

COPY

CAUSE NO. 1651903

THE STATE OF TEXAS
VS.
MICHAEL SYKES

§ IN THE 262ND DISTRICT COURT
§ OF HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS
§ OCTOBER TERM, A. D., 2025

Members of the Jury:

The defendant, Michael Sykes, stands charged by indictment with the offense of capital murder, alleged to have been committed on or about the 4th day of September, 2019, in Harris County, Texas. The defendant has pleaded not guilty.

A person commits the offense of murder if he intentionally or knowingly causes the death of an individual.

A person commits the offense of capital murder if he intentionally commits murder, as hereinbefore defined, in the course of committing or attempting to commit the offense of robbery.

A person commits the offense of felony murder if he commits or attempts to commit a felony, other than manslaughter, and in the course of and in furtherance of the commission or attempt, or in immediate flight from the commission or attempt, he commits or attempts to commit an act clearly dangerous to human life that causes the death of an individual.

A person commits the offense of robbery if, in the course of committing theft, as that term is hereinafter defined, and with intent to obtain or maintain control of property of another, he:

(1) intentionally or knowingly causes bodily injury to another;

or

(2) intentionally or knowingly threatens or places another in fear of imminent bodily injury or death.

"In the course of committing theft" means conduct that occurs in an attempt to commit, during the commission, or in the immediate flight after the attempt or commission of theft.

"Attempt" to commit an offense occurs if, with specific intent to commit an offense, a person does an act amounting to more than mere preparation that tends, but fails, to effect the commission of the offense intended.

"Theft" is the unlawful appropriation of property with intent to deprive the owner of property.

"Appropriation" and "appropriate", as those terms are used herein, means to acquire or otherwise exercise control over property other than real property. Appropriation of property is unlawful if it is without the owner's effective consent.

"Property" as used herein means tangible or intangible personal property including anything severed from land; or documents, including money that represents or embodies anything of value.

"Deprive" means to withhold property from the owner permanently or for so extended a period of time that a major portion of the value or enjoyment of the property is lost to the owner.

"Effective consent" means assent in fact, whether express or apparent, and includes consent by a person legally authorized to act for the owner. Consent is not effective if induced by deception or coercion.

"Owner" means a person who has title to the property, possession of the property, or a greater right to possession of the property than the actor.

"Possession" means actual care, custody, control, or management of the property.

"Deadly weapon" means a firearm or anything manifestly designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting death or serious bodily injury; or anything that in the manner of its use or intended use is capable of causing death or serious bodily injury.

"Bodily injury" means physical pain, illness, or any impairment of physical condition.

"Serious bodily injury" means bodily injury that creates a substantial risk of death or that causes death, serious permanent disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member or organ.

The definition of intentionally relative to the offense of capital murder is as follows:

A person acts intentionally, or with intent, with respect to a result of his conduct when it is his conscious objective or desire to cause the result.

The definitions of intentionally or knowingly relative to the offense of bodily injury robbery are as follow:

A person acts intentionally, or with intent, with respect to the result of his conduct when it is his conscious objective or desire to cause the result.

A person acts knowingly, or with knowledge, with respect to a result of his conduct when he is aware that his conduct is reasonably certain to cause the result.

The definitions of intentionally or knowingly relative to the offense of threaten robbery are as follow:

A person acts intentionally, or with intent, with respect to the nature of his conduct when it is his conscious objective or desire to engage in the conduct.

A person acts knowingly, or with knowledge, with respect to the nature of his conduct when he is aware of the nature of his conduct.

A person is criminally responsible as a party to an offense if the offense is committed by his own conduct, by the conduct of another for which he is criminally responsible, or by both. Each party to an offense may be charged with the commission of the offense.

A person is criminally responsible for an offense committed by the conduct of another if, acting with intent to promote or assist the commission of the offense, he solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid the other person to commit the offense. Mere presence alone will not constitute one a party to an offense.

If, in the attempt to carry out a conspiracy to commit one felony, another felony is committed by one of the conspirators, all conspirators are guilty of the felony actually committed, though having no intent to commit it, if the offense was committed in furtherance of the unlawful purpose and was one that should

have been anticipated as a result of the carrying out of the conspiracy,
"Conspiracy" means an agreement between two or more persons to commit a felony. An agreement constituting a conspiracy may be inferred from acts of the parties.

Before you would be warranted in finding the defendant guilty of capital murder, you must find from the evidence beyond a reasonable doubt not only that on or about the 4th day of September, 2019, the defendant, Michael Sykes, was in the course of committing or attempting to commit the felony offense of robbery of Christian Lezama, as alleged in the indictment, but also that the defendant specifically intended to cause the death of Christian Lezama, by shooting Christian Lezama, with a deadly weapon, namely a firearm; or you must find from the evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant, Michael Sykes, with the intent to promote or assist in the commission of the offense of robbery, if any, solicited, encouraged, directed, aided, or attempted to aid Jourdan Ellison, and/or Deric Williams in shooting Christian Lezama, with a deadly weapon, with the defendant's intention of thereby killing Christian Lezama; or you must find from the evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that on or about the 4th day of September, 2019, the defendant, Michael Sykes, entered into an agreement with Jourdan Ellison, and/or Deric Williams to commit the felony offense of robbery of Christian Lezama, as alleged in the indictment, and pursuant to that agreement they did carry out their conspiracy, and while in the course of committing said conspiracy, Jourdan Ellison and/or Deric Williams intentionally caused the death of

Christian Lezama by shooting Christian Lezama with a deadly weapon, namely a firearm, and the murder of Christian Lezama was committed in furtherance of the conspiracy and was an offense that should have been anticipated by the defendant as a result of carrying out the conspiracy, and unless you so find, then you cannot convict the defendant of the offense of capital murder.

Now, if you find from the evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that on or about the 4th day of September, 2019, in Harris County, Texas, the defendant, Michael Sykes, did then and there unlawfully, while in the course of committing or attempting to commit the robbery of Christian Lezama, intentionally cause the death of Christian Lezama by shooting Christian Lezama with a deadly weapon, namely a firearm; or

If you find from the evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that on or about the 4th day of September, 2019, in Harris County, Texas, Jourdan Ellison, and/or Deric Williams, and/or Michael Sykes did then and there unlawfully, while in the course of committing or attempting to commit the robbery of Christian Lezama, intentionally cause the death of Christian Lezama by shooting Christian Lezama with a deadly weapon, namely a firearm, and that the defendant, Michael Sykes, with the intent to promote or assist the commission of the offense of capital murder, if any, solicited, encouraged, directed, aided or attempted to aid Jourdan Ellison, and/or Deric Williams to commit the offense of capital murder, if he did; or

If you find from the evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant, Michael Sykes, Jourdan Ellison, and/or Deric

Williams entered into an agreement to commit the felony offense of robbery of Christian Lezama, and pursuant to that agreement, if any, they did carry out their conspiracy and that in Harris County, Texas, on or about the 4th day of September, 2019, while in the course of committing such robbery of Christian Lezama, Jourdan Ellison, and/or Deric Williams intentionally caused the death of Christian Lezama by shooting Christian Lezama with a deadly weapon, namely a firearm, and the capital murder of Christian Lezama was committed in furtherance of the conspiracy and was an offense that should have been anticipated by the defendant as a result of carrying out the conspiracy, then you will find the defendant guilty of capital murder, as charged in the indictment.

Unless you so find from the evidence beyond a reasonable doubt, or if you have a reasonable doubt thereof, you will acquit the defendant of capital murder and you will next consider whether the defendant is guilty of the lesser offense of Felony Murder.

Therefore, if you find from the evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that on or about the 4th day of September, 2019, in Harris County, Texas, the defendant, Michael Sykes, did then and there unlawfully, while in the furtherance of the commission or attempted commission of the felony of robbery of Christian Lezama, or in immediate flight from the commission or attempted commission of the felony of robbery of Christian Lezama, commit an act clearly dangerous to human life, to-wit: by shooting Christian Lezama with a deadly weapon, namely a firearm, that caused the death of Christian Lezama; or

If you find from the evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that on or about the 4th day of September, 2019, in Harris County, Texas, Jourdan Ellison and/or Deric Williams, did then and there unlawfully, while in the furtherance of the commission or attempted commission of the felony of robbery of Christian Lezama, or in immediate flight from the commission or attempted commission of the felony of robbery of Christian Lezama, commit an act clearly dangerous to human life, to-wit: by shooting Christian Lezama with a deadly weapon, namely a firearm, that caused the death of Christian Lezama, and that the defendant, Michael Sykes, with the intent to promote or assist the commission of the offense, if any, solicited, encouraged, directed, aided or attempted to aid Jourdan Ellison, and/or Deric Williams to commit the offense, if he did; or

If you find from the evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant, Michael Sykes, Jourdan Ellison, and/or Deric Williams entered into an agreement to commit the felony offense of robbery of Christian Lezama, and pursuant to that agreement, if any, they did carry out their conspiracy and that in Harris County, Texas, on or about the 4th day of September, 2019, while in the course of committing such robbery of Christian Lezama, Jourdan Ellison and/or Deric Williams committed an act clearly dangerous to human life that caused the death of Christian Lezama by shooting Christian Lezama with a deadly weapon, namely a firearm, and that the murder of Christian Lezama was committed in furtherance of the conspiracy and was an offense that should have been anticipated by

the defendant as a result of carrying out the conspiracy, then you will find the defendant guilty of felony murder.

If you have a reasonable doubt as to whether the defendant is guilty of any offense defined in this charge you will acquit the defendant and say by your verdict "Not Guilty."

Our law provides that a defendant may testify in his own behalf if he elects to do so. This, however, is a right accorded a defendant, and in the event he elects not to testify, that fact cannot be taken as a circumstance against him.

In this case, the defendant has elected not to testify and you are instructed that you cannot and must not refer to or allude to that fact throughout your deliberations or take it into consideration for any purpose whatsoever as a circumstance against him.

If any among you mentions or refers to the Defendant's election not to testify, you are instructed to tell the juror to stop immediately. If the juror persists, you are to inform the court in writing.

A Grand Jury indictment is the means whereby a defendant is brought to trial in a felony prosecution. It is not evidence of guilt nor can it be considered by you in passing upon the question of guilt of the defendant. The burden of proof in all criminal cases rests upon the State throughout the trial and never shifts to the defendant.

All persons are presumed to be innocent and no person may be convicted of an offense unless each element of the offense is proved beyond a reasonable doubt. The fact that he has been arrested, confined, or indicted for, or otherwise charged with the offense gives rise to no inference of guilt at his trial. The law does not require a defendant to prove his innocence or produce any evidence at all. The presumption of innocence alone is sufficient to acquit the defendant, unless the jurors are satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt of the defendant's guilt after careful and impartial consideration of all the evidence in the case.

The prosecution has the burden of proving the defendant guilty and it must do so by proving each and every element of the offense charged beyond a reasonable doubt and if it fails to do so, you must acquit the defendant.

It is not required that the prosecution prove guilt beyond all possible doubt; it is required that the prosecution's proof excludes all reasonable doubt concerning the defendant's guilt.

You are the exclusive judges of the facts proved, of the credibility of the witnesses and the weight to be given their testimony, but the law you shall receive in these written instructions, and you must be governed thereby.

After you retire to the jury room, you should select one of your members as your Foreperson. It is his or her duty to preside at your deliberations, vote with you, and when you have unanimously agreed upon a verdict, to certify to your verdict by using the appropriate form attached hereto and signing the same as Foreperson.

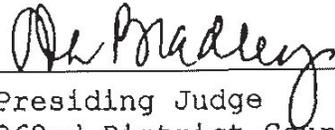
During your deliberations in this case, you must not consider, discuss, nor relate any matters not in evidence before you. You should not consider nor mention any personal knowledge or information you may have about any fact or person connected with this case which is not shown by the evidence.

No one has any authority to communicate with you except the officer who has you in charge. After you have retired, you may communicate with this Court in writing through this officer. Any communication relative to the cause must be written, prepared and signed by the Foreperson and shall be submitted to the court through this officer. Do not attempt to talk to the officer who has you in charge, or the attorneys, or the Court, or anyone else concerning any questions you may have.

Your sole duty at this time is to determine the guilt or innocence of the defendant under the indictment in this cause and restrict your deliberations solely to the issue of whether the State has proven the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Your verdict must be by a unanimous vote of all members of the jury.

Following the arguments of counsel, you will retire to consider your verdict.



Presiding Judge
262nd District Court
Harris County, TEXAS

FILED

Marilyn Burgess
District Clerk

OCT 23 2025

Time: 0929
Harris County, Texas

By: [Signature]
Deputy