

PROBABLE CAUSE STATEMENT

Date: 05/06/2025

Report #: 2025-26398

I, Steve Breshears, a Detective with the Independence, Missouri Police Department, knowing that false statements on this form are punishable by law, state that the facts contained herein are true.

1. I have probable cause to believe that on 05/05/2025 at 2046 hours, Mekai Kelly-James, committed one or more criminal offenses in Jackson County, Missouri.
2. The facts supporting this belief are as follows:

On May 5, 2025, officers were dispatched to the [REDACTED] located at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in Independence, Missouri, following multiple reports of gunfire. Upon arrival, officers observed a chaotic scene with patrons fleeing the area and signs of a recent disturbance inside the business.

In front of a nearby business, [REDACTED], officers located two male security guards physically detaining a male suspect later identified as Mekai Kelly-James. He was taken into custody without further incident. While being escorted to a patrol vehicle, Kelly-James made

multiple spontaneous statements including, "They just jumped me in the club and I started shooting back, bro," and "I only shot out of self-defense." Officers noted visible facial injuries on Kelly-James consistent with physical assault.

Victim 1, an armed security guard, was located nearby with a gunshot wound to the left leg. Victim 1 reported that he and other security staff had been breaking up a fight inside the club involving several patrons, including Kelly-James. Kelly-James was escorted out of the building. Moments later, Victim 1 observed Kelly-James at a vehicle retrieving a firearm. According to Victim 1, Kelly-James then began firing into the air and subsequently toward security staff. Victim 1 and another security guard, hereafter Victim 2, both returned fire in self-defense. Victim 1 sustained a leg wound during the exchange. Both security guards stated they issued commands for Kelly-James to drop his weapon before returning fire. Victim 1 ultimately tackled Kelly-James near the adjacent business and successfully disarmed him.

Witness 1, a business co-owner, and Witness 2, a third security guard, both corroborated that Kelly-James discharged a firearm recklessly in the parking lot,

initially into the air and then toward bystanders and building occupants. Several civilian vehicles were damaged by gunfire, including a Chevrolet Malibu occupied by Victim 3, a female who narrowly avoided injury when a bullet penetrated her windshield. Approximately 75 shell casings were recovered at the scene, indicating extensive gunfire. Additionally, multiple bullet holes were observed on the east side of the nightclub, including damage to window frames and interior furnishings consistent with rounds fired from the area where Kelly-James had been positioned.

A Glock 22 .40 caliber pistol with an extended magazine was recovered from Kelly-James at the scene. A check of the firearm revealed it had been reported stolen out of Kansas City under [REDACTED]. On May 6, 2025, Detective Todd Winborn retrieved and test-fired the weapon. The pistol had been modified with a metal bar affixed to the rear slide, interfering with the internal components and altering the weapon's firing mechanism. The firearm exhibited erratic and dangerous discharge behavior, including firing multiple rounds without trigger reset and, at times, functioning in a fully automatic capacity. The test fire was recorded and preserved as evidence.

On May 6, 2025, Detectives Winborn and Breshears attempted to interview Mekai Kelly-James in custody. After being advised of his Miranda rights, Kelly-James invoked his right to counsel and no further questioning occurred.

Detective Steve Breshears

/s/ Detective Steve Breshears

Print Name

Signature