



Rick Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

NEWS RELEASE

Date: January 8, 2024
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Release #: 2023 – 175

CASE UPDATE #2: Second Man Arrested During Investigation of the Shooting Death of 18-Month-Old

BUNNELL, FL – A second arrest has been made in the shooting death of 18-month-old Ja'liyah Allen on the night of September 3, 2023. Flagler County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) Major Case detectives determined that CJ Nelson Sr. provided instructions on how to stage the scene and dispose of evidence prior to the arrival of law enforcement. Nelson Sr. is the father of CJ Nelson Jr., who was previously indicted on Manslaughter charges by a Grand Jury.



CJ Nelson Sr. (Flagler County Jail Mugshot)

Investigators determined that CJ Nelson Sr. was called to the home immediately after the shooting occurred and took the firearm used in the shooting from CJ Nelson Jr., using a t-shirt to prevent fingerprints from being found on the weapon. CJ Nelson Sr. then placed the gun in the bedroom where it was located by deputies. CJ Nelson Sr. also instructed witnesses to provide an alibi for himself and CJ

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Nelson Jr. and tell deputies that they were both outside smoking at the time of the incident. After the father and son relocated to a residence on Princeton Lane in Palm Coast, CJ Nelson Sr. advised CJ Nelson Jr. to take a shower to remove any trace evidence or gunshot residue.

On Friday, January 5th, 2024, an arrest warrant was obtained for CJ Nelson Sr. for two counts of Tampering with Evidence and two counts of Providing False Information to Law Enforcement During an Investigation. CJ Nelson Sr. was taken into custody at the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility (SPHIDF), where he had been putting money in his son's inmate commissary account. CJ Nelson Sr. was released from the SPHIDF after posting a \$15,000 bond.

CJ Nelson Sr. has an extensive criminal history, with a previous total of nine misdemeanors and nine felony arrests. This includes multiple traffic violations; arrests by the Bunnell Police Department for Battery in 2003 and 2004; arrests in Volusia County for Obstruction without Violence in 2006 and Possession of Marijuana in 2011; and arrests by FCSO for Possession of Cocaine and Sale of Cocaine in 2007 for which he was sentenced to two years in prison, Possession of Marijuana in 2012, and Child Neglect with Great Bodily Harm and Battery in 2016.

“We have a very good team and we have very good technology. We just kept working this case ever since the shooting as we knew immediately from the evidence the crime scene had been tampered with and witnesses were not being forthcoming,” said Sheriff Rick Staly. “The apple did not fall far from the tree and CJ Nelson Sr. will never be the father of the year or even a day by his actions. I again commend Detective Gordon and our Major Case Unit for continuing to dig to find out who tampered with the scene and what was done and by who.”

CASE UPDATE: Grand Jury Indicts Palm Coast Man on Manslaughter in Shooting Death of 18-Month-Old

BUNNELL, FL – Manslaughter charges have been brought against CJ Nelson Jr., the person of interest in the shooting death of 18-month-old Ja'liyah Allen on the night of September 3, 2023. Nelson was initially arrested on September 4, 2023, for violating his terms of probation and transported to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility where he has remained since with no bond.

At the time of his initial arrest, Nelson was on probation for Improper Exhibition of a Dangerous Weapon and Possession of Cannabis Less Than 20 Grams. According to the Order of Probation, Nelson was prohibited from possessing, carrying, or owning any firearm.

On November 15, 2023, a Grand Jury indicted Nelson for Manslaughter with a Firearm and an arrest warrant was issued. Major Case Unit Detective Kathryn Gordon served Nelson, Jr. with the arrest

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warrant at the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility where he had been held since his arrest. He continues to be held with no bond. The charge of Manslaughter with a Firearm holds a penalty of up to 30 years in the state prison system according to State Attorney R.J. Larizza.

Nelson’s DNA and latent prints were located on the firearm after processing at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement’s Crime Lab. Additionally, it was determined through a blood draw that Nelson was high on THC at the time of the incident.

“Thank you to the State Attorney’s Office, FDLE and the many members of the Sheriff’s Office for their assistance in this case,” said Sheriff Rick Staly. “I think the Grand Jury spoke loud and clear and I commend Detective Gordon and the team for building a strong case to hold Nelson, Jr. accountable for his actions. The investigation is continuing, and additional charges may be pending.”

18-Month-Old Child Dies in Shooting in Palm Coast

BUNNELL, FL – An 18-month-old child died overnight in a shooting in Palm Coast. Around 11:45pm on September 3, 2023, Flagler County Sheriff’s Office deputies responded to a residence on Ranwood Lane in Palm Coast after FCSO Communications received a frantic 911 call reporting a baby had been shot.

Upon arrival, deputies located an 18-month-old female with a gunshot wound to the head. The child was transported to the hospital where she was pronounced deceased.

Major Case Unit detectives are still actively gathering evidence and speaking to witnesses. No arrests have been made at this time. This death may have been accidental; however, the investigation is still active and ongoing with the assistance of FDLE’s Crime Scene Investigators.

“This is a tragic situation, and we offer our condolences to the family and friends of this little girl. This was a young life cut way too short,” said Sheriff Rick Staly. “While God has a new little angel, we will investigate this incident along with the State Attorney’s Office Homicide Investigation Unit until all facts are known. There is no threat to the community. The incident was contained inside this residence and all persons present or involved have been identified.”

FCSO will provide more information when possible.

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