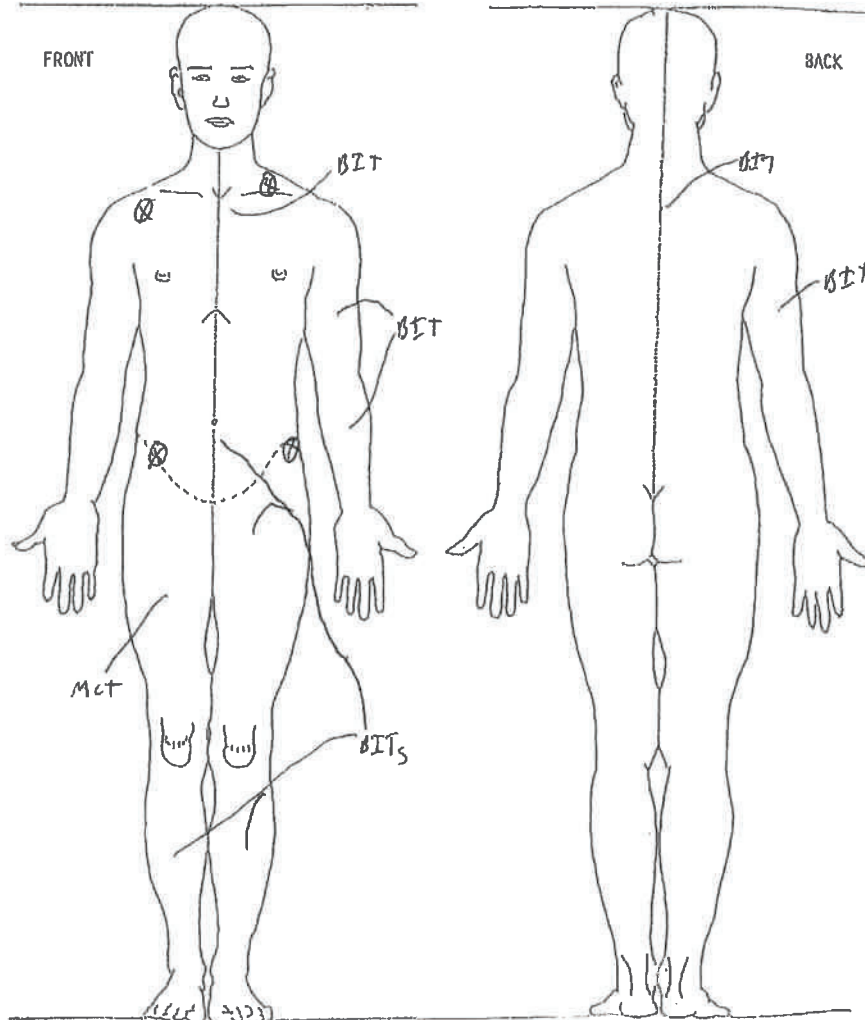
Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

Autopsy # B25-5738

Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27599-7580

Examined By: BRD/LB Date: 12-29-25

BODY DIAGRAM: ADULT (Front/Back)



DEHN 1917 (4/07)
Medical Examiner

This form may be photocopied.

