

**AFFIDAVIT OF SPECIAL AGENT JASON KENTROS IN SUPPORT OF
AN APPLICATION FOR A CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

I, Jason Kentros, being first duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) and have been so employed since 2017. I am assigned to the FBI Boston Division’s Violent Crimes Task Force (“VCTF”), which comprises law enforcement officers from the FBI, Massachusetts State Police (“MSP”), and other local police departments. As a member of the VCTF, I am responsible for investigating kidnappings, murders, robberies, extortion, and other violent crimes. My investigations have included the use of surveillance techniques and the execution of search, seizure, and arrest warrants.

2. I make this affidavit in support of an application for a criminal complaint charging Royal Benjamin, YOB 1960 (“BENJAMIN”), with obstructing, delaying, and affecting commerce and the movement of any article and commodity in commerce, by robbery of the JP Wireless store located at 319 Centre Street in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, on or about March 20, 2023, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1951(a).

3. The facts stated herein are based on my own personal involvement with this investigation, as well as from information provided to me by other law enforcement officers involved in the investigation. In submitting this affidavit, I have not included each and every fact known to me about this investigation; rather, I am only submitting enough evidence necessary to establish the requisite probable cause.

PROBABLE CAUSE

A. The March 20, 2023 Armed Robbery of the JP Wireless Store

4. From approximately February 18, 2023, to March 26, 2023, investigators with FBI

Boston VCTF, and Boston, Cambridge, and Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (“MBTA”) Police Departments investigated a string of armed robberies within the Metro Boston area. One of these was the March 20, 2023, armed robbery of the JP Wireless store (the “WIRELESS STORE”) located at 319 Centre Street in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts.

5. According to Boston Police (“BPD”) reports documenting witness statements and investigators’ review of surveillance footage, on March 20, 2023, at approximately 7:08 p.m., an individual who appeared to be a Black male, approximately six feet in height, wearing a black ski mask, grey hooded sweatshirt, light blue jeans, and black-and-white sneakers, and brandishing a black revolver (“ROBBER 1”), entered the WIRELESS STORE and robbed it. ROBBER 1 entered the store carrying a brown paper bag with a Puma logo on it. ROBBER 1 approached the Victim Employee and attempted to sell the Victim Employee two pairs of Puma sneakers. The Victim Employee declined to purchase the sneakers. As ROBBER 1 began to exit the store, he removed what later was identified by investigators as a black, revolver-style firearm from his waist band and rushed behind the counter. In doing so, ROBBER 1 broke the door behind the counter that stated, “employees only.” ROBBER 1 then approached the register and took approximately \$594.00 in U.S. currency that was sitting on top of the register.¹ ROBBER 1 then opened the cash register drawer, and with his bare hands removed the drawer. He dropped the drawer and its contents on the ground. ROBBER 1 left the drawer on the ground and fled the store, threatening to harm and shoot the Victim Employee as he did so. A still photo taken from the WIRELESS STORE’s video surveillance, which shows portions of ROBBER 1’s face, is included below:

¹ The Employee Victim stated he was in the process of closing the store and that is why the cash was on top of the cash register.



B. The March 20, 2023 Unarmed Robbery in the Downtown Crossing MBTA Station

6. On March 22, 2023 (two days after the WIRELESS STORE robbery), investigators spoke with an employee at the Puma factory store located at 341 Artisan Way in Somerville, Massachusetts. Investigators showed the employees a picture of ROBBER 1 holding the Puma bag, and the Puma store employee confirmed that a bag of that style could be obtained at the Puma factory store at 341 Artisan Way. Investigators then reviewed surveillance footage of recent purchases where a Puma bag was provided, but none of the individuals seen in the surveillance video matched the appearance or description of ROBBER 1.

7. Because the Puma factory store is located within close proximity of the MBTA's orange subway line, which the WIRELESS STORE also is close to, VCTF investigators contacted law enforcement personnel with MBTA Transit Police and inquired whether they had any recent reports of robberies involving a Puma bag. MBTA Transit Police informed investigators that the

MBTA had received a report of an unarmed robbery of a victim's Puma sneakers on March 20, 2023, at approximately 6:20 p.m., in the Downtown Crossing MBTA station. The MBTA's orange subway line stops at the Downtown Crossing station.

