

PROBABLE CAUSE STATEMENT FORM

Date: 08-03-2019

CRN: KC19-57989

I, Detective Darin Penrod #4288, Kansas City, Missouri Police Department
(Name and identify law enforcement officer, or person having information as probable cause.)

knowing that false statements on this form are punishable by law, state that the facts contained herein are true.

I have probable cause to believe that on 08-02-2019, at 18th and Main Street in
(Date) (Address)

Kansas City, Jackson Missouri Deon'te S. Copkney
(County) (Name of Offender(s))

B/M, 01-03-2001, 5'9", 230 lbs committed one or more criminal offense(s).
(Description of Identity)

The facts supporting this belief are as follows:

On 08-02-2019, at about 2204 hours, officers of the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department were dispatched to the area of 18th and Main St. regarding a reported Shots Fired call. Upon arrival, officers located a female victim suffering from an apparent gunshot wound to her head. KCFD EMS transported the victim to an area hospital where she was declared deceased at 2250 hours. The Jackson County Medical Examiner’s Office determined the cause of death was a gunshot wound to the head and the manner of death was homicide. The entry point of the bullet was near the right eyebrow, but there was no exit. The victim was determined to be Erin Langhofer, w/f, 12/15/93 of Overland Park, KS. Witnesses reported that Langhofer was standing near the food trucks on 18th St., and she was not involved in any altercation prior to the gunfire.

Uniformed officers working off duty in the area of became involved in a foot pursuit with three males observed running from the scene immediately after hearing shots fired. The observed males were running north on Walnut St. from 18th St. One of the three males, observed wearing a black hoodie, with short hair, and heavier set, was ordered to stop. Before the heavier set male stopped running, a pursuing officer observed him drop a handgun before lying down on the ground. The firearm was secured and he was taken into custody without incident. He identified himself as **Deon'te S. Copkney B/M, 01-03-2001**. Two additional black males, who had been running in the same direction as Copkney, were also taken into custody. They were later identified and confirmed as Copkney’s associates. The firearm was a 9mm handgun with the slide locked to the rear. It contained an empty 8 round magazine. Near the north east area of the parking lot, located on 18th St. between Walnut St. and an alleyway on the west, officers observed nine (9) spent 9MM shell casings consistent with the number of round capacity held by the firearm recovered at the scene.

The shooting occurred in the Crossroads District, which was full of foot traffic due to a monthly event known as “First Fridays.” This event generally brings thousands of residents and visitors to the Crossroads District, for events such as local food trucks, street music, aerial performances, sidewalk vendors, etc. Multiple food trucks lined 18th St. between Walnut St. and Main St. Just prior to the gunfire, several witnesses described there was a disturbance between two groups of black males in the area of 18th St and the parking lot just north of 18th St. between Walnut St. and an alleyway just east of Main St. directly north of several food vending trucks lined on

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18th St. Witnesses described that at the time of the gunfire a significant number of people were walking in the area. Others were patronizing the food trucks lining 18th St. Other people were watching a nearby street performer, just north of the food trucks.

Detectives located a witness who advised he and his wife, who reside outside the Kansas City area, were patronizing First Fridays, and were standing near the corner at 18th and Walnut Ave when they observed a black male, heavy set, approximately 5'7" and 185lbs with short hair, wearing a black hoodie (matches description of **Copkney**) fighting with a taller skinny black male near the row of food trucks on 18th St. just west of his location. He stated that it appeared the taller male had gained the upper hand in the fight and had disengaged stepping away from **Copkney** allowing him to get up off the ground. He stated that the taller male began to approach **Copkney** once he got to his feet to re-engage in the fight when the witness observed **Copkney** pull an unknown firearm from his left front pocket of his pants. He advised the skinny male then apparently observed the gun and began to retreat and leave the area on foot westbound from the location. He advised that the heavier set b/m (**Copkney**) and another male approximately 6' tall observed wearing a red hoodie began to walk east then northbound on Walnut. The witness then thought the incident was over. He stated that he then heard several gunshots and stated pedestrians in the area began to run from the area, and then observed an injured female on the ground on 18th St. in front of a food truck with apparent head trauma. The witness believed the victim was fatally wounded.

