

# **Man charged with making false statements under oath during first-degree murder trial**

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EDWARDSVILLE — Charges have been filed against an 18-year-old from Cottage Hills for making false statements while testifying under oath during a First-Degree Murder trial.

Ahmad R. Sanders (d.o.b. 2/15/00) was charged this afternoon with one count of Perjury (Class 3) after knowingly making false statements while testifying at the jury trial of his brother, Aryion E. Sanders (d.o.b. 5/15/98) on March 21, 2018.

“It is absolutely necessary for citizens to tell the truth when speaking to police and when testifying under oath. I refuse to surrender this basic principle, and will always fight to ensure that the search for truth is the bedrock of our justice system,” said State’s

Attorney Gibbons. “I would also like to thank the jurors, who, in spite of the numerous attempts to derail this case, worked to discern the true facts and render their verdict.”

Opening statements began on Wednesday, March 21st, in the case against Ariyon Sanders, who was charged with First Degree Murder (Class M) on August 14, 2015, in the shooting death of James E. Hubbard. Following a two-day trial, jurors deliberated just over five (5) hours before returning a guilty verdict against Ariyon Sanders.

During the trial, Assistant State’s Attorneys Crystal Uhe and Lauren Heischmidt, of the Violent Crimes Unit, presented evidence, including witness testimony, in support of the State’s claim that Ariyon had walked up behind Hubbard and shot him four times at point-blank range.

Last week’s trial was the third time Sanders had been in front of a jury on these charges. In August, the trial was continued by Associate Judge Neil Schroeder when two witnesses failed to appear. In September, following a three-day trial, jurors deliberated for nearly six (6) hours before Circuit Judge Kyle Napp was informed the jury had been tainted, and declared a mistrial.

The charge alleges that Ahmad Sanders, while under oath in a jury trial in the matter of the People v. Ariyon Sanders (15CF1880), made false statements, knowing that the statements were false at the time they were made. If convicted, the penalty range for a Class 3 felony is 2-5 years in prison. Ahmad Sanders will be held at the Madison County Jail in Edwardsville. His bond is set at \$100,000.

These charges, as well as the statements made herein, are based upon probable cause. The defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

Ariyon Sanders will remain in custody at the Madison County Jail in Edwardsville pending sentencing by Associate Judge Neil Schroeder. Sentencing will occur following the completion of a pre-sentencing investigation, which usually takes 6-8 weeks. A murder conviction carries a sentence of 20 to 60 years in prison. In addition, since he used a firearm, Ariyon Sanders is eligible for an additional 25-year sentence, making the sentencing range 45-85 years in prison. He will be required to serve 100 percent of his sentence.