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DUVAL COUNTY JURY FINDS SMITH GUILTY OF SECOND-DEGREE MURDER

State Attorney Melissa Nelson announces that a Duval County jury found Dana Smith guilty of Second-Degree Murder; Tampering with Evidence; and Dealing in Stolen Property. With the verdict, Smith faces up to life in Florida State Prison. The Honorable Jeb Branham will sentence Smith at a later date.

On the morning of June 18, 2022, officers were dispatched to Sydney Street for a man found dead in the roadway. The Medical Examiner's Office determined his cause of death was a single gunshot wound to the back of the head. The victim's pocket was pulled out and there was no wallet or phone on scene. The victim was identified the next day by a close family friend who also gave officers his car make and model. A BOLO was issued for his car; officers located the car at a gas station on Park Street. Three people — including two suspected of involvement in the victim's murder — were inside the car with visible drug paraphernalia; all three were detained. When interviewed by police, Smith claimed the victim gave him keys to his car and his phone for collateral to buy drugs. However, Smith's girlfriend told police Smith shot the victim and pushed him out of his car leaving him dead in the road after a botched drug deal. She said they took the victim's phone and sold it at a kiosk on Normandy Boulevard. Officers were able to locate the kiosk and found the victim's phone as well as records that confirmed Smith and his girlfriend sold the phone.

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Jay Plotkin and Lauren Randall.