



State of Connecticut

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

ROBERT J. DEVLIN, JR.
INSPECTOR GENERAL

P.O. BOX 460
CHESHIRE, CONNECTICUT 06410
ROBERT.DEVLIN@CT.GOV
Telephone: (203) 806-1595

February 3, 2025

Preliminary Status Report Regarding the Use of Force by the West Haven Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force on January 29, 2025, Resulting in the Death of Aaron Freeman

In accordance with General Statutes §51-277a(a)(5), Inspector General Robert J. Devlin, Jr. submits this preliminary status report regarding the use of deadly force by the West Haven Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Task Force on January 29, 2025. The Office of Inspector General is investigating an officer-involved shooting that resulted in the death of Aaron Freeman, an African-American male, age 35.

According to initial police reports: on January 29, 2025, at approximately 5:30 a.m., West Haven and Task Force officers (TFO) went to premises known as 719 Grand Avenue, Apartment 105, New Haven to execute a search and seizure warrant. Apartment 105 is a two-story townhouse style apartment. The officers assembled outside, knocked on the door, and announced their presence. Upon their initial entry, officers encountered an adult female. Moments later, Aaron Freeman opened fire upon the officers from the first-floor bedroom. One shot struck West Haven Officer Robert Rappa in the calf. Martin Scanlon, a Waterbury Police Officer assigned to the DEA Task Force, pursued Freeman and took cover in the stairwell leading to the second floor. There was an exchange of gunfire between TFO Scanlon and Freeman. The gunfire from the bedroom then stopped.

The police reports further indicate that the officers on scene then waited the arrival of the West Haven Police Department Special Response Team (SRT). The SRT, including West Haven Police Sergeant Joseph Riehl, equipped with safety shields, entered the apartment a second time. As Sergeant Riehl proceeded into the apartment toward Freeman's bedroom, he was struck in the upper leg by a bullet fired by Freeman through the bedroom wall. Sergeant Riehl returned fire.

The Connecticut State Police Central District Major Crime Squad recovered a firearm near Freeman's body.

Officers were wearing body-worn cameras that were activated at the time of the execution of the search warrant. To view the relevant portion of Officer Rappa's body-worn camera, click [here](#). To review TFO Joel Perez's body-worn camera recording, click [here](#).

February 3, 2025

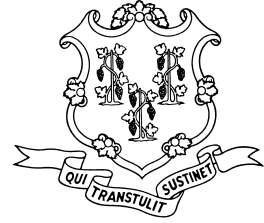
Page 2

To review the relevant portion of TFO Scanlon's body-worn camera recording click [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#). To review Sergeant Riehl's body-worn camera, click [here](#).

On January 30, 2025, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner performed an autopsy of Aaron Freeman. The medical examiner determined the cause of death to be "Homicide" and the manner of death to be "GUNSHOT WOUNDS OF TORSO AND EXTREMITIES." A copy of the Medical Examiner's Notification to Police is [attached](#). As of the date of this report, neither the death certificate nor toxicology results are available.

The Office of Inspector General, West Haven Police Department, Drug Enforcement Administration, New Haven Police Department, Waterbury Police Department, and New Haven Judicial District State's Attorney's Office are conducting the investigation.

State of Connecticut
Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
11 Shuttle Road, Farmington, CT 06032
Telephone: (860) 679-3980



01/30/2025

Office of the Inspector General
State of CT Division of Criminal Justice P.O. Box 460
Cheshire, CT 06410

RE: NOTIFICATION TO POLICE

OCME CASE # 25-02334

PD CASE # IG2025-8

This is to inform you that the cause of death of the following person is as stated below.

Name of the Deceased Aaron Freeman	Found Dead On: 01/29/2025	Autopsy Performed: Yes, 01/30/2025
--	-------------------------------------	--

The cause of death has been certified as:
GUNSHOT WOUNDS OF TORSO AND EXTREMITIES

The manner of death has been certified as: **Homicide**

Sincerely,

James R. Gill, M.D.
Chief Medical Examiner

COMPLETION INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1- Complete as required.
- 2- Make one copy for case file.
- 3- Original to Police Department.



25-02334NOPO