

Judicial Conduct Board
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Melissa L. Norton, Chief Counsel
717-234-7911

Press Release

April 10, 2024

FROM: Melissa L. Norton
Chief Counsel

SUBJECT: Magisterial District Judge Sonya M. McKnight
Magisterial District Court 12-2-04
12th Judicial District
Dauphin County
2 JD 2024

HARRISBURG, PA - On Wednesday, April 10, 2024, the Judicial Conduct Board filed formal charges in the Court of Judicial Discipline against Dauphin County Magisterial District Judge Sonya M. McKnight. The Board Complaint alleges violations of the Rules Governing Standards of Conduct of Magisterial District Judges and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Accompanying the Board Complaint, the Board filed a Petition for Special Relief seeking revocation of the probation imposed at Court of Judicial Discipline Docket Number 1 JD 2021.

Under the Pennsylvania Constitution, Judge McKnight, as the subject of the charges, is presumed innocent in all proceedings before the Court of Judicial Discipline. The Board has the burden of proving the charges filed in the Court of Judicial Discipline by clear and convincing evidence.

In accordance with the rules which govern proceedings before the Court of Judicial Discipline, Judge McKnight has the right to respond to the charges, to obtain and inspect the evidence which forms the basis of the allegations, and to a public trial before the Court of Judicial Discipline.

Upon completion of the trial, if the Court determines that any of the charges have been proven by clear and convincing evidence, it will schedule a hearing to determine what sanction, if any, should be imposed. Possible sanctions include censure, suspension, fine or removal from office.

The Board Complaint and Petition for Special Relief accompany this press release. The documents are also available on the Board's website at www.jcbpa.org (select the Resource Tab then select Press Releases in the drop-down menu).

Court filings for all cases prosecuted by the Board are available on the Court of Judicial Discipline website at <http://www.pacourts.us/courts/court-of-judicial-discipline>.

Counsel:

Representing the Judicial Conduct Board: Elizabeth R. Donnelly, Deputy Counsel

Representing Magisterial District Judge Sonya M. McKnight: John Brovacos, Esquire

Contact: Melissa L. Norton, Chief Counsel

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

**COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE
OF PENNSYLVANIA**

APR 10 2024

RECEIVED AND FILED

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight :
Magisterial District Judge :
Magisterial District 12-2-04 : 2 JD 2024
12th Judicial District :
Dauphin County :

TO: SONYA M. MCKNIGHT

You are hereby notified that the Pennsylvania Judicial Conduct Board has determined that there is probable cause to file formal charges against you for conduct proscribed by Article V, § 17(b) and § 18(d)(1) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Rules Governing Standards of Conduct of Magisterial District Judges. The Board's counsel will present the case in support of the charges before the Pennsylvania Court of Judicial Discipline.

You have an absolute right to be represented by a lawyer in all proceedings before the Court of Judicial Discipline. Your attorney should file an entry of appearance with the Court of Judicial Discipline within fifteen (15) days of service of this Board Complaint in accordance with C.J.D.R.P. No. 110.

You are hereby notified, pursuant to C.J.D.R.P. No. 302(B), that should you elect to file an omnibus motion, that motion should be filed no later than thirty (30) days after the service of this Complaint in accordance with C.J.D.R.P. No. 411.

You are further hereby notified that within thirty (30) days after the service of this Complaint, if no omnibus motion is filed, or within twenty (20) days after the dismissal of all or part of the omnibus motion, you may file an Answer admitting or denying the allegations contained in this Complaint in accordance with C.J.D.R.P. No. 413. Failure to file an Answer shall be deemed a denial of all factual allegations in the Complaint.

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight	:	
Magisterial District Judge	:	
Magisterial District 12-2-04	:	2 JD 2024
12 th Judicial District	:	
Dauphin County	:	

COMPLAINT

AND NOW, this 10th day of April, 2024, comes the Judicial Conduct Board of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Board) and files this Board Complaint against the Honorable Judge Sonya M. McKnight, Magisterial District Judge for Magisterial District 12-2-04, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, alleging that Judge McKnight has violated the Rules Governing Standards of Conduct of Magisterial District Judges and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as more specifically delineated herein.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

1. Article V, § 18 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania grants to the Board the authority to determine whether there is probable cause to file formal charges against a judicial officer in this Court, and thereafter, to prosecute the case in support of such charges in this Court.
2. From January 4, 2016, to February 9, 2021, Judge McKnight served as Magisterial District Judge for Magisterial District 12-2-04, Dauphin County Pennsylvania.

McCoy on February 10, 2024. A copy of the Criminal Complaint is attached hereto as "Exhibit A," made a part hereof, and incorporated herein by reference as though set forth in full.

12. The charge of attempted homicide is a felony in the first degree and carries a maximum sentence of forty years of incarceration and a possible fine of up to \$50,000.
13. The charge of aggravated assault is a felony in the first degree and carries a maximum sentence of twenty years of incarceration and a possible fine of up to \$25,000.
14. Rule 1921 of the Pennsylvania Rules of Judicial Administration (Rule 1921) mandates:

[w]henver a judge receives notice that he or she is the subject of any federal or state criminal investigation or prosecution through a target letter, a subject letter, a presentment, an indictment, an arrest, a summons, a complaint, or other legal process, or any other means from the investigating or prosecuting authority, unless precluded by order of court, the judge must report the receipt of such notice in writing to the Chief Justice and the Judicial Conduct Board within five (5) days.
15. Judge McKnight failed to comply with Rule 1921 and report to the Chief Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court that she was the subject of a state criminal investigation.
16. Judge McKnight failed to comply with Rule 1921 and report to the Judicial Conduct Board that she was the subject of a state criminal investigation.

CHARGES

Count 1 Violation of Canon 1, Rule 1.1

17. By virtue of some or all of the conduct set forth above Judge McKnight violated Canon 1, Rule 1.1 of the Rules Governing Standards of Conduct of Magisterial District Judges (RGSCMDJ).

18. Canon 1, Rule 1.1 states the following:

Canon 1, Rule 1.1 Compliance with the Law.

A magisterial district judge shall comply with the law, including the Rules Governing Standards of Conduct of Magisterial District Judges.

19. By failing to comply with Rule 1921 of the Pennsylvania Rules of Judicial Administration as set forth above, Judge McKnight failed to comply with the law within the meaning of Canon 1, Rule 1.1 of the RGSCMDJ.

Count 2 – Violation of Canon 1, Rule 1.2

20. By virtue of some or all of the conduct set forth above, Judge McKnight violated Canon 1, Rule 1.2 of the RGSCMDJ.

21. Canon 1, Rule 1.2 states the following:

Canon 1, Rule 1.2 Promoting Confidence in the Judiciary.

A magisterial district judge shall act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary, and shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.

22. By engaging in the conduct set forth above, Judge McKnight failed to promote confidence in the judiciary and avoid impropriety or the appearance of impropriety within the meaning of Canon 1, Rule 1.2 of the RGSCMDJ.

Counts 3 – 4 - Violation of Article V, § 17(b) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

23. By virtue of some or all of the conduct set forth above, Judge McKnight violated Article V, § 17(b) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
24. Article V, § 17(b) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania states the following:

Justices and judges shall not engage in any activity prohibited by law and shall not violate any canon of legal or judicial ethics prescribed by the Supreme Court. Justices of the peace shall be governed by rules or canons which shall be prescribed by the Supreme Court.
25. A violation of the RGSCMDJ constitutes an automatic derivative violation of Article V, § 17(b) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
26. Judge McKnight violated Canon 1, Rule 1.1.
27. Judge McKnight violated Canon 1, Rule 1.2.
28. By violation of all, or some, of the Rules set forth above, Judge McKnight violated Article V, § 17(b) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Count 5 – Violation of Article V, § 18(d)(1) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

29. By virtue of some or all of the conduct set forth above, Judge McKnight violated Article V, § 18(d)(1) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
30. Article V, § 18(d)(1) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of

Pennsylvania states the following:

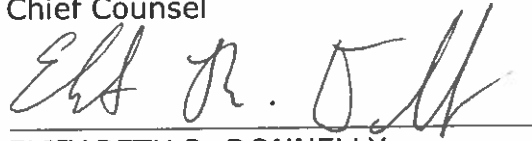
A justice, judge or justice of the peace may be suspended, removed from office or otherwise disciplined for . . .conduct which brings the judicial office into disrepute, whether or not the conduct occurred while acting in a judicial capacity [.]