8. MBTA police reviewed surveillance footage from March 20, 2023, and identified an individual in the Downtown Crossing station who was carrying a Puma bag following the reported unarmed robbery. That individual was wearing black Nike sneakers with white soles and white lines along with a white oval shape on the back heel, blue jeans, a grey hoodie, a black stocking hat, and a black mask. This is an image captured on MBTA surveillance video footage of the individual:



Based on the WIRELESS STORE's proximity to an MBTA orange line stop, the unarmed robbery of Puma sneakers at a different MBTA orange line stop, the timing of the two robberies on the same day, the similar clothing and appearance of the individual involved in each, and ROBBER 1's possession of the Puma bag, I believe that the individual captured on MBTA surveillance video at the Downtown Crossing stop is ROBBER 1, who robbed the WIRELESS STORE approximately 48 minutes later.

C. The Identification and Arrest of BENJAMIN

9. BPD investigators collected the WIRELESS STORE cash register drawer that ROBBER 1 had dropped on the floor and processed it for fingerprints. The BPD Latent Print Unit identified a fingerprint on the drawer and submitted it for comparison. The fingerprint was run through the Automated Fingerprint Identification System ("AFIS") and BPD received a hit. The fingerprint collected by BPD matched to that of BENJAMIN.

10. Investigators reviewed BENJAMIN's criminal history, which revealed that he has been convicted of various crimes including, but not limited to, manslaughter, armed robbery, and unarmed robbery.

11. On or around March 25, 2023, BPD investigators secured an arrest warrant for BENJAMIN for the armed robbery of the WIRELESS STORE.

12. On March 27, 2023, members of the BPD Gang Unit contacted BENJAMIN's sister ("the SISTER"), who resides in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The SISTER informed BPD that BENJAMIN was upstairs sleeping. Members of the VCTF, Cambridge Police Department, and BPD responded to the SISTER's Cambridge residence (hereinafter, "Residence 1") and BENJAMIN was taken into custody.

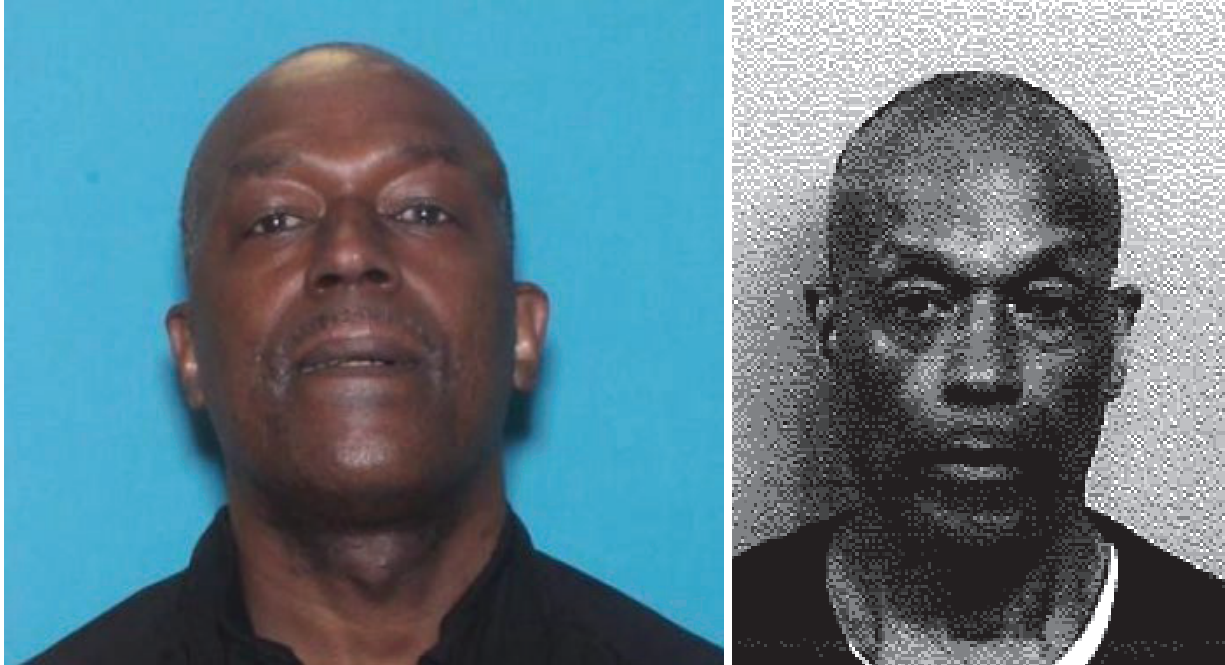
13. Investigators questioned the SISTER regarding BENJAMIN's use of a bedroom in

