

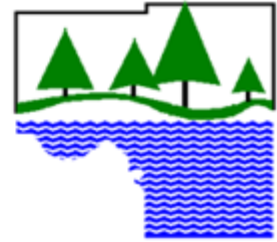
Office of the Itasca County Attorney

County Attorney
Matti R. Adam

Assistants

Todd S. Webb
David S. Schmit
Cassidy L. Villeneuve
Jake P. Fauchald

Michael J. Haig
John R. Kempe
Heather M. Roy
Justin J. Lee



PRESS RELEASE

June 21, 2023

Itasca County Attorney Matti Adam reports on Nigel Randel Blackburn, age 33, of St. Paul, Minnesota, appeared in Itasca County District Court on a criminal complaint charging him with Second Degree Intentional Murder, with the maximum penalty for this felony crime being forty years in prison. This case is being investigated by the Itasca County Sheriff's Office with assistance from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and the Deer River Police Department. A copy of the complaint is attached.

At today's hearing, District Court Judge Sarah McBroom set unconditional bail at two million dollars and conditional bail at one million dollars. Defendant Blackburn will make a next court appearance on July 12, 2023.

State of Minnesota
County of ItascaDistrict Court
9th Judicial DistrictProsecutor File No. 0310063930
Court File No. 31-CR-23-1452State of Minnesota,
Plaintiff,**COMPLAINT**
Warrant

vs.

NIGEL RANDEL BLACKBURN DOB: 03/01/1990719 E 18th Street, Apt 3
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Defendant.

The Complainant submits this complaint to the Court and states that there is probable cause to believe Defendant committed the following offense(s):

COUNT I**Charge: Murder - 2nd Degree, felony**

Minnesota Statute: 609.19.1(1), with reference to: 609.19.1

Maximum Sentence: 40 years prison

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 06/09/2023

Control #(ICR#): 23001504

Charge Description: On or about June 9, 2023, in the County of Itasca, State of Minnesota, Nigel Randel Blackburn caused the death of J.C.K. with intent to effect the death of that person.

The Complainant states that the following facts establish probable cause:

In the early morning hours of June 13, 2023, Itasca County law enforcement received a report that there may be a dead body at the residence of 501 4th Street SE, Deer River, Itasca County, Minnesota. C.M. called law enforcement after receiving a call from her daughter Allison Rae Mandich, who lives at the residence. C.M. explained that Mandich initially said there was a stabbing but then said a shooting happened there several days earlier. Officers learned that Mandich was in Zimmerman, Minnesota when she called her mother.

Itasca County Deputy Sheriff Jacob Olson and Deer River Police Officer Jeff Krall made contact with Mandich by phone. Mandich was crying on the phone and said that J.C.K. was shot on Friday, June 9 and his body was still inside her home. She gave consent for law enforcement to enter the residence. Once they made entry through the back door, officers could see a blood trail from a doorway into the living room where a male later identified as J.C.K. was laying. He had apparent bullet holes in his head and body and brass shell casings were observed in the vicinity. There was blood throughout the residence including on the interior of the front door. Officers cleared the house to ensure there were no other occupants and then secured the scene.

Through the course of investigation officers learned that J.C.K., Mandich, and Nigel Randal Blackburn, d.o.b. 03/01/1990 visited J.C.K.'s mother's house on Thursday, June 8. J.C.K.'s mother told officers that she hadn't seen him or heard from him for several days since then.