31. By engaging in the conduct set forth above, Judge McKnight engaged in conduct that was so extreme that it brought the judicial office itself into disrepute and thereby constitutes a violation of the Disrepute Clause of Article V, § 18(d)(1) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

WHEREFORE, Sonya M. McKnight, a Magisterial District Judge of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, is subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Article V, § 18(d)(1).

Respectfully submitted,

MELISSA L. NORTON
Chief Counsel



ELIZABETH R. DONNELLY
Deputy Counsel
Pa. Supreme Court ID No. 308085

DATE: April 10, 2024

BY:

Judicial Conduct Board
Pennsylvania Judicial Center
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 3500
Harrisburg, PA 17106
(717) 234-7911

VERIFICATION

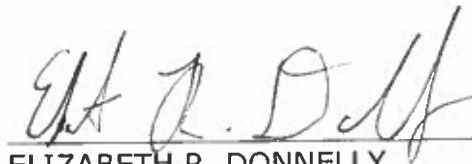
I, Elizabeth R. Donnelly, Deputy Counsel to the Judicial Conduct Board, verify that the Judicial Conduct Board found probable cause to file formal charges contained in the *BOARD COMPLAINT*. I understand that the statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. Cons. Stat. Ann. § 4904, relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Respectfully submitted,

MELISSA L. NORTON
Chief Counsel

DATE: April 10, 2024

By:


ELIZABETH R. DONNELLY
Deputy Counsel
Pa. Supreme Court ID No. 308085
Judicial Conduct Board
Pennsylvania Judicial Center
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 3500
P.O. Box 62525
Harrisburg, PA 17106
(717) 234-7911


**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight	:	
Magisterial District Judge	:	
Magisterial District 12-2-04	:	2 JD 2024
12th Judicial District	:	
Dauphin County	:	

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Case Records Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

Submitted by:	Judicial Conduct Board of Pennsylvania
Signature:	
Name:	Elizabeth R. Donnelly Deputy Counsel
Attorney No.:	308085

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight	:	
Magisterial District Judge	:	
Magisterial District 12-2-04	:	2 JD 2024
12th Judicial District	:	
Dauphin County	:	

PROOF OF SERVICE


In compliance with Rule 122 of the Court of Judicial Discipline Rules of Procedure, on the date below a copy of the Board's Complaint was sent by UPS overnight mail and email to John G. Bravacos, Esquire, counsel for Magisterial District Judge Sonya M. McKnight at the following address:

John G. Bravacos, Esquire
30 Keldon Court
Glenmoore, PA 19343
Email: John@Bravacoslaw.com

Respectfully submitted,

DATE: April 10, 2024

BY:



Elizabeth R. Donnelly
Deputy Counsel
Pa. Supreme Court ID No. 308085
Judicial Conduct Board
Pennsylvania Judicial Center
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 3500
P.O. Box 62525
Harrisburg, PA 17106
(717) 234-7911

EXHIBIT A

EXHIBIT A

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COUNTY OF: DAUPHIN



POLICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
VS.

Magisterial District Number: 12-1-01
MDJ: Hon. MARIAN URRUTIA
Address: 2125 PAXTON CHURCH ROAD
MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT JUDGE
12-1-01
HARRISBURG PA 17110

DEFENDANT: SONYA M MCKNIGHT
(NAME and ADDRESS):
First Name Middle Name Last Name Gen.
2744 LEXINGTON STREET
HARRISBURG PA 17110

Telephone: 717-545-4143

Telephone: Day: 717-329-3366 Eve: 717-329-3366

NCIC Extradition Code Type

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1-Felony Full | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-Felony Pend. | <input type="checkbox"/> C-Misdemeanor Surrounding States | <input type="checkbox"/> Distance: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2-Felony Ltd | <input type="checkbox"/> 6-Felony Pend. Extradition Determ. | <input type="checkbox"/> D-Misdemeanor No Extradition | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3-Felony Surrounding States | <input type="checkbox"/> A-Misdemeanor Full | <input type="checkbox"/> E-Misdemeanor Pending | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4-Felony No Ext. | <input type="checkbox"/> B-Misdemeanor Limited | <input type="checkbox"/> F-Misdemeanor Pen. Extra. Determ. | |

DEFENDANT IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

Docket Number CR102-24	Date Filed 2/15/2024	OTN/LiveScan Number V1003130-4	Complaint Number 2400031811	Incident Number 24-0003181	Request Lab Services? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
GENDER <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Female	DOB 12/11/1966	POB PA	Add'l DOB	Co-Defendant(s) <input type="checkbox"/>	
First Name		Middle Name		Last Name	
AKA				Gen.	
RACE	<input type="checkbox"/> White	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Black	<input type="checkbox"/> Native American	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
ETHNICITY	<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Hispanic		<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	
HAIR COLOR	<input type="checkbox"/> GRY (Gray)	<input type="checkbox"/> RED (Red/Aubn.)	<input type="checkbox"/> SDY (Sandy)	<input type="checkbox"/> BLU (Blue)	<input type="checkbox"/> PLE (Purple)
	<input type="checkbox"/> BLK (Black)	<input type="checkbox"/> ONG (Orange)	<input type="checkbox"/> WHI (White)	<input type="checkbox"/> XXX (Unk./Bald)	<input type="checkbox"/> GRN (Green)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BLN (Blonde / Strawberry)			<input type="checkbox"/> BRO (Brown)	<input type="checkbox"/> PNK (Pink)
EYE COLOR	<input type="checkbox"/> BLK (Black)	<input type="checkbox"/> BLU (Blue)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BRO (Brown)	<input type="checkbox"/> GRN (Green)	<input type="checkbox"/> GRY (Gray)
	<input type="checkbox"/> HAZ (Hazel)	<input type="checkbox"/> MAR (Maroon)	<input type="checkbox"/> PNK (Pink)	<input type="checkbox"/> MUL (Multicolored)	<input type="checkbox"/> XXX (Unknown)
DNA	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	DNA Location		WEIGHT (lbs.)	
FBI Number		MNU Number		140	
Defendant Fingerprinted:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO			Ft. HEIGHT In.	
				5 4	

DEFENDANT VEHICLE INFORMATION

Plate #	State	Hazmat <input type="checkbox"/>	Registration Sticker (MM/YY)	Comm'l Veh. Ind. <input type="checkbox"/>	School Veh. <input type="checkbox"/>	Oth. NCIC Veh. Code	Reg. same as Def. <input type="checkbox"/>
VIN	Year	Make	Model	Style	Color		

Office of the attorney for the Commonwealth Approved Disapproved because: _____

(The attorney for the Commonwealth may require that the complaint, arrest warrant affidavit, or both be approved by the attorney for the Commonwealth prior to filing. See Pa.R.Crim.P. 507).

DA Sean McCormack

(Name of the attorney for the Commonwealth)

(Signature of the attorney for the Commonwealth)

2/15/24
(Date)

I, SGT SGT LEE TARASI (Name of the Affiant)	37287112 (PSP/MP/OTC - Assigned Affiant ID Number & Badge #)
of Susquehanna Twp Police Department (Identify Department or Agency Represented and Political Subdivision)	PA0220800 (Police Agency ORI Number)
do hereby state: (check appropriate box)	
1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I accuse the above named defendant who lives at the address set forth above	
<input type="checkbox"/> I accuse the defendant whose name is unknown to me but who is described as	
<input type="checkbox"/> I accuse the defendant whose name and popular designation or nickname are unknown to me and whom I have therefore designated as John Doe or Jane Doe	
with violating the penal laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania at [101] SUSQUEHANNA (Subdivision Code) (Place-Political Subdivision)	
224 SADDLE RIDGE DRIVE, HARRISBURG PA 17110 Zone 2	
in DAUPHIN County [22] on or about Saturday, 02/10/2024 00:40 to 02/10/2024 00:47 (County Code) (Offense Date)	



POLICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

Docket Number: CR102-24	Date Filed: 2/15/2024	OTN/LiveScan Number V1003B2-4	Complaint Number 2400031811	Incident Number 24-0003181
Defendant Name	First: SONYA	Middle: M	Last: MCKNIGHT	

The acts committed by the accused are described below with each Act of Assembly or statute allegedly violated, if appropriate. When there is more than one offense, each offense should be numbered chronologically.
 (Set forth a brief summary of the facts sufficient to advise the defendant of the nature of the offense(s) charged. A citation to the statute(s) allegedly violated, without more, is not sufficient. In a summary case, you must cite the specific section(s) and subsection(s) of the statute(s) or ordinance(s) allegedly violated.)

