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**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 30, 2021

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**Commonwealth v. Ditron Laquay Thigpen
Convicted Felon Sentenced to 20 Years for Murder and Related Charges**

Colin D. Stolle, Commonwealth's Attorney for the City of Virginia Beach, announced today that Ditron Laquay Thigpen, 29 years old, formerly of the 1200 block of Lynnhaven Parkway, pled guilty to charges of Second Degree Murder, Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Felony (2 counts), Burglary at Nighttime with a Deadly Weapon, and Possession of Firearm by Non-Violent Felon. In accordance with a plea agreement, Circuit Court Judge Steven C. Frucci accepted Thigpen's plea and sentenced him to 63 years in prison with 46 years suspended, leaving seventeen (17) years to serve. Further, Thigpen pled guilty to multiple probation violations and received an additional three (3) years to serve, resulting in a total sentence of twenty (20) years to serve.

Had this matter gone to trial, the Commonwealth's evidence would have proven that on October 5, 2019, there was a large physical altercation between a group of young females on Atlantis Drive in Virginia Beach. Sherman Lane lived on Atlantis Drive and stepped outside to intervene in the altercation. After separating the young females involved in the physical altercation Lane and other family members returned to Lane's apartment.

Ashley Smith, an adult, was involved in the physical altercation and called her boyfriend, Ditron Thigpen, and said Lane struck her during the fight. Around 1:00 a.m., Thigpen came to Lane's apartment complex, called his name, and kicked in his apartment door. As Lane came out of the bedroom, Thigpen shot him one time in the lower abdomen. Thigpen fled the apartment. Rescue personnel responded and pronounced Lane deceased. Police arrested Thigpen a few days later. Thigpen was a convicted felon at the time of the homicide.

Thigpen has prior convictions for Eluding Police, Possession with Intent to Manufacture/Sell Schedule I/II Drug, Obtaining Money by False Pretenses, Attempt to Elude/Escape Police, and Drinking While Driving/Open Container.

Assistant Commonwealth's Attorneys C. Andrew Rice and Alicia M. LeClair prosecuted the case. Please contact Macie Allen if additional information is desired.

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