On June 13, 2023, Sherburne County Sheriff Sgt. Austin Turner made contact with Mandich who was driving a black 2015 Dodge Durango with Minnesota Plate BUY737 in Zimmerman, Minnesota. Mandich was distressed and told Sgt. Turner she wanted to cooperate. Mandich said Blackburn shot and killed her friend at her home in Itasca County and afterwards she drove Blackburn to a grey townhome in Monticello. Mandich was transported to the sheriff's office where she met with Minnesota BCA Agent Nathaniel Brovold and agreed to provide a statement after being advised of her *Miranda* rights. Mandich said she, J.C.K., and Blackburn were all acquainted. She said that both men had a romantic interest in her and she was previously in a relationship with Blackburn and she considers J.C.K. a friend. Mandich said that earlier in the week she followed Blackburn to St. Paul so he could sell a motorcycle. She said he acquired a handgun in the transaction and Blackburn returned with her to Deer River because he had a disagreement with his wife. Mandich said that she, J.C.K., and Blackburn had dinner at J.C.K.'s mother's home and returned to her residence. At the residence, she and J.C.K. fell asleep on the couch. The two men had a disagreement after Blackburn told J.C.K. to move from the couch. The argument moved downstairs and Mandich pushed herself between the two men. She said she heard a loud bang and saw J.C.K. put his hands to his head. She realized J.C.K. was shot. J.C.K. tried to walk upstairs and Blackburn followed, continuing to fire. Mandich said she heard approximately four more gunshots. She said that J.C.K. collapsed and died in the living room. Mandich said this took place in the early morning hours of June 9, 2023.

Mandich said she and Blackburn remained at the house for several more hours after J.C.K. died. Blackburn said they should cover up the murder and gave several suggestions as to how they could do so. Mandich said Blackburn used socks to wipe some footprints from the residence before they left in Mandich's black Dodge Durango. She said that Blackburn took J.C.K.'s cell phone and threw it from the vehicle and discarded the socks in a different area. Mandich said she did not know what Blackburn did with the firearm.

During a neighborhood canvas, officers received consistent reports of Mandich and a black male who matched Blackburn's description going to and from 501 4th Street SE Thursday June 8. The residence directly across the street had a home security camera capable of still photography. Officers obtained photos showing the Durango parked outside the residence at 9:48 a.m., in the next photo from 9:54 a.m. the Durango is no longer present.

On June 9, 2023 at 11:31 p.m. Wright County deputies responded to an apartment in Monticello following a 911 call. Deputy Karen Radi spoke to S.B. who said that her husband, Blackburn, was having a mental health episode. Mandich was present at the apartment at the time. Deputies cleared the scene after telling the two women to contact law enforcement if there were further issues.

At 3:00 a.m. on June 10, 2023, Wright County Sheriff's Office responded to the same apartment after receiving a report that Blackburn was holding a large kitchen knife and making suicidal statements. Blackburn left the residence by the time officers arrived. His wife, S.B. said that Blackburn is bipolar and schizophrenic, and he was so unstable she thought he might hurt someone. Blackburn returned to the residence just before 4:00 a.m. wearing only sweatpants and sweating profusely. He was transported to an emergency room and placed on a mental health hold. Blackburn was later transferred to Prairie St. John's in Fargo, North Dakota.

On June 14, 2023 a post-mortem medical examination was conducted. Preliminary results indicate that J.C.K. was shot five to six times with three entry and exit paths in the torso, one entrance in the right forearm with a lodged projectile, and two entrance and exit paths in the head.

Itasca County Sheriff's Office is aware that Blackburn is currently at Prairie St. John's and is anticipated to be released in the coming days. Fargo Police Department is prepared to assist the Itasca County Sheriff's Office in the arrest upon issuance of an arrest warrant.

A review of court records shows Blackburn has the following convictions in addition to numerous misdemeanor and traffic violation convictions:

7/28/2017 – Fleeing a Peace Officer in a Motor Vehicle, felony

1/5/2018 – Drugs - 5th Degree Sale, felony

1/5/2018 – Drugs - 5th Degree Possession, felony

11/20/2018 – Domestic Assault, misdemeanor

11/06/2019 – Simple Robbery, felony

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE: Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 609.49 intentional failure to appear for duly scheduled court appearances may result in additional criminal charges in addition to any arrest warrant that may otherwise be issued by the Court.