Inchoate Offense	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attempt 18 901 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Solicitation 18 902 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Conspiracy 18 903	Number of Victims Age 60 or Older <u>0</u>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	2502	A	of the	Title 18	1	F1		09A
Lead?	Offense#	Section	Subsection		PA Statute (Title)	Counts	Grade	NCIC Offense Code	UCR/NIBRS Code
PennDOT Data (if applicable)	Accident Number				<input type="checkbox"/> Interstate	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety Zone	<input type="checkbox"/> Work Zone		
Statute Description (include the name of statute or ordinance): MURDER OF THE FIRST DEGREE									
Acts of the accused associated with this Offense:									

PACC 2502 (A) MURDER

A criminal homicide constitutes murder of the first degree when it is committed by an intentional killing.
 To Wit: Sonya McKnight did attempt to commit an intentional killing of Michael McCoy in violation of Section 2502(a) of the Pa Crimes Code by shooting him in the head with a gun.

Inchoate Offense	<input type="checkbox"/> Attempt 18 901 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Solicitation 18 902 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Conspiracy 18 903	Number of Victims Age 60 or Older <u>0</u>					
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	2702	A1	of the	Title 18	1	F1		13A
Lead?	Offense#	Section	Subsection		PA Statute (Title)	Counts	Grade	NCIC Offense Code	UCR/NIBRS Code
PennDOT Data (if applicable)	Accident Number				<input type="checkbox"/> Interstate	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety Zone	<input type="checkbox"/> Work Zone		
Statute Description (include the name of statute or ordinance): AGGRAVATED ASSAULT-GENERAL									
Acts of the accused associated with this Offense:									

2702(a)(1) AGGRAVATED ASSAULT - 18 Pa. C.S. §2702(a)(1)
 The defendant did intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, under circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to the value of human life, attempt to cause or cause serious bodily injury to another.
 Victim: Michael McCoy
 To Wit: Sonya McKnight did attempt to commit an intentional killing of Michael McCoy in violation of Section 2502(a) of the Pa Crimes Code by shooting him in the head with a gun. Michael McCoy was hospitalized and will have permanent vision loss, in his right eye.



POLICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

Docket Number: <u>CR 102-24</u>	Date Filed: 2/15/2024	OTN/LiveScan Number <u>V1003132-4</u>	Complaint Number 2400031811	Incident Number 24-0003181
Defendant Name	First: SONYA	Middle: M	Last: MCKNIGHT	

- I ask that a warrant of arrest or a summons be issued and that the defendant be required to answer the charges I have made.
- I verify that the facts set forth in this complaint are true and correct to the best of my knowledge or information and belief. This verification is made subject to the penalties of Section 4904 of the Crimes Code (18 Pa. C.S. §4904) relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.
- This complaint consists of the preceding page(s), numbered 1 through 5.
- I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Case Records Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

The acts committed by the accused, as listed and hereafter, were against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and were contrary to the Act(s) of the Assembly, or in violation of the statutes cited.
(Before a warrant of arrest can be issued, an affidavit of probable cause must be completed, sworn to before the issuing authority, and attached.)

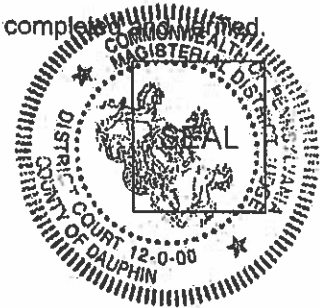
2/15/24 (Date) _____ (Year) [Signature] (Signature of Affiant)

AND NOW, on this date 2/15/24 I certify that the complaint has been properly completed and verified.

An affidavit of probable cause must be completed before a warrant can be issued.

12-1-01
(Magisterial District Court Number)

[Signature]
(Issuing Authority)





POLICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

Docket Number: CR100-24	Date Filed: 2/15/2024	OTN/LiveScan Number V100332-4	Complaint Number 2400031811	Incident Number 24-0003181
Defendant Name	First: SONYA	Middle: M	Last: MCKNIGHT	

AFFIDAVIT of PROBABLE CAUSE

Your affiant is Lee Ann Tarasi, a Police Officer with the Susquehanna Township Police Department, and has been so since July of 2007. Your affiant attended and graduated the Municipal Police Officers Training Academy (ACT 120). Your affiant is currently assigned as a Detective Sergeant, to the Criminal Investigations Division, and is tasked and authorized to investigate crimes that occur within the Township. Your affiant has attended various training's on such topics as: Crisis Intervention, Open-Source Intelligence, Child Death and Near Death, Homicide, Interview and Interrogation, Identification of Deceptive Behavior, Sex Trafficking, Financial Crimes, Hostage Negotiation, Shooting Reconstruction, Cell Phone Investigation, Highway Interdiction, Drug Identification, and Child Abuse. Your affiant is Class "A" Wiretapping and Electronic Surveillance Trained and Certified. Your affiant is also a Hostage Negotiator currently assigned to the Dauphin County Crisis Response Team as the Hostage Negotiations Team Leader.

February 10, 2024, at 0048 hours, Susquehanna Township Police were dispatched to 224 Saddle Ridge Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17110, for a hemorrhage/lacerations call. The complainant, Sonya McKnight, called Dauphin County Dispatch and reported that her boyfriend, Michael McCoy, couldn't see and asked if an ambulance come and get him. She could not explain what happened and stated that she was sleeping and heard him screaming.

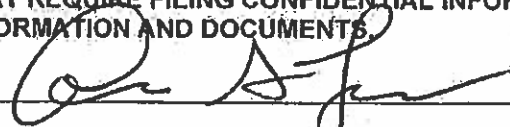
Patrol Officers responded to the residence and made contact with the only two occupants of the residence, Sonya McKnight, and the victim, Michael McCoy. It was found that Michael McCoy sustained a gunshot wound to the face next to his right eye. Neither person provided details as to the series of events that led Michael McCoy to being shot. Michael McCoy stated, "I did not shoot myself".

An investigation ensued. Sergeant Lee Tarasi and Patrolman First Class/Detective Darryl Brown were the assigned investigators. The Dauphin County Evidence Team responded to the scene. All biographical data, including phone numbers were obtained directly from Sonya McKnight and Michael McCoy.

The following was learned from interviews and the investigation itself:

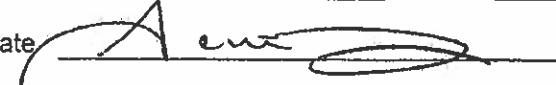
I, SGT SGT LEE TARASI, BEING DULY SWORN ACCORDING TO THE LAW, DEPOSE AND SAY THAT THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE FOREGOING AFFIDAVIT ARE TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, INFORMATION AND BELIEF.

I CERTIFY THAT THIS FILING COMPLIES WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE CASE RECORDS PUBLIC ACCESS POLICY OF THE UNIFIED JUDICIAL SYSTEM OF PENNSYLVANIA THAT REQUIRE FILING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS DIFFERENTLY THAN NON-CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS.



(Signature of Affiant)

Sworn to me and subscribed before me this 15 day of February, 2024

2-15-24 Date 

, Magisterial District Judge

My commission expires first Monday of January,





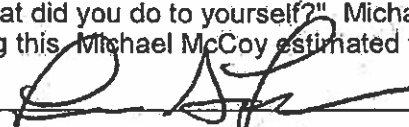
**POLICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT
AFFIDAVIT CONTINUATION PAGE**

Docket Number: CR 102-24	Date Filed: 2/15/2024	OTN/LiveScan Number V1003132-4	Complaint Number 2400031811	Incident Number 24-0003181
Defendant Name	First: SONYA	Middle: M	Last: MCKNIGHT	

AFFIDAVIT of PROBABLE CAUSE CONTINUATION

1. Sonya McKnight and Michael McCoy were the only two occupants of the residence, 224 Saddle Ridge Drive Harrisburg, Dauphin County Pa 17110. It is Michael McCoy's house.
2. Michael McCoy ended a one year relationship with Sonya McKnight. Sonya McKnight was living, full time, with Michael McCoy and had clothing and other belongings at his house. Michael McCoy attempted numerous times to have Sonya McKnight leave, however she would not. He removed his house key from Sonya McKnight's key ring on the same day, Sunday February 4, 2024.
3. Michael McCoy went to work, as usual, on Monday February 5, 2024. Sonya McKnight was already gone from the home. Michael McCoy is relieved but returns home from work and Sonya McKnight is inside his house. He immediately yells at her asking:
What is she doing there?
How did she get into the home?
Why is she there?

