



# **Federal Charges Filed in East St. Louis for Death of Illinois Trooper Nicholas Hopkins**

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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EAST ST. LOUIS - On Wednesday, a federal grand jury in East St. Louis returned an eight-count indictment charging Christopher R. Grant, 46, with several federal crimes, including using a firearm to murder Trooper Hopkins in furtherance of a drug trafficking offense.

Illinois State Trooper Nicholas Hopkins, 33, was killed in the line of duty while attempting to execute a state search warrant in East St. Louis.

“On that devastating day in August, the U.S. Attorney’s Office pledged every available resource to support this investigation and to support the men and women of law

enforcement - today's indictment keeps that promise," said U.S. Attorney Steven D. Weinhoeft. "We continue to mourn for Nick and his family and we will continue our work to honor his sacrifice."

According to the federal indictment, Grant was using the house where the warrant was executed to distribute controlled substances. The indictment charges that Grant knowingly fired a Glock, Model 19, 9mm caliber pistol, causing Trooper Hopkins' death with "malice aforethought," the state of mind needed to prove it was murder and not an accident. Grant is also charged with distribution of crack cocaine (three counts), maintaining a drug house, possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime, use of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime, use of a firearm to commit murder in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime, and possession of a firearm by a felon.

Grant has been held in state custody on first-degree murder charges since the shooting occurred. His initial appearance and arraignment on the federal charges has not yet been scheduled. Illinois State Police Director Brendan Kelly said, "The Illinois State Police appreciate the steps taken by the Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorney, who are working in partnership with the St. Clair County State's Attorney to ensure that justice is done.

The joint state and federal prosecutions recognize the very real dangers the men and women of law enforcement face every day – perhaps now more than ever.

St. Clair County State's Attorney Jim Gomric said, "In August of 2019, Mr. Weinhoeft and I stood shoulder to shoulder and pledged that the investigation and prosecution of those responsible for the death of Trooper Nick Hopkins would constitute a consolidated effort involving both the United States federal government and the State of Illinois.

"The federal indictment of Christopher Grant by the grand jury for the Southern District of Illinois places us one step further toward the fulfillment of that pledge. My office is thankful to all the assets of every agency involved in this investigation. My office more than appreciates all of the diligent effort put forward by Mr. Weinhoeft and Criminal Chief Ali Summers who have worked so hard on this matter."

*An indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury. This case is being investigated by the Illinois State Police and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives. Assistant U.S. Attorney Ali M. Summers is prosecuting the case.*