



JASON W. SMITH
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

State of North Carolina
General Court of Justice
Sixth Prosecutorial District
Wilmington, NC 28402

POST OFFICE BOX 352
PHONE: (910) 772-6610
FAX: (910) 772-6611

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Contact: Samantha Dooies, Public Information Officer

Samantha.Dooies@nccourts.org

(910)-772-6934

Kinston Man Convicted of the First-Degree Murder after Three-Week Trial

Jamal Terrel Griggs, 32, was convicted of First-Degree Murder, Firing into an Occupied Vehicle in Operation, and Possession of a Firearm by a Felon by a New Hanover County jury on February 6, 2026, for the shooting death of Shelton Long in November 2021. The defendant was sentenced to a life in prison without the possibility of parole by the Honorable Superior Court Judge Tiffany Powers of Robeson County.

Shelton Long was found dead on November 5, 2021, at 4203 River Road in his vehicle after having suffered three gunshot wounds. Investigators determined that he had been shot on November 4, 2021, and found three 9mm shell casings. Witnesses came forward to explain that the victim and defendant had an interaction earlier on November 4, 2021, at an apartment and that upon leaving that location Shelton Long reported that he was being followed. Surveillance footage of the pursuit matched a vehicle later linked with the defendant, and cell site location data, presented by the FBI's CAST Team, indicated that the defendant's phone was at or near the crime scene around the time of the murder.

District Attorney Jason Smith said, "Justice has been a long time coming for the Long family, but it wasn't denied. We are grateful to the jury for their verdict. Our office will continue to prioritize justice for victims like Shelton Long."

"Senseless gun violence like this will not be tolerated in our community," Assistant District Attorney Brad Matthews added.

The successful prosecution of the case can be attributed to witnesses who were willing to come forward and investigative efforts from the Wilmington Police Department. Pamela Long, the victim's mother, was present in the courtroom when the verdict was announced and gave an emotional impact statement to the Court. DA Smith commends the hard work of Assistant District Attorneys Brad Matthews and Amy White, who represented the State on this case.



Jamal Griggs