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## ***NEWS RELEASE –***

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### **Denver Jury Finds Christopher Smith Guilty of Murder in National Western Complex Stabbing Incident**

**DENVER**—After deliberating for approximately two and a half hours on Friday, A Denver jury found Christopher Smith (age 40) guilty of murder in the second degree. On June 23, 2020 the Denver District Attorney [announced charges had been filed against Smith](#) in connection with an incident at the National Western Complex. During the COVID-19 pandemic the complex was being used as a shelter and Smith and then 21-year old Jared Villaluz-Jones were staying there when Smith fatally stabbed Villaluz-Jones in the neck.

In reaction to the hearing the verdict, Mr. Villaluz-Jones’ parents said, “We ask you to take note of what you hold dear. We ask you to hug your children. We all must do what we can to keep each other safe.”

The incident began after the Villaluz-Jones cut in front of Smith who was in line for the shower and continued in the dormitory area of the facility. Witnesses report that a verbal altercation ensued and Smith pulled out a knife and began stabbing the deceased. Villaluz-Jones was pronounced dead at Denver Health Medical Center later that same night.

Smith will be sentenced on September 17, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. This is Denver District Court case number 20CR03674.

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The filing of a criminal charge is merely a formal accusation that an individual(s) committed a crime(s) under Colorado laws. A defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. See Colo. RPC 3.6