Sonya McKnight calmly states that she took his spare keys, that he keeps in a key dish, in a common area of the home. Michael realized that she must have noticed the house key removed and took the spare keys for the extra house key that is maintained on them.
4. On Friday, February 9, 2024 Michael McCoy came home from work and Sonya McKnight was sitting on his couch wearing pajamas and a pink robe. These pajamas were later identified as a Calvin Klein brand with a camisole top and shorts for bottoms. He informed her that he was going out. Her attitude changed and she questioned him stating that he just got home. He responded that he had a long week with her and at work and was going out. Upon his departure, she called him, on his way, to his destination asking where he was going. He didn't answer her because they were broke up and he didn't need to. She sent text messages and called. He ignored the majority of them but did respond to, at least one, whereby she requested he bring her food home. Sonya McKnight asked Michael McCoy to get her a salad "from up there". At this point, he knew Sonya McKnight did a "drive-by" of Crawdaddy's to see if he was there. He orders a salad and upon returning home, Sonya McKnight was in regular clothes. She had changed out of her pajama's, at some point. At this point, Michael McCoy knew she had departed that house to check and see if he was at Crawdaddy's a local restaurant/bar, they usually patronized.
- Michael McCoy takes his food and goes up the spare room to eat. Michael McCoy returns his plate to the kitchen and Sonya McKnight accosts him asking if they are going to talk. Michael McCoy stated that he already told her he had a long week, at work, and with her and they could talk tomorrow, being Saturday February 10, 2024. Michael McCoy knows that he intended on calling her mother to help him get her out. At this point Sonya McKnight responds, "Oh, You're serious?". Michael McCoy stated that it was like she finally understood that it was over. Michael McCoy goes upstairs to go to bed. He estimates that this would have been likely approximately 11:00 PM. Michael McCoy states he was probably asleep an hour or two after. Michael McCoy stated that he will crash hard when he first goes to bed because he is decompressing.
5. Michael McCoy wakes up with massive head pain and can not see. He never heard a gun shot or any noise prior. He begins screaming and he hears Sonya McKnight say "Mike what did you do to yourself?" Michael McCoy never heard any footsteps or anything. Sonya McKnight keeps repeating this. Michael McCoy estimated that this



(Signature of Affiant)



**POLICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT
AFFIDAVIT CONTINUATION PAGE**

Docket Number: CR102-24	Date Filed: 2/15/2024	OTN/LiveScan Number V1003132-4	Complaint Number 2400031811	Incident Number 24-0003181
Defendant Name	First: SONYA	Middle: M	Last: MCKNIGHT	

AFFIDAVIT of PROBABLE CAUSE CONTINUATION

went on for two to three minutes. Michael McCoy asks if he is bleeding to which Sonya McKnight yes and he asks to be directed to the bathroom, as he is blind at this time. Sonya McKnight escorts Michael McCoy past the closest bathroom and to the master bedroom bathroom instead. Michael McCoy has to tell Sonya McKnight to call him an ambulance. Sonya McKnight leaves him for some time and then returns and says she can't find her phone. Sonya McKnight ask Michael McCoy where his phone is and he directs Sonya McKnight to get his. Sonya McKnight returns with Michael McCoy's phone and asks What the pin number is. Michael McCoy provides Sonya the pin number to unlock his phone. Michael McCoy tells Sonya McKnight to call an ambulance, yet again and then she asks "What's the number?". He advises 9-1-1.

6. Upon arrival of EMS, it was determined that Michael McCoy suffered a single gun shot wound that entered his head in the area of his right temple and exited the left temple area. Michael McCoy had to be informed, of this, as he did not know what happened to him. His response was pure shock. Sergeant Gomez asked him specifically if he shot himself and he shockingly, exclaimed "no!". I know this, from my training and experience, to be a spontaneous and truthful answer.

7. Michael McCoy has maintained that he did not, nor has he ever, thought about taking his own life. He has maintained this from the initial interview, while he was in the hospital, and in addition when he was interviewed, out of the hospital, on February 11, 2024. This investigation supports his account thus far.

8. Sonya McKnight's interview was found to be deceptive. She stated that she did not leave the house on the evening of the incident, however, neighboring Ring doorbells have proven differently. In addition Sonya McKnight's vehicle was observed on a License Plate Reader on 6th Street north of McClay Street, Harrisburg, at 9:50 PM, on 2/9/24. The vehicle was traveling south and toward the direction of Crawdaddy's. It appears that she returned the house at 10:19 PM, by pulling into the garage. This was also observed on a neighboring Ring camera.

9. The physical evidence of the gunshot wound coupled with the stippling, indicate the gunshot was approximately one foot away.

10. Sonya McKnight tested positive for gun shot residue on her hands via a presumptive test within a hour of the incident.

Michael McCoy adamantly stated that he did not, nor ever wished to shoot himself. He went to sleep after telling Sonya McKnight, again, that the relationship was over. It was at this point, Sonya McKnight finally comprehended and acknowledged it by saying "Oh, you're serious."

Michael McKnight woke up from his sleep after being shot in the head with a gun registered to Sonya McKnight. Sonya McKnight and Michael McCoy both stated they were the only two people in the house at the time of the shooting.

Due to the aforementioned account of events, your affiant respectfully requests a warrant be issued for Sonya McKnight, in order to bring her forth to answer to the charges contained within this complaint. #314


(Signature of Affiant)

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight	:	
Magisterial District Judge	:	
Magisterial District 12-2-04	:	2 JD 2024; 1 JD 2021
12th Judicial District	:	
Dauphin County	:	

PETITION FOR SPECIAL RELIEF

AND NOW, this 10th day of April, 2024, comes the Judicial Conduct Board of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Board), by and through undersigned counsel, and files this Petition For Special Relief requesting that; Judge McKnight’s probation on Court of Judicial Discipline Docket Number 1 JD 2021 be revoked pursuant to Rule 505 of the Court of Judicial Discipline Rules of Procedure and in support thereof, avers the following:

1. From January 4, 2016, to February 9, 2021, Judge McKnight served as Magisterial District Judge for Magisterial District 12-2-04, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania.
2. From February 9, 2021 through August 18, 2021, Judge McKnight was suspended from her duties as Magisterial District Judge, *In re McKnight*, 1 JD 2021.
3. On August 19, 2021, Judge McKnight returned to the bench.
4. On January 31, 2023, Judge McKnight was placed on probation by the Court of Judicial Discipline until January 31, 2024, *In re McKnight*, 1 JD 2021. A copy of the Court’s January 31, 2023, Opinion and Order is attached hereto as “Exhibit A,” made a part hereof, and incorporated by reference as though set forth in full.

5. A specific condition of Judge McKnight's probation was that "Magisterial District Judge McKnight not commit any more ethical violations of any nature."
6. On April 10, 2024, the Board filed a Board Complaint against Judge McKnight alleging violations of the Rules Governing Standards of Conduct of Magisterial District Judges (RGSCMDJ) and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. A copy of the Board Complaint is attached hereto as "Exhibit B," made a part hereof, and incorporated herein by reference as though set forth in full.
7. The allegations contained in the Board Complaint aver that Judge McKnight committed an ethical violation.
8. Rule 505 of the Court of Judicial Discipline Rules of Procedure directs the following:
 - (B) When the Board finds that the judicial officer has violated the conditions of probation, the Board shall file a Petition with the Court alleging such a violation. This Petition shall request a hearing and request the Court to provide the Board with any relevant material or other written information in possession of the Court.
9. Based on the filing of the Board Complaint alleging that Judge McKnight has engaged in additional violations of the RGSCMDJ, the Board requests that the Court find that Judge McKnight has violated the terms of her probation.

