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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARREST WARRANT ISSUED FOR RAFIQ THOMPSON OF PHILADELPHIA FOR MURDER IN UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP



RAFIQ THOMPSON

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (April 9, 2022) — Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele and Upper Merion Police Chief Thomas Nolan announce that an arrest warrant has been issued for Rafiq Thompson, 38, of North 47th Street in Philadelphia. Thompson is wanted for First-Degree Murder, Person Not to Possess a Firearm and other charges related to killing 31-year-old Tamara Cornelius while she was pumping gas at a gas station in Upper Merion Township.

At approximately 10:22 p.m., Upper Merion Township Police were dispatched to the Exxon Station at 113 N. Gulph Road for a report of shots fired. They arrived to find Tamara Cornelius lying in the gas station parking lot suffering from multiple gunshot wounds. She was transported to Paoli Hospital, where she was pronounced dead at 11:09 p.m. An autopsy is scheduled for Monday by the Chester County Coroner's Office.

A joint homicide investigation was launched by Upper Merion Township Police and the Montgomery County Detective Bureau. Detectives processed the scene and found four 9 mm cartridge casings and a take-out bag from The Cheesecake Factory on front seat of the victim's car. The investigation revealed that

the defendant and victim had a prior relationship and that the two had met and talked briefly at 9:11 p.m. before she went in to have dinner at The Cheesecake Factory. The investigation revealed the victim left the restaurant at 10:15 p.m., walked to the parking garage, then drove to the Exxon station. The defendant followed her. While Cornelius is pumping gas, Thompson steps out of his car, spoke to the victim and then shot her. He continued to shoot her as she attempted to get away.

Thompson is to be considered armed and dangerous as the firearm was not recovered at the scene. Thompson is Black, stands 5-feet, 7-inches tall, and weighs approximately 167 pounds. If Thompson is spotted, call 911 immediately.

For tips about Thompson's whereabouts, the public is asked to call Upper Merion Township Police at 610-265-3232 or the Montgomery County Detectives' Tip Line at 610-278-DOIT (3638). Anonymous text tips can be submitted using MontcoCrimeTips on the STOPit! app. The STOPit! app can be downloaded for free from the App Store for iPhones or Google Play for Androids, then use code MONTCOPA to get the Montgomery County version of the app.

Approved for release:
Kevin R. Steele

CRIMINAL CHARGES, AND ANY DISCUSSION THEREOF, ARE MERELY ALLEGATIONS AND ALL DEFENDANTS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL AND UNLESS PROVEN GUILTY.