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NEWS RELEASE
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**STATUS OF THE OFFICER-INVOLVED CRITICAL INCIDENT RESULTING IN THE
DEATH OF SALAYTHIS MELVIN**

ORLANDO, FL – The Office of the State Attorney for the Ninth Judicial Circuit (the “Office”) is actively investigating the deputy-involved shooting that resulted in the death of Mr. Salaythis Melvin on August 7, 2020, outside of Florida Mall.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (“FDLE”) submitted its findings to the Office on November 5, 2020. Upon assuming office on January 5, 2021, State Attorney Monique H. Worrell initiated the process of developing a series of policies for the Ninth Judicial Circuit. The Officer-Involved Critical Incident policy has been created and subsequently shared with law enforcement officials in the Circuit. There were no actions taken by the Office during that time period preceding the State Attorney assuming office.

Investigations of officer-involved critical incidents must be objectively examined. Utilizing an agency not affiliated with the incident will reassure the public that the investigation was conducted without bias or direct connection to the officer(s) involved. As such, the law enforcement agencies in the Ninth Judicial Circuit have designated the FDLE as the independent investigative agency in these incidents. In addition, the Office will conduct an independent investigation alongside FDLE in all future cases.

Having FDLE and the Office involved with the investigations best ensures the integrity of, and public confidence in, whatever conclusions are eventually reached. This is also an important component to protecting the reputation of individual officers and their departments, should the investigation clear law enforcement of any wrongdoing. This will help build community trust, assure transparency, guide community perception, and lend credibility to decisions that the Office must make.

While State Attorney Worrell is the chief state law enforcement official in the Ninth Judicial Circuit, the State Attorney has no administrative authority or control over the personnel of the Orange County Sheriff’s Office or other policing departments within the jurisdiction. We are aware that Orange County Sheriff Deputy James Montiel has returned and resumed his duties with the Sheriff’s Office. As such, any concerns regarding his return will be best addressed with that agency.

This Office strives to maintain independence as we investigate Officer-Involved Critical Incidents. Our review is separate from FDLE’s investigation, and is designed to treat these incidents with the serious, objective, and independent review necessary when any human life is taken.

Our charge is to uphold the law and operate within the confines of justice, and that will never change. We will provide an update to this investigation upon its conclusion.

For general media inquiries, please contact: PIO@sao9.org.

For media records request, please contact: mediarecordsrequest@sao9.org.

For specific media inquiries pertaining to State Attorney Monique Worrell, please contact Keisha Mulfort at kmulfort@sao9.org.