WHEREFORE, it is respectfully requested that this Honorable Court schedule a probation violation hearing, and to grant such other relief as may be deemed appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,

MELISSA L. NORTON
Chief Counsel

DATE: April 10, 2024

By: 

ELIZABETH R. DONNELLY
Deputy Counsel
Pa. Supreme Court ID No. 308085

Judicial Conduct Board
Pennsylvania Judicial Center
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 3500
Harrisburg, PA 17106
(717) 234-7911

VERIFICATION

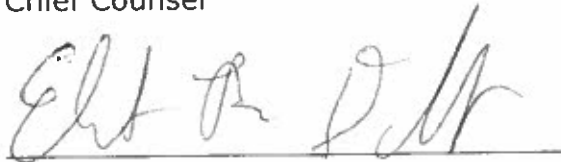
I, Elizabeth R Donnelly, Deputy Counsel to the Judicial Conduct Board, verify that the facts set forth in the foregoing Petition for Special Relief are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief. I understand that the statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. Cons. Stat. Ann. § 4904, relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Respectfully submitted,

MELISSA L. NORTON
Chief Counsel

DATE: April 10, 2024

By:



ELIZABETH R. DONNELLY
Deputy Counsel
Pa. Supreme Court ID No. 308085
Judicial Conduct Board
Pennsylvania Judicial Center
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 3500
P.O. Box 62525
Harrisburg, PA 17106
(717) 234-7911

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight :
Magisterial District Judge :
Magisterial District 12-2-04 : 2 JD 2024
12th Judicial District :
Dauphin County :

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Case Records Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

Submitted by: Judicial Conduct Board of Pennsylvania

Signature:



Name:

Elizabeth R. Donnelly
Deputy Counsel

Attorney No.:

308085

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight :
Magisterial District Judge :
Magisterial District 12-2-04 : 2 JD 2024
12th Judicial District :
Dauphin County :

PROOF OF SERVICE

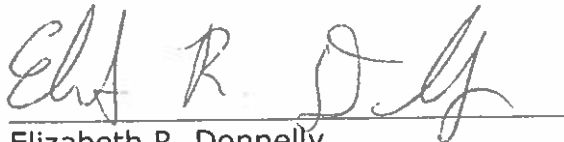
In compliance with Rule 122 of the Court of Judicial Discipline Rules of Procedure, on the date below a copy of the Board's Petition for Special Relief was sent by UPS overnight mail and email to John G. Bravacos, Esquire, counsel for Magisterial District Judge Sonya M. McKnight at the following address:

John G. Bravacos, Esquire
30 Keldon Court
Glenmoore, PA 19343
Email: John@Bravacoslaw.com

Respectfully submitted,

DATE: April 10, 2024

BY:



Elizabeth R. Donnelly
Deputy Counsel
Pa. Supreme Court ID No. 308085
Judicial Conduct Board
Pennsylvania Judicial Center
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 3500
P.O. Box 62525
Harrisburg, PA 17106
(717) 234-7911

EXHIBIT A

EXHIBIT A

2. The nature, extent, and frequency of occurrence of the acts of misconduct: The misconduct by Magisterial District Judge McKnight involved improper contact with the Harrisburg Police to advance her interests and a failure to properly notify the Supreme Court that she was under investigation in accordance with Rule 1921 of the Pennsylvania Rules of Judicial Administration.
3. Whether the conduct occurred in or out of the courtroom: The conduct occurred outside of the courtroom.
4. Whether the misconduct occurred in the judge's official capacity: The misconduct at issue here was committed by Magisterial District Judge McKnight in her misusing her influence as a judicial officer.
5. Whether the judge acknowledged or recognized that the acts occurred: Magisterial District Judge McKnight has acknowledged her improper conduct.
6. Whether the Judge has evidenced an effort to change or modify the conduct: Magisterial District Judge McKnight has voiced contrition over her misconduct.
7. The length of service on the bench: Magisterial District Judge McKnight has been on the bench for eight years.
8. Whether there have been prior complaints about the judge: There have not been prior misconduct cases brought against Magisterial District Judge McKnight, but she had been informally sanctioned for violating Rule 1921 of the Pennsylvania Rules of Judicial Administration before.
9. The effect the misconduct has upon the integrity of and respect for the judiciary: Magisterial District Judge McKnight's misconduct eroded respect for the judiciary.

10. The extent to which the judge exploited his or her position to satisfy personal desires: Magisterial District Judge McKnight's misconduct was committed to advance her own interests or that of her family.

Discussion

Magisterial District Judge McKnight's misconduct was reviewed at length in this Court's Opinion and Order of September 13, 2022.

We repeat that her misconduct is inexcusable. Any action by a judge which might interfere with the justice system, even if that was not her goal, is forbidden.

Magisterial District Judge McKnight was suspended without pay from February 9, 2021, until August 18, 2021, a period of 190 days. As her sanction, the Court of Judicial Discipline ORDERS that Magisterial District Judge McKnight is suspended without pay for 200 days with credit given to her for the 190 days she has already served. The ten remaining days Magisterial District Judge McKnight is to be suspended without pay will commence on February 9, 2023. Additionally, Magisterial District Judge McKnight will serve one year on probation starting on the date of this ORDER. A specific condition of this probation is that Magisterial District Judge McKnight not commit any more ethical violations of any nature.

* Although his term has expired, Former President Judge Eisenhower participates in this Opinion and Order pursuant to Article V, §18(b)(2) of the Constitution of Pennsylvania.

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight	:	
Magisterial District Judge	:	
Magisterial District 12-2-04	:	2 JD 2024
12th Judicial District	:	
Dauphin County	:	

TO: SONYA M. MCKNIGHT

You are hereby notified that the Pennsylvania Judicial Conduct Board has determined that there is probable cause to file formal charges against you for conduct proscribed by Article V, § 17(b) and § 18(d)(1) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Rules Governing Standards of Conduct of Magisterial District Judges. The Board's counsel will present the case in support of the charges before the Pennsylvania Court of Judicial Discipline.

You have an absolute right to be represented by a lawyer in all proceedings before the Court of Judicial Discipline. Your attorney should file an entry of appearance with the Court of Judicial Discipline within fifteen (15) days of service of this Board Complaint in accordance with C.J.D.R.P. No. 110.

You are hereby notified, pursuant to C.J.D.R.P. No. 302(B), that should you elect to file an omnibus motion, that motion should be filed no later than thirty (30) days after the service of this Complaint in accordance with C.J.D.R.P. No. 411.

You are further hereby notified that within thirty (30) days after the service of this Complaint, if no omnibus motion is filed, or within twenty (20) days after the dismissal of all or part of the omnibus motion, you may file an Answer admitting or denying the allegations contained in this Complaint in accordance with C.J.D.R.P. No. 413. Failure to file an Answer shall be deemed a denial of all factual allegations in the Complaint.

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight	:	
Magisterial District Judge	:	
Magisterial District 12-2-04	:	2 JD 2024
12 th Judicial District	:	
Dauphin County	:	

COMPLAINT

AND NOW, this 10th day of April, 2024, comes the Judicial Conduct Board of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Board) and files this Board Complaint against the Honorable Judge Sonya M. McKnight, Magisterial District Judge for Magisterial District 12-2-04, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, alleging that Judge McKnight has violated the Rules Governing Standards of Conduct of Magisterial District Judges and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as more specifically delineated herein.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

1. Article V, § 18 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania grants to the Board the authority to determine whether there is probable cause to file formal charges against a judicial officer in this Court, and thereafter, to prosecute the case in support of such charges in this Court.
2. From January 4, 2016, to February 9, 2021, Judge McKnight served as Magisterial District Judge for Magisterial District 12-2-04, Dauphin County Pennsylvania.

3. From February 9, 2021 through August 18, 2021, Judge McKnight was suspended from her duties as Magisterial District Judge. *In re McKnight*, 1 JD 2021.
4. On August 19, 2021, Judge McKnight returned to the bench.
5. From February 9, 2023 through February 18, 2023, Judge McKnight was suspended from her duties as Magisterial District Judge. *In re McKnight*, 1 JD 2021.
6. On November 14, 2023, Judge McKnight was suspended from her duties as Magisterial District Judge. *In re McKnight*, 2 JD 2023, 1 JD 2021.
7. At approximately 12:50 AM on February 10, 2024, Judge McKnight called 911 dispatch and reported that her paramour, Michael McCoy, could not see and required an ambulance.
8. The Emergency Medical Technicians determined Mr. McCoy suffered a gunshot wound to the head.
9. On February 10, 2024, Judge McKnight became the subject of the criminal investigation regarding Mr. McCoy's injury and as such, she was interviewed at the Susquehanna Police Department headquarters by Officers of the Susquehanna Township Police Department.
10. During Judge McKnight's February 10, 2024, interview, while the subject of the criminal investigation regarding Mr. McCoy's injury a gunshot residue test was performed on her hands by police.
11. On February 15, 2024, the Susquehanna Township Police Department charged Judge McKnight with Attempted First-Degree Homicide 18 Pa.C.S.A. § 901(A) and Aggravated Assault 18 Pa.C.S.A. § 2702(A)(1), for allegedly shooting Mr.

McCoy on February 10, 2024. A copy of the Criminal Complaint is attached hereto as "Exhibit A," made a part hereof, and incorporated herein by reference as though set forth in full.

