

ATLANTIC COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

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Prosecutor

NEWS RELEASE

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MAYS LANDING— An Atlantic City man was sentenced to 10 years in prison today for the fatal shooting of another Atlantic City man during a dispute over a drug sale in a case that had previously ended in two hung juries, Atlantic County Prosecutor Ted Housel stated.

Terryn Kelsey, 20, of 1922 Beach Avenue, entered a guilty plea on June 22 to one count of reckless manslaughter for the fatal shooting of Booker Purnell, 29, of Brights Court, and an unrelated drug charge for which Kelsey must serve four years in prison to run concurrent to the homicide sentence. The defendant, who waived his right to appeal, must serve 85 percent of the prison term before parole eligibility. Upon release, he will be subject to three years of parole supervision, according to Assistant Prosecutor Donna Fetzer.

On Aug. 7, 2007 Kelsey killed Purnell while he was in the victim's vehicle, which was parked in a lot adjacent to the intersection of Sheridan and Beach Avenues in Atlantic City. Purnell was shot four times and Kelsey was arrested shortly thereafter, Fetzer said.

Prior to the defendant being sentenced, the victim's mother Harriet Saxon-Purnell told the court that she misses her only child, very much, knowing that she will never be a grandmother. During the proceeding she wiped away tears, Fetzer said.

"It is a travesty that young people think the way to solve their problems is with the use of a gun," Fetzer said. "The situation will just get worse if we do not guide our children to become productive members of society. This is a tragic case for both families."

Superior Court Judge James E. Isman said that the prosecution had problems with the case in part because of a lack of witness cooperation. The Judge stated that he does not see an end in sight with the escalating crime in Atlantic County communities. "Until this changes, many families will be grieving over the loss or temporary loss of loved ones."

Anyone with information involving serious crimes is asked to call the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office at 609-909-7800 or go to the Prosecutor's Office Web

site at <http://www.acpo.org/tips.html> and provide information by filling out the form anonymously on the Submit a Tip page. People can also call Crime Stoppers at 609-652-1234 or 1-800-658-8477 (TIPS) or visit the Crime Stoppers Website at <http://www.crimestoppersatlantic.com/>. Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for information leading to the arrest and indictment of those who commit crimes in Atlantic County.