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PRESS RELEASE

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Investigative Report Released for March 2023 Fatal Officer-Involved Shooting in Frederick City

BALTIMORE, MD (September 6, 2023) – The Independent Investigations Division (IID) of the Office of the Attorney General today released its investigative report of the March 4, 2023, fatal officer-involved shooting in the city of Frederick.

On March 4, 2023, at approximately 6:20 p.m., Frederick Police Department (FPD) officers were dispatched to an apartment in the 1500 block of N. East Street in Frederick to locate Joseph Sherrill, who had an open warrant for an alleged violation of probation. Officers went to the apartment where they believed him to be located and spoke with a witness who denied that Mr. Sherrill was inside the apartment. After several minutes, the witness opened the door, and three FPD officers entered the apartment. Inside the apartment, an officer found Mr. Sherrill crouching in an open bedroom closet and holding a knife. Officers Robert Hess, Fahad Mirza, and a witness officer began speaking with Mr. Sherrill, commanding him to “drop the knife,” while backing away from him into the apartment’s living room. Mr. Sherrill then moved towards Officer Mirza with the knife held out in front of him. At that point, Officers Mirza and Hess discharged their firearms, striking Mr. Sherrill. Officers called for emergency medical services and provided aid until paramedics arrived. Mr. Sherrill was pronounced dead on scene.

On March 22, 2023, the Frederick County State’s Attorney Office announced—while the case was still under active investigation—that they were declining to prosecute the case.

The IID continued to complete a thorough, independent investigation, as required by the law, and concluded its investigation on July 31, 2023. The IID’s investigative report was forwarded to the Frederick County State’s Attorney’s Office on August 9, 2023. The Frederick County State’s Attorney’s Office notified the IID on August 28, 2023, of its decision not to prosecute the case.

The IID’s report contains detailed investigative findings and an analysis of relevant legal issues. Because the Frederick County State’s Attorney’s Office—not the IID—retains prosecution authority^[1] in this case, the report does not make any recommendations as to whether any individual should or should not be charged. A copy of the investigative report can be found [here](#).

^[1] Beginning October 1, 2023, the IID will have the sole authority, where appropriate, to prosecute police-involved incidents that result in the death of an individual or injuries that are likely to result in the death of an individual
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^[1] Beginning October 1, 2023, the IID will have the sole authority, where appropriate, to prosecute police-involved incidents that result in the death of an individual or injuries that are likely to result in the death of an individual occurring on or after that date. For incidents occurring before that date, the local State's Attorney retains sole prosecution authority.

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2023/090623a.pdf>

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