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NEWS RELEASE

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Lexington Park Man Sentenced to *LIFE* in Prison for First-Degree Murder

LEONARDTOWN, MD (June 8, 2026) – State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced today that Joseph Daren Brooks, Jr., 23, of Lexington Park, Maryland, was sentenced to *LIFE* in prison for the 2024 murder of a 23-year-old man.

On February 26, 2024, deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office responded to reports of shots fired near Fox Ridge Road and Valley Drive in Lexington Park. Upon arrival, they located an unconscious victim in a vehicle suffering from a gunshot wound to the head. The victim ultimately succumbed to his injuries.

Brooks was convicted by a St. Mary's County jury of first-degree murder, use of a firearm in the commission of a violent crime, and illegal possession of a regulated firearm by a disqualified person in November 2025 following a five-day trial.

The Court sentenced Brooks to a total sentence of *LIFE* plus 25 years in prison, with *LIFE* plus five years of active incarceration.

“Our community has no room for gun violence, especially when a senseless pull of the trigger comes at the cost of a life. While this sentence cannot undo the devastation inflicted on the victim's family, it guarantees that this dangerous offender is removed from our streets,” said State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling. “My office remains steadfast in our commitment to keeping our community safe, and those who choose to bring deadly violence into St. Mary's County will spend the rest of their lives answering for it.”

Senior Assistant State's Attorney Alena Mosier and Assistant State's Attorney Shaye Reynolds prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of St. Mary's County.

Detective Warren Forinash of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office was the lead investigator.

The Honorable Joseph Stanalonis presided over the case.

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