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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INVESTIGATION OF OFFICER-INVOLVED SHOOTING IN PLYMOUTH TOWNSHIP CONCLUDES; OFFICERS CLEARED IN USE OF FORCE

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (Sept. 3, 2021)—Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele announced today that the investigation of the Aug. 3, 2021 fatal shooting of an armed man by two Plymouth Township police officers was a lawful use of force.

The independent investigation of the shooting was conducted by the Montgomery County Detective Bureau, as is normal procedure for officer-involved shootings in Montgomery County. The Plymouth Township Police Department and the officers involved cooperated with the investigation. As part of the investigation, County Detectives interviewed numerous witnesses, obtained multiple videos and an audio recording, recovered multiple 911 calls, collected on-scene evidence and evaluated ballistic evidence.

The investigation found that Plymouth Township Police were dispatched at 11:10 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 3, 2021 to the Plymouth Garden Apartments on Fayette Street in Conshohocken after the 911 call center received a call about a female family member—22-year-old Michael Paone—who had a knife, had “jumped” her and cut her. She reported Michael was going to stab his mother. Two minutes later at 11:12 p.m., a second 911 call came in from a neighboring resident who said a woman had been stabbed, and she said her son had stabbed her. At 11:15 p.m., a third 911 call came in from a man who, when rendering aid to a female stabbed by her son, saw a male walking outside holding a gun. The 911 caller then reported “shots fired.”

Two uniformed Plymouth Township Police Officers arrived on scene, and a witness told them a male had a handgun. Officers encountered Paone in the grass area outside of the apartment building. Both officers immediately began issuing loud, clear verbal commands to him, saying: “Drop the gun,” “Step away from the gun,” and “Step back.” Paone ignored the police officers' verbal commands and extended his right arm straight out pointing the gun directly at one of the officers. Both officers fired their weapons at Paone, who fell to the ground. While he was on the ground, officers again commanded Paone to “Drop the gun.” Paone ignored their commands, sat up and extended the gun again toward the officers. He was shot again. Three officers then rendered aid to Paone. Paone was transported to Suburban Community Hospital

where he was pronounced dead. A loaded black Crossman Vigilante C02 Air Pistol, a .357 double action, semi-auto revolver, with a six steel-rifled barrel was recovered near Paone.

At the same time, other officers from Plymouth Township Police Department and Conshohocken Borough Police Department as well as civilians rendered aid to Paone's mother, who suffered numerous stab wounds. She was transported to Lankenau Hospital for treatment and is recovering from her injuries.

On Aug. 4, 2021, an autopsy was performed on the body of Michael Paone by Dr. Gregory McDonald, a forensic pathologist with the Montgomery County Coroner's Office. Dr. McDonald opined that Paone died of multiple gunshot wounds. Five projectiles were recovered from his body.

"Police arrived at the Plymouth Gardens Apartments after multiple reports of a serious stabbing and a male with a gun. They immediately encountered the male and issued verbal commands for him to drop his weapon. But Michael Paone repeatedly took a shooting position and aimed the gun at the officers, while there were numerous bystanders in the area," said Steele. "The Plymouth Township Police Officers acted by discharging their firearms to put a stop to what they believed was a lethal threat to themselves and to surrounding bystanders. Our investigation determined the facts of this case supported the use of deadly force."

In Pennsylvania, the use of deadly force by a law enforcement officer is governed by Section 508 of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code. A law enforcement officer is "justified in using deadly force only when he believes that such force is necessary to prevent death or serious bodily injury to himself or such other person..." 18 Pa.C.S.A. §508(a). In addition, the use of deadly force by law enforcement officers is justified to defeat...the escape of a person who possesses a deadly weapon, or otherwise indicates that he will endanger human life or inflict serious bodily injury unless arrested without delay. 18 Pa.C.S.A. §508(a)(1)(i)(ii).

Approved for release:

Kevin R. Steele