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III
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NEWS RELEASE

August 28, 2026

Man sentenced to life in prison for 2023 fatal shooting

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Today, Lawrence Jackson was sentenced to life in prison after a jury found him guilty of the June 2023 shooting that killed 33-year-old Justin Johnson. The DA's Homicide Team prosecuted the case. After the defendant asserted his right to a speedy trial, the trial began on August 17, 2026, and concluded with today's verdict. The trial was held in courtroom 5370 before the Honorable Reggie E. McKnight, Superior Court Judge.

Lawrence Jackson, 52, was tried for 1) first-degree murder and 2) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. The jury found him *guilty as charged*. Judge McKnight sentenced Jackson to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

On June 9, 2023, Justin Johnson, the victim, was packing to move out of an apartment off Peppervine Ln. in which he'd been living with his mother and Lawrence Jackson. Jackson had been in a dating relationship with the victim's mother. Around 10:30 p.m., the victim was sitting at the kitchen table when Jackson shot him once in the side of the head. Jackson moved the victim's body and attempted to clean up the victim's blood that was on the floor.

Jackson then left the apartment and met up with some people at their home. At some point later upon visiting the apartment, at least three of them saw the victim's body in Jackson's apartment. One of them went to the apartment with Jackson and saw the victim's body but did not call 911. Another one of the people, along with his girlfriend, went later to Jackson's apartment, saw the victim's body, and left without calling 911.

Later that morning, the victim's mother called a neighbor to ask her to check on her son at the apartment because he wasn't answering the phone. The neighbor went to the apartment and after no one answered her knocks, she opened the unlocked door and saw a large amount of blood which prompted her to call 911. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department officers responded, and the victim was pronounced deceased on scene.

Detectives with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department executed a search warrant at Jackson's apartment. They recovered multiple live rounds of .380 ammunition. A .380 bullet was recovered from the victim's body. They also recovered suspected blood from the lid of the washing machine. An analyst with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department Forensics Lab was able to determine that blood evidence recovered from the washing machine matched that of the victim.

Jackson was arrested while sleeping in his car at a motel off of Brookshire Blvd. in the early morning of June 11, 2023.

Jackson was convicted of a felony in New York in 2005, and, thus, was illegally in possession of a firearm on June 9, 2023.

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