PAGE ____ OF ____

State of North Carolina

Name of Decedent: Tijane Hulin II

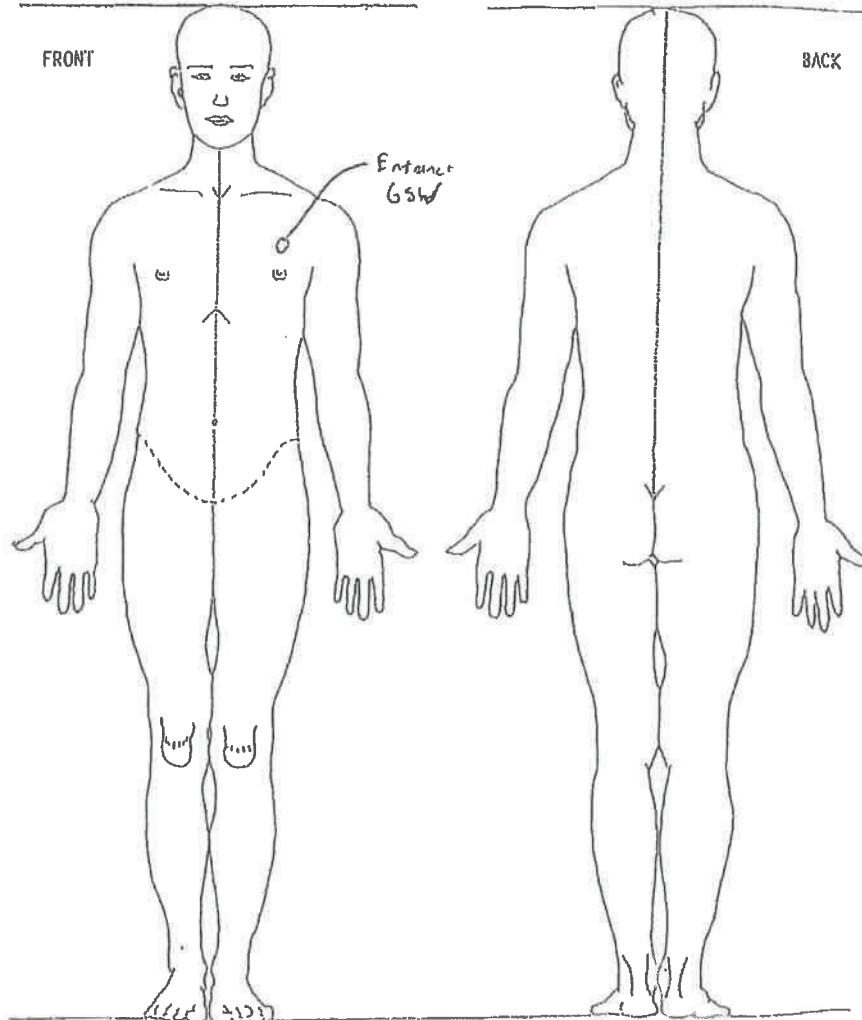
Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

Autopsy # B25-5738

Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27599-7580

Examined By: BRD/LB Date: 12-29-25

BODY DIAGRAM: ADULT (Front/Back)



DEMR 1817 (4/97)
Medical Examiner

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PAGE ___ OF ___

Rhyne, Thomas

From: noreply@dhhs.nc.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 10:47 PM
To: Rhyne, Thomas
Subject: No Reply: OCME Toxicology F202507827

CAUTION: This is an external email, please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. Report suspicious emails with the Report button located on your Outlook menu bar on the Home tab.

TOXICOLOGY REPORT

Office of the Chief Medical Examiner Toxicology Folder: T202513540
Raleigh, NC 27699-3025 Case Folder: F202507827

Date of Report: 26-feb-2026
DOD: 26-dec-2025
Page: 1

Thomas Rhyne
Ncsbi 5994 Caldwell Park Drive
Harrisburg, NC 28075

DECEDENT: Tjamel Ali Hamlin II
Status of Report: Approved
Report Electronically Approved By: Marc Feaster, BS,BA

* * *

=====

SPECIMENS received from Benjamin Daggett on 31-dec-2025

S250039462: 15.0 ml Blood CONDITION: Postmortem
SOURCE: Aorta OBTAINED: 29-dec-2025

Drug Screen - Basic ----- Present 02/26/2026
Ethanol ----- None Detected 02/26/2026

S250039463: 20.0 ml Blood CONDITION: Postmortem
SOURCE: Iliac vein OBTAINED: 29-dec-2025

11-Hydroxy-THC ----- 4.9 ng/mL 02/26/2026

** Comments Concerning This Result **

Analysis was performed by NMS Labs.

** End of Comments Concerning This Result **

Delta-9 Carboxy THC ----- 83 ng/mL 02/26/2026

** Comments Concerning This Result **

Analysis was performed by NMS Labs.

** End of Comments Concerning This Result **

Delta-9-THC ----- 44 ng/mL 02/26/2026

** Comments Concerning This Result **

Analysis was performed by NMS Labs.

** End of Comments Concerning This Result **

TOXICOLOGY REPORT

Office of the Chief Medical Examiner Toxicology Folder: T202513540

Raleigh, NC 27699-3025

Case Folder: F202507827

Date of Report: 26-feb-2026

DOD: 26-dec-2025

Page: 2

Decedent: Tjamel Ali Hamlin II

*** SPECIMENS received from Benjamin Daggett on 31-dec-2025 (Continued)

S250039464: 3.0 ml Vitreous Humor CONDITION: Postmortem

SOURCE: Eye

OBTAINED: 29-dec-2025

** Comments Concerning This Specimen **

Specimen appears discolored.

** End of Comments Concerning This Specimen **

S250039465: 20.0 ml Urine

CONDITION: Postmortem

SOURCE: Urinary Bladder

OBTAINED: 29-dec-2025

Accredited by the College of American Pathologists,
Laboratory Accreditation Program.

030426 22:46

*** END OF REPORT ***

B202505738