Another witness, who was overwhelmed with grief during his statement, stated that he and his girlfriend (the victim) were standing at one of the food trucks waiting to get something to eat. He heard several gunshots. He stated that he then observed the victim lying on the ground with apparent trauma to her body and to be bleeding. He advised that he did not see who had the firearm.

One other subject advised he had come to the area with **Copkney** and another friend at approximately 9 PM (2100 hours) to hang out and meet some other friends. He stated upon arrival he did not know of any issues between anyone he was with and anyone they came into contact with prior to the physical altercation and subsequent shooting. He stated that he never observed **Copkney** with a firearm prior to, during, or after the shooting occurred. He confirmed that there was a physical altercation, and that once it broke up, he and another friend began to walk from the scene north on Walnut St. with **Copkney** behind them. He said that as he was walking away, he could hear **Copkney** still "running his mouth." Then he heard gunshots. He observed officers take **Copkney** into custody. Officers directed that he and his other friend get on the ground, and his friends complied. He stated that he did not know who had shot the firearm and he was not aware that anyone had been struck by gunfire until he arrived at Police Headquarters and noticed that he was taken to the Homicide Unit for questioning.

Copkney was also transported to Police Headquarters and was placed into an interview room. Detectives made contact with **Copkney** and advised him of his Miranda Rights by reading them aloud from the Miranda Warning and Waiver Form 340 PD. **Copkney** stated that he understood his rights and gave a statement. **Copkney** told detectives that he and two other friends responded to the area of this offense and had walked to the food trucks. **Copkney** said that near the food trucks, his group was walking on 18th St. towards another group of black males. A tall, slender black male in the other group said "What's up," and then jumped him (**Copkney**). When pressed, he could provide no other indication of why the physical altercation occurred. **Copkney** initially

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stated that during the physical altercation with this slender black male he fell to the ground and discovered a handgun which he picked up. He stated that after the fight broke up, he and his friends then ran northeast through the parking lot and the other group departed to the west. As he was running, he turned backwards and fired shots “into the air” and “emptied his clip.” **Copkney** stated that after he discharged his firearm he continued to run and was pursued by police officers who took him in to custody. **Copkney** stated he dropped the gun as he was running. **Copkney** ultimately admitted that the handgun he used belonged to him and he had brought it with him that night, fully loaded, concealed in the left front pocket of his sweatpants. He confirmed that he was left handed. He admitted that he was the only one who fired a gun during this offense and he did not describe anybody else as having a firearm. **Copkney** drew an “X” in the northeast corner of the parking lot located north of 18th St. at Walnut, which he indicated was his position when he fired his gun. Two unoccupied vehicles within the parking lot were discovered to have been struck by gunfire to the south and west of where the 9MM shell casings were located.

Copkney stated that he shot into the air and did not intend to hurt anyone. Detectives noted that the physical evidence at the scene contradicts this claim. Rather, the trajectory with which the bullet struck the victim, and multiple other bullets struck the sides, a bumper, a window and a windshield of two vehicles in the area indicate that **Copkney** did not aim up into the air.

On 8-03-2019, the Firearms Section of the Kansas City Regional Crime Lab confirmed that the 9MM cartridge casings recovered from the northeast section of the parking lot at 18th and Walnut St. were fired from the recovered 9MM Smith and Wesson that **Copkney** dropped on the ground prior to his arrest and subsequently admitted was his firearm.

I am requesting a warrant be issued in this case. The lead charges are both A felonies punishable by up to life in prison. Based on the Defendant’s actions described above, he poses a serious risk to the safety of the community. He deliberately fired nine shots horizontally into a crowd of persons until his magazine was empty. **Copkney** is described by one of his associates as a hothead, who “doesn’t let things go.”

Printed Name Det. Darin Penrod #4288 Signature /S/ Det. Darin Penrod #4288

The Court finds probable cause and directs the issuance of a warrant this _____ day of _____.

Judge

Circuit Court of _____ County, State of Missouri.