her home. According to the SISTER, BENJAMIN had slept at Residence 1 the night prior, March 26, 2023. Prior to March 26, BENJAMIN had not stayed at Residence 1 for at least three days. The SISTER indicated BENJAMIN often stayed at his girlfriend's house in Dorchester, and only began staying sporadically in an upstairs bedroom at the SISTER's house approximately one month prior to March 27. BENJAMIN did not pay any rent to his SISTER. BENJAMIN's sister kept her personal belongings in the room that BENJAMIN occasionally slept in, such as home furnishings, and she had access to and entered the room as she wished to retrieve such belongings.

14. The SISTER signed a form providing her consent to search the room that BENJAMIN had slept in on March 26, 2023. Among other items investigators found in the room, investigators discovered black Nike sneakers and a grey hooded sweatshirt, which were similar in appearance the sneakers and sweatshirt worn by ROBBER 1 during the WIRELESS STORE robbery and beforehand on MBTA surveillance video at the Downtown Crossing station. A revolver loaded with seven rounds of ammunition was found inside a black duffel bag in the room. The revolver was a Weihrauch, model HW 51, serial number 715815, which contained .32 caliber Smith & Wesson Long ammunition.

15. BENJAMIN was booked by BPD in District E13, was read and waived his *Miranda* rights in writing, and was interviewed by Boston and Cambridge Police officers and members of the VCTF. Investigators questioned BENJAMIN about the aforementioned robberies involving ROBBER 1, and BENJAMIN denied having committed either robbery.

16. Investigators reviewed BENJAMIN's Massachusetts driver's license photograph (below left) and his booking photographs from March 27, 2023 (below right), which revealed that BENJAMIN resembles ROBBER 1 and the individual captured on MTBA surveillance video at the Downtown Crossing station:



This provides further support for my belief that ROBBER 1 is the same person captured on MBTA surveillance video at the Downtown Crossing station, and is BENJAMIN.

17. Also on March 27, 2023, investigators spoke with BENJAMIN's girlfriend ("the GIRLFRIEND") at her home located at in Dorchester, Massachusetts. She informed investigators that BENJAMIN had some belongings in her room and had been living with her on-and-off since his release from prison. BENJAMIN had stayed with the GIRLFRIEND during the week prior, from Wednesday, March 22, through Friday, March 24, 2023. The GIRLFRIEND was shown an MBTA surveillance video image of the person I believe is ROBBER 1 and she identified him as BENJAMIN.

CONCLUSION

18. Based on the foregoing, I submit that there is probable cause to believe that on or about March 20, 2023, in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, BENJAMIN obstructed, delayed, and affected, and attempted to obstruct, delay, and affect, in any way and degree, commerce and the movement of any article and commodity in commerce, by robbery, as that term is defined in 18


U.S.C. § 1951(b)(1), that is, by unlawfully taking and obtaining property from the person and in the presence of another, against the person's will, by means of actual or threatened force, or violence, or fear of injury, immediate or future, to the person, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1951(a).

Respectfully submitted,



JASON KENTROS
Special Agent, FBI

Sworn to before me via telephone in accordance with
Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 on September 5, 2023.



HONORABLE JUDITH G. DEIN
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE