

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. I, the affiant, is a detective with the Norfolk Police Department (NPD) and have been since June 2019. I am currently assigned to Narcotics Trafficking Team One (NTTO) of the Vice and Narcotics Division which investigates violations of law in regards to the sale and movement of narcotics within and outside of the state. As a detective with the NTTO, I have executed seventy-eight drug-related search warrants resulting in the seizure of approximately three tons of illegal drugs in total and the conviction of eighty-two offenders. I have also collaborated with the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) on twelve separate cases. Prior to being a Detective with the NPD, I served at the San Diego Police Department (SDPD) as a Detective in the Drug Enforcement Team (DET) investigating various drug-related crimes for three years and as a patrol officer assigned to the Downtown San Diego area for three years. As part of the DET, I am a graduate of the Narcotics Investigation Program, Drugs and Organized Crime Program, and Narcotics Medical Response Training Program. As part of state requirements, I underwent Peace Officer Basic Training, Field Training Program, and Continuing Professional Training at the San Diego Police & Fire Training Center. I graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice in 2013. As a law enforcement officer, I have conducted countless investigations that consisted of physical and electronic surveillance, questioning of witnesses, working with confidential informants, executing search and arrest warrants, and gathering intelligence. As a law enforcement officer, I have the authority to investigate violations of the law and to execute search and seizure warrants.
2. This affidavit is in support of violations of the Virginia Code § 18.2-248 which prohibits the manufacturing, sale, distribution, giving and possession of a controlled substance and Virginia Code § 18.2-248.01 which prohibits the transportation of controlled substances into the Commonwealth.

## TERMS/DEFINITIONS

1. **SNAPCHAT:**  
Snapchat is a messaging app created by Snap Inc. in 2011 whose features allows messages which can consist of texts, photos or videos to be seen by the recipient for a short period of time.
2. **INSTAGRAM:**  
Instagram is a social media platform owned by Meta Platforms Inc. that allows users to upload photos and videos to be shared publicly or to their followers.
3. **HapE:**  
HapE is a new street drug that has had a surge in popularity among college-aged individuals and is a combination of ketamine, ecstasy and methamphetamine.
4. **Internet Protocol Address (IP address):**  
IP address is a unique number that is assigned to a device that connects to the Internet using Internet Protocol.
5. **Bitcoin:**

Bitcoin is a type of cryptocurrency that is difficult to trace which makes it a favored currency to be used in criminal activities.

#### PROBABLE CAUSE

On September 06, 2024, paramedics and Norfolk Police Department were called to a parking lot located on Hampton Blvd. and W 48th St. regarding a suspected overdose. The individual named Michael Price, was announced dead at the scene. Among the individual's possessions was a small clear bag of red pills which were marked with a smile. The autopsy of Mr. Price revealed he had a blend of ketamine, ecstasy and methamphetamine in his system which was supported by the drug testing of the pills that were in his possession.

Contact and questioning of a confidential informant who will be referred to as CI One confirmed the spread of a new street drug matching the description of the pills found in Mr. Price's possession. According to CI One the new street drug is being referred to as HapE. CI One has been a confidential informant for the NPD's Vice and Narcotics Division since 2018 and I, the affiant, has worked with CI One since 2019. Information shared by CI One has helped in several arrests and convictions.

Review of Mr. Price's public social media accounts revealed a photo shared on Instagram taken at a nearby bar from the scene called The Edge. The photo included Mr. Price with four other individuals that were also tagged in the photo. All other individuals in the photo were questioned by Detective Smith and Detective Torres regarding how the drugs ended up in Mr. Price's possession. One individual, who will be referred to as Witness A, shared that Mr. Price regularly received Snapchat messages on Fridays that showed the location where the transaction for drugs will be held.

On September 24, 2024, a subpoena was issued to Snapchat to obtain pen register information regarding Mr. Price's Snapchat account. Review of the records corroborated Witness A's statement and revealed the sender's account is registered under the name of John Smith using the email sm!le@gmail.com and IP address of 192.168.191.001. A subsequent subpoena was issued to view records of the Snapchat account which revealed messages were sent to multiple individuals who had been arrested for possession. A warrant was issued and executed to trace the IP address 192.168.191.001 which revealed a location fifty meters from the premises to be searched.

Additional questioning of CI One revealed the premises to be searched is a known location for drug operations. I, Detective Castro, conducted physical surveillance along with Detective Smith of the premises over the course of four weeks taking note of individuals entering and exiting the premises. One individual who was seen at the location is a confidential informant to be referred to as CI B. CI B has been a confidential informant for the NPD for the past ten years and has helped in intelligence gathering regarding organized crime and drug trafficking. According to CI B, the location received a large shipment of cocaine from outside of the state recently and another shipment is scheduled in the future.

Another individual seen at the location is a long-term undercover detective referred to as Detective A. Detective A has been undercover for ten years to monitor organized drug trafficking and distribution in Norfolk. Detective A has been undercover within an organization simply known as The Corporation for eight years and has worked to a position that is knowledgeable of the organization's operations and future transactions. Detective A corroborated CI B's statement regarding a recent shipment of drugs into the organization as well as the future shipment. According to Detective A, the organization received twenty kilograms of cocaine on November 21, 2024 which was paid for using the cryptocurrency, Bitcoin. Detective A also informed Norfolk Police Department of the recent sale of drugs by the organization on November 22, 2024 amounting to \$500,000 and the ongoing production of HapE to fulfill a future transaction. The statement by Detective A also covered aspects of the organization's operations including the use of cell phones to contact buyers on Snapchat and the existence of a laptop that is solely used for cryptocurrency transactions. Ongoing physical surveillance of the location by Detective Smith and Detective Torres indicates the illegal substances and cash has not been moved and are still held in the premises to be searched.

Based on Detective A's statement and intelligence gathered in the investigation into Michael Price's death, there is probable cause to believe a search of the premises located at 1097 Norview Avenue, Norfolk, Virginia 23513 will produce at least twenty kilograms of cocaine, \$500,000 in cash, a cellular phone with the IP address of 192.168.191.001 and a laptop containing cryptocurrency transaction records that will prove illegal substances have been transported into the Commonwealth and are being sold to the residents of Norfolk.

### CONCLUSION

I submit that this affidavit supports probable cause for a search warrant to search the mentioned premises to find illegal substances, communication devices such as phones and laptops, and cash that is evidence a crime has been committed.

Respectfully submitted,

Angelica Castro

Detective

Norfolk Police Department