12. The charge of attempted homicide is a felony in the first degree and carries a maximum sentence of forty years of incarceration and a possible fine of up to \$50,000.
13. The charge of aggravated assault is a felony in the first degree and carries a maximum sentence of twenty years of incarceration and a possible fine of up to \$25,000.
14. Rule 1921 of the Pennsylvania Rules of Judicial Administration (Rule 1921) mandates:

[w]henever a judge receives notice that he or she is the subject of any federal or state criminal investigation or prosecution through a target letter, a subject letter, a presentment, an indictment, an arrest, a summons, a complaint, or other legal process, or any other means from the investigating or prosecuting authority, unless precluded by order of court, the judge must report the receipt of such notice in writing to the Chief Justice and the Judicial Conduct Board within five (5) days.
15. Judge McKnight failed to comply with Rule 1921 and report to the Chief Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court that she was the subject of a state criminal investigation.
16. Judge McKnight failed to comply with Rule 1921 and report to the Judicial Conduct Board that she was the subject of a state criminal investigation.

CHARGES

Count 1 Violation of Canon 1, Rule 1.1

17. By virtue of some or all of the conduct set forth above Judge McKnight violated Canon 1, Rule 1.1 of the Rules Governing Standards of Conduct of Magisterial District Judges (RGSCMDJ).

18. Canon 1, Rule 1.1 states the following:

Canon 1, Rule 1.1 Compliance with the Law.

A magisterial district judge shall comply with the law, including the Rules Governing Standards of Conduct of Magisterial District Judges.

19. By failing to comply with Rule 1921 of the Pennsylvania Rules of Judicial Administration as set forth above, Judge McKnight failed to comply with the law within the meaning of Canon 1, Rule 1.1 of the RGSCMDJ.

Count 2 – Violation of Canon 1, Rule 1.2

20. By virtue of some or all of the conduct set forth above, Judge McKnight violated Canon 1, Rule 1.2 of the RGSCMDJ.

21. Canon 1, Rule 1.2 states the following:

Canon 1, Rule 1.2 Promoting Confidence in the Judiciary.

A magisterial district judge shall act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary, and shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety.

22. By engaging in the conduct set forth above, Judge McKnight failed to promote confidence in the judiciary and avoid impropriety or the appearance of impropriety within the meaning of Canon 1, Rule 1.2 of the RGSCMDJ.

Counts 3 – 4 - Violation of Article V, § 17(b) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

23. By virtue of some or all of the conduct set forth above, Judge McKnight violated Article V, § 17(b) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
24. Article V, § 17(b) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania states the following:

Justices and judges shall not engage in any activity prohibited by law and shall not violate any canon of legal or judicial ethics prescribed by the Supreme Court. Justices of the peace shall be governed by rules or canons which shall be prescribed by the Supreme Court.
25. A violation of the RGSCMDJ constitutes an automatic derivative violation of Article V, § 17(b) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
26. Judge McKnight violated Canon 1, Rule 1.1.
27. Judge McKnight violated Canon 1, Rule 1.2.
28. By violation of all, or some, of the Rules set forth above, Judge McKnight violated Article V, § 17(b) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Count 5 – Violation of Article V, § 18(d)(1) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

29. By virtue of some or all of the conduct set forth above, Judge McKnight violated Article V, § 18(d)(1) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
30. Article V, § 18(d)(1) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of

Pennsylvania states the following:

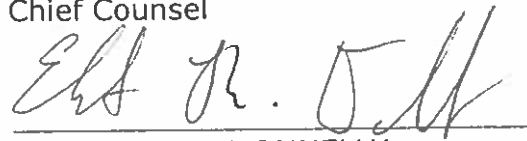
A justice, judge or justice of the peace may be suspended, removed from office or otherwise disciplined for . . .conduct which brings the judicial office into disrepute, whether or not the conduct occurred while acting in a judicial capacity [.]

31. By engaging in the conduct set forth above, Judge McKnight engaged in conduct that was so extreme that it brought the judicial office itself into disrepute and thereby constitutes a violation of the Disrepute Clause of Article V, § 18(d)(1) of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

WHEREFORE, Sonya M. McKnight, a Magisterial District Judge of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, is subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Article V, § 18(d)(1).

Respectfully submitted,

MELISSA L. NORTON
Chief Counsel



ELIZABETH R. DONNELLY
Deputy Counsel
Pa. Supreme Court ID No. 308085

DATE: April 10, 2024

BY:

Judicial Conduct Board
Pennsylvania Judicial Center
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 3500
Harrisburg, PA 17106
(717) 234-7911

VERIFICATION

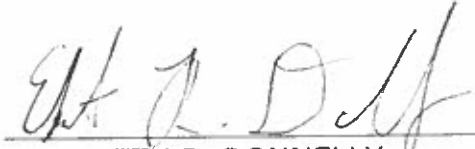
I, Elizabeth R. Donnelly, Deputy Counsel to the Judicial Conduct Board, verify that the Judicial Conduct Board found probable cause to file formal charges contained in the *BOARD COMPLAINT*. I understand that the statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. Cons. Stat. Ann. § 4904, relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Respectfully submitted,

MELISSA L. NORTON
Chief Counsel

DATE: April 10, 2024

By:


ELIZABETH R. DONNELLY
Deputy Counsel
Pa. Supreme Court ID No. 308085
Judicial Conduct Board
Pennsylvania Judicial Center
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 3500
P.O. Box 62525
Harrisburg, PA 17106
(717) 234-7911


**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight	:	
Magisterial District Judge	:	
Magisterial District 12-2-04	:	2 JD 2024
12th Judicial District	:	
Dauphin County	:	

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Case Records Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

Submitted by:	Judicial Conduct Board of Pennsylvania
Signature:	
Name:	Elizabeth R. Donnelly Deputy Counsel
Attorney No.:	308085

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COURT OF JUDICIAL DISCIPLINE**

IN RE:

Judge Sonya M. McKnight	:	
Magisterial District Judge	:	
Magisterial District 12-2-04	:	2 JD 2024
12th Judicial District	:	
Dauphin County	:	

PROOF OF SERVICE

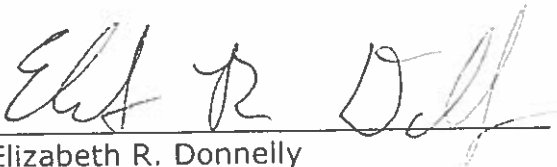
In compliance with Rule 122 of the Court of Judicial Discipline Rules of Procedure, on the date below a copy of the Board's Complaint was sent by UPS overnight mail and email to John G. Bravacos, Esquire, counsel for Magisterial District Judge Sonya M. McKnight at the following address:

John G. Bravacos, Esquire
30 Keldon Court
Glenmoore, PA 19343
Email: John@Bravacoslaw.com

Respectfully submitted,

DATE: April 10, 2024

BY:



Elizabeth R. Donnelly
Deputy Counsel
Pa. Supreme Court ID No. 308085
Judicial Conduct Board
Pennsylvania Judicial Center
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 3500
P.O. Box 62525
Harrisburg, PA 17106
(717) 234-7911

EXHIBIT A

EXHIBIT A

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COUNTY OF: DAUPHIN

Magisterial District Number: 12-1-01
MDJ: Hon. MARIAN URRUTIA
Address: 2125 PAXTON CHURCH ROAD
MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT JUDGE
12-1-01
HARRISBURG PA 17110

Telephone: 717-545-4143



POLICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
VS.

