



IN AND FOR THE CIRCUIT COURT  
MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA



STATE OF FLORIDA

COURT # 2020CF3014

VS.

MCSO CASE # 2020-024250

ASHLEY CHRISTINA BENEFIELD

SAO # \_\_\_\_\_

Before me, a JUDGE of the CIRCUIT COURT, in and for Manatee County, Florida,  
DETECTIVE Justin Warren, a duly sworn officer of the  
MANATEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, personally or by sworn attestation says that on or about  
the 27th of September, 2020 in the aforesaid county, one  
ASHLEY CHRISTINA BENEFIELD, did unlawfully:

On 09/27/2020, John Sant contacted 911 and reported that his neighbor Ashley Benefield had just run over to his residence and told him that she had been attacked by her husband (Douglas Benefield) and that she had shot him. John Sant confirmed that the shooting took place at Ashley's residence which is located at 11331 White Rock Terrace Bradenton, FL. John Sant also told the dispatcher that the weapon used was currently at his residence. John Sant remained on the phone and in the presence of Ashley until she was directed to go out and meet with deputies. John then directed deputies to the firearm which was still inside his residence.

Responding deputies entered 11331 White Rock Terrace and began to render aid to Douglas Benefield who was found on the floor of Ashley's bedroom. Douglas was moved to the living room where the deputies continued to render aid. Douglas had two gunshot wounds visible on his person. The wounds were located to his right leg, right arm, and right chest area. Douglas was eventually transported by EMS to the nearest hospital. Douglas succumbed to his injuries and was pronounced deceased at 2009 hrs.

A search warrant was obtained for the residence and during the execution, it was discovered that a total of 4 shots were fired. Four .45 caliber casings were located on the floor in Ashley's bedroom. A loose projectile was also found on the floor and two more were found embedded in the walls of the residence.

Ashley was transported to CID by patrol for an interview. Prior to her arrival, Ashley's legal counsel had already arrived. Ashley and counsel advised that she did not wish to make a statement at this time. Ashley did however make a spontaneous statement to me advising that her ears were still ringing. Ashley was shown to the interview room so that she could confer with her counsel. As we walked to the interview room I did not observe Ashley to have any injuries nor did I observe any ripped, torn, or stretched out clothing.

(continue narrative on next page, if necessary)

Contrary to FLORIDA STATE STATUTE 782, 04 (2), in such cases made and provided, and against the peace and dignity of the STATE OF FLORIDA.

Det. Justin H. Warren 003622  
AFFIANT

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 4TH day of NOVEMBER, 2020

Jenny P...  
NOTARY PUBLIC 11009014  
(seal)  
F.S. 5 117.10 LE

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NARRATIVE (continued)

A search warrant was obtained for photographs as well as DNA from Ashley's person. I reviewed the photographs and spoke with the crime scene technician. No injuries aside from a minor scratch on her right side were visible. The scratch appeared to be old and very minor. Upon further investigation, a witness explained that Ashley had obtained the scratch on her right side the day before the shooting when she was inadvertently scratched when someone walked by her carrying a box.

Douglas was found to have been shot twice. One of the rounds entered the outside of his right leg and exited the inside of his right leg. The other round appeared to have skipped across the right bicep and entered his chest cavity from his right side. No signs of stippling were observed on Douglas or his clothing indicating that the firearm was several feet away when it was fired.

Based on the entry wounds on Douglas it does not appear that he was facing Ashley when she began shooting. It also does not appear that Douglas had taken any kind of defensive or combative stance. After being shot Douglas fell to the ground and it appears that he may have struck his head on the wall on the way down. Douglas did have an abrasion on the back of his head which was about the same size as a small patch of disturbed drywall on the eastern wall of the bedroom.

Douglas was not found to have any weapons on his person or near him.

On 10/01/2020 a second search warrant for photographs was executed on Ashley for any delayed injuries that may have not been visible on the night of the shooting. No injuries were observed.

Numerous requests have been made through Ashley's legal counsel to set up an interview to discuss what occurred in the room that night. As of this writing, Ashley has not provided a statement or interview.

Contrary to FLORIDA STATE STATUTE 782, 04 (2), in such cases made and provided, and against the peace and dignity of the STATE OF FLORIDA.

Det. Justin F. Warner <sup>11603622</sup>  
AFFIANT

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 4TH day of NOVEMBER, 2020

James J. [Signature]  
NOTARY PUBLIC <sup>11609014</sup>  
(seal)  
F.S.S. 117.10 LE

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**NARRATIVE (continued)**

During this investigation, it was found that since the time Ashley found out that she was pregnant with the child that she and Douglas share she has made several allegations against Douglas. While looking into the outcomes of the numerous cases it was found that they had never resulted in criminal charges and were furthermore closed as unfounded. None of the cases involved the allegation of physical domestic violence. Based on these cases and Ashley's actions leading up to the murder of Douglas Benefield it appears that the main focus of these complaints was to keep the child away from Douglas. In one of the most recent cases, Ashley and Douglas went before the Honorable Judge Moreland for an injunction hearing. During the hearing, Judge Moreland openly advised that she did not find Ashley's story to possess a "scintilla of truth". Judge Moreland further ordered Douglas to have access to the child for visitation. At this point, it appears that Ashley had exhausted all legal means of keeping the child away from Douglas before the shooting.

Contrary to FLORIDA STATE STATUTE 782 . 04 (2) , in such cases made and provided, and against the peace and dignity of the STATE OF FLORIDA.

Detective Justin F. Williams 11003622  
AFFIANT

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 4TH day of NOVEMBER , 2020

Jeannette J. [Signature]  
NOTARY PUBLIC 110091014  
(seal)  
F.S.S. 117.10 LE