Complainant requests that Defendant, subject to bail or conditions of release, be:
(1) arrested or that other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court; or
(2) detained, if already in custody, pending further proceedings; and that said Defendant otherwise be dealt with according to law.

Complainant declares under penalty of perjury that everything stated in this document is true and correct. Minn. Stat. § 358.116; Minn. R. Crim. P. 2.01, subds. 1, 2.

Complainant

Mark Weller
Supervisor / Investigator
440 NE First Avenue
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
Badge: 735

Electronically Signed:
06/14/2023 02:48 PM
itasca County, Minnesota

Being authorized to prosecute the offenses charged, I approve this complaint.

Prosecuting Attorney

Matti R Adam
123 NE Fourth Street
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
(218) 327-2867

Electronically Signed:
06/14/2023 02:34 PM

31-CR-23-1452
FINDING OF PROBABLE CAUSE

Filed in District Court
State of Minnesota
6/14/2023

From the above sworn facts, and any supporting affidavits or supplemental sworn testimony, I, the Issuing Officer, have determined that probable cause exists to support, subject to bail or conditions of release where applicable, Defendant's arrest or other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court, or Defendant's detention, if already in custody, pending further proceedings. Defendant is therefore charged with the above-stated offense(s).

☐ **SUMMONS**

THEREFORE YOU, THE DEFENDANT, ARE SUMMONED to appear as directed in the Notice of Hearing before the above-named court to answer this complaint.

IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR in response to this SUMMONS, a WARRANT FOR YOUR ARREST shall be issued.

☒ **WARRANT**

To the Sheriff of the above-named county; or other person authorized to execute this warrant: I order, in the name of the State of Minnesota, that the Defendant be apprehended and arrested without delay and brought promptly before the court (if in session), and if not, before a Judge or Judicial Officer of such court without unnecessary delay, and in any event not later than 36 hours after the arrest or as soon as such Judge or Judicial Officer is available to be dealt with according to law.

☐ *Execute in MN Only*

☒ *Execute Nationwide*

☐ *Execute in Border States*

☐ **ORDER OF DETENTION**

Since the Defendant is already in custody, I order, subject to bail or conditions of release, that the Defendant continue to be detained pending further proceedings.

Bail: \$

Conditions of Release:

This complaint, duly subscribed and sworn to or signed under penalty of perjury, is issued by the undersigned Judicial Officer as of the following date: June 14, 2023.

Judicial Officer

Korey Wahwassuck
District Judge

Electronically Signed: 06/14/2023 02:53 PM

Sworn testimony has been given before the Judicial Officer by the following witnesses:

**COUNTY OF ITASCA
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

State of Minnesota

Plaintiff

vs.

Nigel Randel Blackburn

Defendant

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER RETURN OF SERVICE
I hereby Certify and Return that I have served a copy of this Warrant upon the Defendant herein named.

Signature of Authorized Service Agent:

31-CR-23-1452
DEFENDANT FACT SHEET

*Filed in District Court
State of Minnesota
6/14/2023*

Name: Nigel Randel Blackburn
DOB: 03/01/1990
Address: 719 E 18th Street, Apt 3
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Alias Names/DOB:

SID:

Height:

Weight: 165lbs.

Eye Color:

Hair Color:

Gender:

Race:

Fingerprints Required per Statute: Yes

Fingerprint match to Criminal History Record: No

Driver's License #:

Alcohol Concentration:

STATUTE AND OFFENSE GRID

Cnt Nbr	Statute Type	Offense Date(s)	Statute Nbrs and Descriptions	Offense Level	MOC	GOC	Controlling Agencies	Case Numbers
1	Charge	6/9/2023	609.19.1(1) Murder - 2nd Degree - With Intent-Not Premeditated	Felony	H2012		MN0310000	23001504
	Penalty	6/9/2023	609.19.1 Murder - 2nd Degree	Felony	H2012		MN0310000	23001504