DEFENDANT: SONYA M MCKNIGHT
(NAME and ADDRESS):
First Name Middle Name Last Name Gen.
2744 LEXINGTON STREET
HARRISBURG PA 17110

Telephone: Day: 717-329-3366 Eve: 717-329-3366

NCIC Extradition Code Type

- 1-Felony Full
- 2-Felony Ltd
- 3-Felony Surrounding States
- 4-Felony No Ext.
- 5-Felony Pend.
- 6-Felony Pend. Extradition Determ.
- A-Misdemeanor Full
- B-Misdemeanor Limited
- C-Misdemeanor Surrounding States
- D-Misdemeanor No Extradition
- E-Misdemeanor Pending
- F-Misdemeanor Pen. Extra. Determ.
- Distance: _____

DEFENDANT IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

Docket Number CR102-24	Date Filed 2/15/2024	OTN/LiveScan Number V1003132-4	Complaint Number 2400031811	Incident Number 24-0003181	Request Lab Services? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
GENDER <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Female	DOB 12/11/1966	POB PA	Add'l DOB	Co-Defendant(s) <input type="checkbox"/>	
First Name		Middle Name		Last Name	
RACE <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown					
ETHNICITY <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown					
HAIR COLOR <input type="checkbox"/> GRY (Gray) <input type="checkbox"/> RED (Red/Aubn.) <input type="checkbox"/> SDY (Sandy) <input type="checkbox"/> BLU (Blue) <input type="checkbox"/> PLE (Purple) <input type="checkbox"/> BRO (Brown) <input type="checkbox"/> BLK (Black) <input type="checkbox"/> ONG (Orange) <input type="checkbox"/> WHI (White) <input type="checkbox"/> XXX (Unk./Bald) <input type="checkbox"/> GRN (Green) <input type="checkbox"/> PNK (Pink) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BLN (Blonde / Strawberry)					
EYE COLOR <input type="checkbox"/> BLK (Black) <input type="checkbox"/> BLU (Blue) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BRO (Brown) <input type="checkbox"/> GRN (Green) <input type="checkbox"/> GRY (Gray) <input type="checkbox"/> HAZ (Hazel) <input type="checkbox"/> MAR (Maroon) <input type="checkbox"/> PNK (Pink) <input type="checkbox"/> MUL (Multicolored) <input type="checkbox"/> XXX (Unknown)					
DNA <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	DNA Location			WEIGHT (lbs.) 140	
FBI Number	MNU Number		Ft. HEIGHT In. 5 4		
Defendant Fingerprinted: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO					

DEFENDANT VEHICLE INFORMATION

Plate #	State	Hazmat <input type="checkbox"/>	Registration Sticker (MM/YY)	Comm'l Veh. Ind. <input type="checkbox"/>	School Veh. <input type="checkbox"/>	Oth. NCIC Veh. Code	Reg. same as Def. <input type="checkbox"/>
VIN	Year	Make	Model	Style	Color		

Office of the attorney for the Commonwealth Approved Disapproved because: _____

(The attorney for the Commonwealth may require that the complaint, arrest warrant affidavit, or both be approved by the attorney for the Commonwealth prior to filing. See Pa.R.Crim.P. 507.)

D.A. Sean McCormick

(Name of the attorney for the Commonwealth)

(Signature of the attorney for the Commonwealth)

2/15/24
(Date)

I, SGT SGT LEE TARASI

(Name of the Affiant)

of Susquehanna Twp Police Department

(Identify Department or Agency Represented and Political Subdivision)

do hereby state: (check appropriate box)

- I accuse the above named defendant who lives at the address set forth above
- I accuse the defendant whose name is unknown to me but who is described as

I accuse the defendant whose name and popular designation or nickname are unknown to me and whom I have therefore designated as John Doe or Jane Doe

with violating the penal laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania at [101] SUSQUEHANNA
(Subdivision Code) (Place-Political Subdivision)

224 SADDLE RIDGE DRIVE, HARRISBURG PA 17110 Zone 2

in DAUPHIN

County [22] on or about Saturday, 02/10/2024 00:40 to 02/10/2024 00:47
(County Code) (Offense Date)

37126731
(PSP/MP/PO/ETC -Assigned Affiant ID Number & Badge #)
PA0220800
(Police Agency ORI Number)



POLICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

Docket Number: CR102-24	Date Filed: 2/15/2024	OTN/LiveScan Number V1003132-4	Complaint Number 2400031811	Incident Number 24-0003181
Defendant Name	First: SONYA	Middle: M	Last: MCKNIGHT	

The acts committed by the accused are described below with each Act of Assembly or statute allegedly violated, if appropriate. When there is more than one offense, each offense should be numbered chronologically.

(Set forth a brief summary of the facts sufficient to advise the defendant of the nature of the offense(s) charged. A citation to the statute(s) allegedly violated, without more, is not sufficient. In a summary case, you must cite the specific section(s) and subsection(s) of the statute(s) or ordinance(s) allegedly violated.)

Inchoate Offense	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attempt 18 901 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Solicitation 18 902 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Conspiracy 18 903	Number of Victims Age 60 or Older <u>0</u>
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	2502	A	of the	Title 18	1	F1		09A
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Lead?	Offense#	Section	Subsection	PA Statute (Title)	Counts	Grade	NCIC Offense Code	UCR/NIBRS Code
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PennDOT Data (if applicable)	Accident Number	<input type="checkbox"/> Interstate	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety Zone	<input type="checkbox"/> Work Zone
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Statute Description (include the name of statute or ordinance):
MURDER OF THE FIRST DEGREE

Acts of the accused associated with this Offense:

PACC 2502 (A) MURDER

A criminal homicide constitutes murder of the first degree when it is committed by an intentional killing.

To Wit: Sonya McKnight did attempt to commit an intentional killing of Michael McCoy in violation of Section 2502(a) of the Pa Crimes Code by shooting him in the head with a gun.

Inchoate Offense	<input type="checkbox"/> Attempt 18 901 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Solicitation 18 902 A	<input type="checkbox"/> Conspiracy 18 903	Number of Victims Age 60 or Older <u>0</u>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	2	2702	A1	of the	Title 18	1	F1		13A
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Lead?	Offense#	Section	Subsection	PA Statute (Title)	Counts	Grade	NCIC Offense Code	UCR/NIBRS Code
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PennDOT Data (if applicable)	Accident Number	<input type="checkbox"/> Interstate	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety Zone	<input type="checkbox"/> Work Zone
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Statute Description (include the name of statute or ordinance):
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT-GENERAL

Acts of the accused associated with this Offense:

2702(a)(1) AGGRAVATED ASSAULT - 18 Pa. C.S. §2702(a)(1)

The defendant did intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, under circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to the value of human life, attempt to cause or cause serious bodily injury to another.

Victim: Michael McCoy

To Wit: Sonya McKnight did attempt to commit an intentional killing of Michael McCoy in violation of Section 2502(a) of the Pa Crimes Code by shooting him in the head with a gun. Michael McCoy was hospitalized and will have permanent vision loss, in his right eye.



POLICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

Docket Number: CR 102-24	Date Filed: 2/15/2024	OTN/LiveScan Number V1003132-4	Complaint Number 2400031811	Incident Number 24-0003181
Defendant Name	First: SONYA	Middle: M	Last: MCKNIGHT	

- I ask that a warrant of arrest or a summons be issued and that the defendant be required to answer the charges I have made.
- I verify that the facts set forth in this complaint are true and correct to the best of my knowledge or information and belief. This verification is made subject to the penalties of Section 4904 of the Crimes Code (18 Pa. C.S. §4904) relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.
- This complaint consists of the preceding page(s), numbered 1 through 5.
- I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Case Records Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

The acts committed by the accused, as listed and hereafter, were against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and were contrary to the Act(s) of the Assembly, or in violation of the statutes cited.
(Before a warrant of arrest can be issued, an affidavit of probable cause must be completed, sworn to before the issuing authority, and attached.)

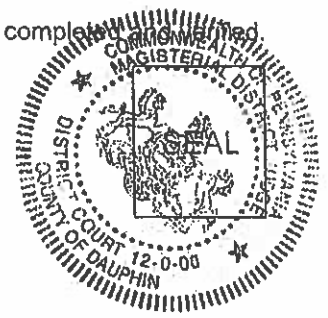
2/15/24 (Date) _____ (Year) _____ (Signature of Affiant) _____

AND NOW, on this date 2/15/24 I certify that the complaint has been properly completed and verified.

An affidavit of probable cause must be completed before a warrant can be issued.

12-1-01
(Magisterial District Court Number)

(Issuing Authority)





POLICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

Docket Number: CR102-24	Date Filed: 2/15/2024	OTN/LiveScan Number V100332-4	Complaint Number 2400031811	Incident Number 24-0003181
Defendant Name	First: SONYA	Middle: M	Last: MCKNIGHT	

AFFIDAVIT of PROBABLE CAUSE

Your affiant is Lee Ann Tarasi, a Police Officer with the Susquehanna Township Police Department, and has been so since July of 2007. Your affiant attended and graduated the Municipal Police Officers Training Academy (ACT 120). Your affiant is currently assigned as a Detective Sergeant, to the Criminal Investigations Division, and is tasked and authorized to investigate crimes that occur within the Township. Your affiant has attended various training's on such topics as: Crisis Intervention, Open-Source Intelligence, Child Death and Near Death, Homicide, Interview and Interrogation, Identification of Deceptive Behavior, Sex Trafficking, Financial Crimes, Hostage Negotiation, Shooting Reconstruction, Cell Phone Investigation, Highway Interdiction, Drug Identification, and Child Abuse. Your affiant is Class "A" Wiretapping and Electronic Surveillance Trained and Certified. Your affiant is also a Hostage Negotiator currently assigned to the Dauphin County Crisis Response Team as the Hostage Negotiations Team Leader.

