

**16-Jun-2025 15:24**

CIRCUIT COURT OF JACKSON COUNTY, MO

BY *James F. Kanatys* DCA

## **PROBABLE CAUSE STATEMENT**

Date: 6/13/2025

Report #: 2025-35081

I, Nicholas VanHoecke, a Detective with the Independence, Missouri, Police Department, knowing that false statements on this form are punishable by law, state that the facts contained herein are true.

1. I have probable cause to believe that on 6/12/2025, at 2358 hours, Robert Cordato, (Race- White, Sex- Male, committed one or more criminal offenses in Jackson County, Missouri.
2. The facts supporting this belief are as follows:

On 6/12/2025, officers with the Independence Police Department were dispatched to A residence in Independence, Jackson County, Missouri 64052, in reference to a shooting.

Prior to officers' arrival, dispatch confirmed with the reporting party—identified as Victim 3, a juvenile—that the suspect had fled the scene. Upon arrival, officers located Victim 3 at the front door of the residence suffering from apparent gunshot wounds. Victim 3 directed officers to the interior hallway, where Victim 2 was located with a gunshot wound to the head. During a protective sweep of the residence for additional victims or suspects, officers located Victim 1 deceased in the kitchen.

While conducting the safety sweep, officers observed a spent shell casing near Victim 1 in the kitchen and a spent shell casing near Victim 2 in the hallway.

While receiving medical treatment, Victim 3 identified the Defendant as her cousin, "Billy Cordato" whose information was identified to be Defendant. Victim 3 reported to Detective Kitzenberger (Reporting Officer) that Defendant entered the residence through a side door. Victim 3 reported Defendant asked where Victim 1 was and then Victim 3 heard shots being fired. Victim 3 reported Defendant then entered a room that herself, Victim 2 and additional juveniles were in. Victim 3 reported Defendant shot Victim 2 and then shot her.

Victim 2 and Victim 3 were transported to area hospitals for medical treatment. Victim 3 had three gunshot wounds, one to her left thigh, one to her left flank and one to her right wrist. Victim 2 had gunshot wounds to her head, right arm and right leg.

There were an additional 5 children in the residence at the time of the shooting. The additional children's ages ranged from seven months old to nine years old.

Through the course of the investigation, target addresses were identified that were associated with Defendant or his associates. Surveillance was set up on the addresses and Defendant was located near a residence in, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri 64126 on 06/13/2025. Defendant was arrested and transported to the Independence Police Detention Center.

On 06/13/2025, Detective VanHoecke (Primary Detective) and Detective Garcia (Assisting Detective) attempted an interview of Defendant. Defendant was read his Miranda Warning of Rights and acknowledged that he understood his rights. Defendant refused to sign the Warning of Rights Form.

Defendant was asked what occurred on 6/12/2025 and Defendant requested an attorney.

Defendant was escorted back to the detention lobby to be placed back in a cell. While in the lobby, Defendant made a spontaneous statement, asking "So I'm being charged with two first degree counts of murder?" It should be noted during the contact with Defendant, that detectives did not reveal the number of victims.

On 6/14/2025, Detective Winans (Assisting Detective) conducted an interview of Victim 3. Victim 3 stated Victim 1 was downstairs, and Victim 2 was in the kitchen and she was in the living room. Victim 3 stated Defendant entered the residence through the side door, wearing a "gas mask" describing the mask as black around the edges and clear around the face. Victim 3 stated she recognized Defendants voice as he was talking. Victim 3 stated Defendant "walks weird" and recognized the walk. Victim 3 stated Defendant had a gun in his hand, describing the gun as black, big and long gun. Victim 3 stated she could see Defendant's whole face through the clear part of the mask. Victim 3 stated Defendant was wearing a red and black hoodie and black pants. Victim 3 stated Defendant was saying "where's Rob, where's Rob". Victim 3 stated she recognized the voice to be the voice of Defendant.

Victim 3 stated Victim 2 was telling Defendant that there were kids present. Victim 3 stated Victim 1 came upstairs, and Defendant shot Victim 1. Victim 3 stated her and Victim 2 got all of the other children that were in the living room to a back bedroom. Victim 3 stated she and Victim 2 were attempting to hold the door shut. Victim 3 stated the other juveniles were hiding under the bed in the room. Victim 3 stated Defendant pushed the door open and shot Victim 2 and then Defendant shot her.

A photographic line-up was presented to Victim 3. Victim 3 identified Defendant in the photographic line-up.

Defendant shows to have a history of arrests or arrests with convictions for Tampering 1<sup>st</sup> Degree, Murder 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, Armed Criminal Action, Aid the Escape of Prisoner, Unlawful Use of a Weapon, Possession of Stolen Property, Driving while Intoxicated, Burglary 2<sup>nd</sup>, Domestic Assault, Resisting Arrest, Domestic Assault 1<sup>st</sup> Degree, and Property Damage.

Nicholas VanHoecke #1600

/S/ Nicholas VanHoecke #1600

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Print Name

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Signature