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JURY FINDS IRIS WILLIAMS GUILTY OF 2023 DOUBLE MURDER, KIDNAPPING

State Attorney Melissa Nelson announces that a Duval County jury found Iris Williams guilty of two counts of Second-Degree Murder; Kidnapping with a Firearm; Tampering with Evidence; and Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon for the murders of Charles Watkins and Thomas Harris and kidnapping their elderly mother. With the verdict, Williams faces up to life in Florida State Prison. The Honorable Anthony Salem will sentence Williams at a later date.

In the early morning hours of Oct. 18, 2023, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office responded to a Northwest Jacksonville home for two men shot. The caller was the elderly mother of the two adult victims, who had been taken hostage after the shootings happened the night before. When officers arrived, they found Watkins sitting in a chair with a single gunshot to the head and Harris dead in his bedroom with multiple gunshot wounds. Watkins was treated at the scene but died at the hospital shortly after.

The victims' mother went to her room around 9 p.m. the night before. Not long after, she heard gunshots and went into the hall to find Harris shot. His last words to his mother were "She shot me," referring to Williams, the longtime girlfriend of Watkins. Williams then fired another shot while Harris lay in his bed, pointed the gun at the mother, and said, "we got to go." Williams forced her to drive to a motel and held her captive for hours. During the drive there, Williams told her she also shot Watkins. Williams disposed of the gun at the top of a bridge and tried to coerce the mother to lie to the police. When they returned home in the morning, the mother called 911 and Williams was arrested.

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Jay Plotkin and Crystal Ganpath-Freed.