February 10, 2024, at 0048 hours, Susquehanna Township Police were dispatched to 224 Saddle Ridge Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17110, for a hemorrhage/lacerations call. The complainant, Sonya McKnight, called Dauphin County Dispatch and reported that her boyfriend, Michael McCoy, couldn't see and asked if an ambulance come and get him. She could not explain what happened and stated that she was sleeping and heard him screaming.

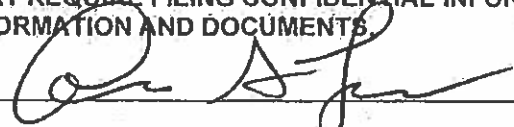
Patrol Officers responded to the residence and made contact with the only two occupants of the residence, Sonya McKnight, and the victim, Michael McCoy. It was found that Michael McCoy sustained a gunshot wound to the face next to his right eye. Neither person provided details as to the series of events that led Michael McCoy to being shot. Michael McCoy stated, "I did not shoot myself".

An investigation ensued. Sergeant Lee Tarasi and Patrolman First Class/Detective Darryl Brown were the assigned investigators. The Dauphin County Evidence Team responded to the scene. All biographical data, including phone numbers were obtained directly from Sonya McKnight and Michael McCoy.

The following was learned from interviews and the investigation itself:

I, SGT SGT LEE TARASI, BEING DULY SWORN ACCORDING TO THE LAW, DEPOSE AND SAY THAT THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE FOREGOING AFFIDAVIT ARE TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, INFORMATION AND BELIEF.

I CERTIFY THAT THIS FILING COMPLIES WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE CASE RECORDS PUBLIC ACCESS POLICY OF THE UNIFIED JUDICIAL SYSTEM OF PENNSYLVANIA THAT REQUIRE FILING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS DIFFERENTLY THAN NON-CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS.


 (Signature of Affiant)

Sworn to me and subscribed before me this 15 day of February, 2024

2-15-24 Date , Magisterial District Judge

My commission expires first Monday of January,





**POLICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT
AFFIDAVIT CONTINUATION PAGE**

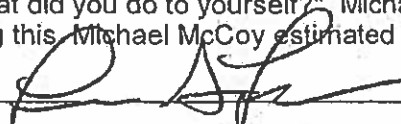
Docket Number: CR102-24	Date Filed: 2/15/2024	OTN/LiveScan Number V1003132-4	Complaint Number 2400031811	Incident Number 24-0003181
Defendant Name	First: SONYA	Middle: M	Last: MCKNIGHT	

AFFIDAVIT of PROBABLE CAUSE CONTINUATION

- Sonya McKnight and Michael McCoy were the only two occupants of the residence, 224 Saddle Ridge Drive Harrisburg, Dauphin County Pa 17110. It is Michael McCoy's house.
- Michael McCoy ended a one year relationship with Sonya McKnight. Sonya McKnight was living, full time, with Michael McCoy and had clothing and other belongings at his house. Michael McCoy attempted numerous times to have Sonya McKnight leave, however she would not. He removed his house key from Sonya McKnight's key ring on the same day, Sunday February 4, 2024.
- Michael McCoy went to work, as usual, on Monday February 5, 2024. Sonya McKnight was already gone from the home. Michael McCoy is relieved but returns home from work and Sonya McKnight is inside his house. He immediately yells at her asking:
What is she doing there?
How did she get into the home?
Why is she there?

Sonya McKnight calmly states that she took his spare keys, that he keeps in a key dish, in a common area of the home. Michael realized that she must have noticed the house key removed and took the spare keys for the extra house key that is maintained on them.
- On Friday, February 9, 2024 Michael McCoy came home from work and Sonya McKnight was sitting on his couch wearing pajamas and a pink robe. These pajamas were later identified as a Calvin Klein brand with a camisole top and shorts for bottoms. He informed her that he was going out. Her attitude changed and she questioned him stating that he just got home. He responded that he had a long week with her and at work and was going out. Upon his departure, she called him, on his way, to his destination asking where he was going. He didn't answer her because they were broke up and he didn't need to. She sent text messages and called. He ignored the majority of them but did respond to, at least one, whereby she requested he bring her food home. Sonya McKnight asked Michael McCoy to get her a salad "from up there". At this point, he knew Sonya McKnight did a "drive-by" of Crawdaddy's to see if he was there. He orders a salad and upon returning home, Sonya McKnight was in regular clothes. She had changed out of her pajama's, at some point. At this point, Michael McCoy knew she had departed that house to check and see if he was at Crawdaddy's a local restaurant/bar, they usually patronized.

Michael McCoy takes his food and goes up the spare room to eat. Michael McCoy returns his plate to the kitchen and Sonya McKnight accosts him asking if they are going to talk. Michael McCoy stated that he already told her he had a long week, at work, and with her and they could talk tomorrow, being Saturday February 10, 2024. Michael McCoy knows that he intended on calling her mother to help him get her out. At this point Sonya McKnight responds, "Oh, You're serious?". Michael McCoy stated that it was like she finally understood that it was over. Michael McCoy goes upstairs to go to bed. He estimates that this would have been likely approximately 11:00 PM. Michael McCoy states he was probably asleep an hour or two after. Michael McCoy stated that he will crash hard when he first goes to bed because he is decompressing.
- Michael McCoy wakes up with massive head pain and can not see. He never heard a gun shot or any noise prior. He begins screaming and he hears Sonya McKnight say "Mike what did you do to yourself?" Michael McCoy never heard any footsteps or anything. Sonya McKnight keeps repeating this. Michael McCoy estimated that this



(Signature of Affiant)



**POLICE CRIMINAL COMPLAINT
AFFIDAVIT CONTINUATION PAGE**

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AFFIDAVIT of PROBABLE CAUSE CONTINUATION

went on for two to three minutes. Michael McCoy asks if he is bleeding to which Sonya McKnight yes and he asks to be directed to the bathroom, as he is blind at this time. Sonya McKnight escorts Michael McCoy past the closest bathroom and to the master bedroom bathroom instead. Michael McCoy has to tell Sonya McKnight to call him an ambulance. Sonya McKnight leaves him for some time and then returns and says she can't find her phone. Sonya McKnight ask Michael McCoy where his phone is and he directs Sonya McKnight to get his. Sonya McKnight returns with Michael McCoy's phone and asks What the pin number is. Michael McCoy provides Sonya the pin number to unlock his phone. Michael McCoy tells Sonya McKnight to call an ambulance, yet again and then she asks "What's the number?". He advises 9-1-1.

6. Upon arrival of EMS, it was determined that Michael McCoy suffered a single gun shot wound that entered his head in the area of his right temple and exited the left temple area. Michael McCoy had to be informed, of this, as he did not know what happened to him. His response was pure shock. Sergeant Gomez asked him specifically if he shot himself and he shockingly, exclaimed "no!". I know this, from my training and experience, to be a spontaneous and truthful answer.

7. Michael McCoy has maintained that he did not, nor has he ever, thought about taking his own life. He has maintained this from the initial interview, while he was in the hospital, and in addition when he was interviewed, out of the hospital, on February 11, 2024. This investigation supports his account thus far.

8. Sonya McKnight's interview was found to be deceptive. She stated that she did not leave the house on the evening of the incident, however, neighboring Ring doorbells have proven differently. In addition Sonya McKnight's vehicle was observed on a License Plate Reader on 6th Street north of McClay Street, Harrisburg, at 9:50 PM, on 2/9/24. The vehicle was traveling south and toward the direction of Crawdaddy's. It appears that she returned the house at 10:19 PM, by pulling into the garage. This was also observed on a neighboring Ring camera.

9. The physical evidence of the gunshot wound coupled with the stippling, indicate the gunshot was approximately one foot away.

10. Sonya McKnight tested positive for gun shot residue on her hands via a presumptive test within a hour of the incident.

Michael McCoy adamantly stated that he did not, nor ever wished to shoot himself. He went to sleep after telling Sonya McKnight, again, that the relationship was over. It was at this point, Sonya McKnight finally comprehended and acknowledged it by saying "Oh, you're serious."

Michael McKnight woke up from his sleep after being shot in the head with a gun registered to Sonya McKnight. Sonya McKnight and Michael McCoy both stated they were the only two people in the house at the time of the shooting.

Due to the aforementioned account of events, your affiant respectfully requests a warrant be issued for Sonya McKnight, in order to bring her forth to answer to the charges contained within this complaint. #314


(Signature of Affiant)