

State of Minnesota  
County of Hennepin

District Court  
4th Judicial District

Prosecutor File No. 17A05264  
Court File No. 27-CR-18-11295

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**State of Minnesota,**  
Plaintiff,

**COMPLAINT**  
Warrant

vs.

**DARNELL JEROME DAVIS DOB: 03/23/1991**

1003 Whitetail Ln  
Montrose, MN 55363

Defendant.

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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 - Without Intent - While Committing a Felony**

Minnesota Statute: 609.19.2(1), with reference to: 609.19.2(1)

Maximum Sentence: 40 YEARS

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 08/21/2016

Control #(ICR#): 16012879

Charge Description: That on or about 8/21/2016, in Hennepin County, Minnesota, Darnell Jerome Davis, did without intent to effect the death of any person, cause the death of the victim, a human being, while committing or attempting to commit the felony offense of Assault in the Third Degree.

## STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

Complainant has investigated the facts and circumstances of this offense and believes the following establishes probable cause:

On August 21, 2016 at 9:48 AM, Rogers police and paramedics responded to a residence in Rogers, Hennepin County, Minnesota on a report of an infant who was not breathing. The reporting party was the child's mother, who was at work and had received a call from the child's father, DARNELL JEROME DAVIS, Defendant herein. The child was a five-month-old girl ("the victim") who had been home alone with Defendant since her mother left for work a little before 9:00 AM. Defendant told first-responding officers that he had fed the victim a bottle and later noticed she was not breathing normally.

The victim was transported to Children's Hospital in Minneapolis where she was intubated, treated for seizure-like activity, and received a CT scan. The scan revealed bilateral subdural hemorrhage in the victim's brain. The victim's neurological status continued to deteriorate, and emergency surgery was performed to place an external ventricular drain. The swelling in the victim's brain continued to worsen, despite medical interventions.

On August 23, a pediatric ophthalmologist examined the victim and noted extensive and severe bilateral retinal hemorrhages as well as retinal folds (which are created when the eye is subjected to "tractional forces") in the victim's right eye. A pediatrician specializing in child abuse opined that the victim's "presentation [was] far and away most consistent with abusive head trauma."

Despite a series of life-saving measures, the victim's condition continued to worsen, and life support was removed on August 24. The victim died at 9:11 A.M. on August 25, 2016. She was five months and fifteen days old. By all accounts, the victim was healthy and developmentally on-track prior to August 21, 2016.

Defendant told the child's mother when he first called her that the victim had suffered a seizure. He later denied seizure activity to medical personnel.

Later on August 21, Defendant told a medical provider that he had propped a bottle up for the victim to eat in her bassinet and left her in the bedroom. He said he heard a choking noise and returned to the bedroom and picked up the victim. Defendant said that he ran around the apartment in a panic and hit the victim's head on a doorframe while running. Defendant told a similar account to an investigator. The child abuse pediatrician noted in his report that the victim's injuries were inconsistent with striking her head on a doorframe and that her condition was "most consistent with an acute traumatic incident" that morning.

An autopsy was performed at the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office in April 2017. The manner of death was ruled undetermined "due to or as a consequence of...unknown insult." The physical and microscopic findings at autopsy included: subdural hemorrhage, traumatic axonal injury (injury to the nerve fibers in the brain often caused by trauma), a hemorrhage in the victim's cervical spinal cord dorsal nerve root ganglion (located at the very top of the spinal cord, in the neck), and bilateral hemorrhages in the optic nerves and retinas of the eyes. The medical examiner made no findings consistent with an accidental or natural death.

On September 21, 2017, Defendant was interviewed by detectives. He persisted in claiming that he ran around the apartment holding the victim in a panic. When confronted with the medical evidence suggesting that the victim was shaken, he said he may have inadvertently shaken the victim while running.

On April 30, 2018, Defendant met voluntarily with an investigator from the county attorney's office at the

Human Services Building in Buffalo, Minnesota. Defendant initially told the investigator that he picked the victim up after he heard her choking and proceeded to run around in "panic mode," shaking the victim in the process. The investigator confronted Defendant with the medical findings and asked Defendant if he had intentionally caused the victim's injuries. Defendant insisted that he "didn't mean to" hurt the victim.

Defendant then admitted that he was not sleeping well at the time of the victim's death and was taking medicine to help him sleep. Officers at the scene documented a bottle of "Zzzquil" in the kitchen. Defendant told the investigator that, after the victim's mother left for work on August 21, the victim cried for an extended period of time. Defendant admitted that he became frustrated, picked the victim up by her torso, and shook the victim back and forth three or four times. Defendant demonstrated for the investigator how he shook the victim. Defendant confirmed that the victim's head whipped back and forth multiple times when he shook her. After he shook her, the victim was quiet, and he later noticed that she was not breathing and called the victim's mother. Defendant admitted that he had lied to medical staff and investigators previously when he claimed he struck the victim's head while running around in a panic because he did not want anyone to think he was a bad person. Defendant was emotionally distraught throughout the interview. The injuries documented by medical providers and observed at autopsy are consistent with Defendant's confession.

Defendant is not in custody and is believed to be currently staying at his parents' home in Brooklyn Park. Defendant married a new girlfriend approximately six months after the victim died and has a seven-month-old daughter. The State requests this case issue as a warrant. After the recent confession, Defendant is more likely to flee and/or become a danger to himself or others.

## SIGNATURES AND APPROVALS

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**

JEFFREY A BEAHEN  
Chief of Police  
21860 Industrial Court Street  
Rogers, MN 55374  
Badge: 6801

Electronically Signed:  
05/03/2018 04:27 PM  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

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

**Prosecuting Attorney**

Paige L Starkey  
300 S 6th St  
Minneapolis, MN 55487  
(612) 348-5550

Electronically Signed:  
05/03/2018 04:25 PM

**FINDING OF PROBABLE CAUSE**

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 on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM before the above-named court at 300 S Sixth Street, Minneapolis, MN 55487 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: \$500,000.00  
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: May 3, 2018.

**Judicial Officer**                      Liza K. Janzen                      Electronically Signed: 05/03/2018 04:34 PM  
District Court Judge

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

**COUNTY OF HENNEPIN  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

**State of Minnesota**

Plaintiff

vs.

**Darnell Jerome Davis**

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:

## DEFENDANT FACT SHEET

**Name:** Darnell Jerome Davis  
**DOB:** 03/23/1991  
**Address:** 1003 Whitetail Ln  
Montrose, MN 55363

**Alias Names/DOB:**

**SID:**

**Height:**

**Weight:**

**Eye Color:**

**Hair Color:**

**Gender:** MALE

**Race:** Black

**Fingerprints Required per Statute:** Yes

**Fingerprint match to Criminal History Record:** No

**Driver's License #:**

**SILS Person ID #:** 816738

**SILS Tracking No.** 2939145

**Alcohol Concentration:**

## STATUTE AND OFFENSE GRID

<b>Cnt Nbr</b>	<b>Statute Type</b>	<b>Offense Date(s)</b>	<b>Statute Nbrs and Descriptions</b>	<b>Offense Level</b>	<b>MOC</b>	<b>GOC</b>	<b>Controlling Agencies</b>	<b>Case Numbers</b>
1	Charge	8/21/2016	609.19.2(1) Murder - 2nd Degree - Without Intent - While Committing a Felony	Felony	H2854		MN0273400	16012879
	Penalty	8/21/2016	609.19.2(1) Murder - 2nd Degree - Without Intent - While Committing a Felony	Felony	H2854		MN0273400	16012879