

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA  
21-01099-CF  
SECTION M

STATE OF FLORIDA

Vs.

CORNELIUS TREVON WHITFIELD Person ID: 1566510,  
Defendant.

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DEPOSITION OF SCOTT FRANKLAND

Taken on Behalf of the Defendant

DATE: March 18, 2025

TIME: 1:00 p.m. to 1:24 p.m.

PLACE: Pinellas County Justice Center  
14250 49th Street North  
Clearwater, Florida 33762

Examination of the witness taken before:

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 THE REPORTER: We are on the record. Today  
3 is March 18th, 2025 and the time is 1:00 p.m.

4 Mr. Frankland, please raise your right hand.  
5 THEREUPON,

6 SCOTT FRANKLAND  
7 was called as a witness and after having been first  
8 duly sworn, was deposed and testified as follows:

9 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

10 You may begin.

11 DIRECT EXAMINATION

12 BY MS. RUSSELL:

13 Q. Is it Mr. Frankland?

14 A. Whatever you want to call it. You can call me  
15 Scott if you want.

16 Q. Oh. Well, that (cross talk) --

17 A. Technician Frankland.

18 Q. -- familiar after 24 years of --

19 A. You know, it's -- it's up to you, you know?

20 Q. Mr. Frankland, my name is Margaret Russell,  
21 and I'm here with my cocounsel Julia Seifer-Smith and  
22 Lamark McGreen. We are here to ask you some questions  
23 for your deposition today.

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. And I'd like to start by asking you to

1 introduce yourself to the court reporter and spell your  
2 last name please.

3 A. My name is Scott Frankland. My last name is  
4 spelled F-R-A-N-K-L-A-N-D. I'm a forensic crime scene  
5 investigator with St. Petersburg Police Department.  
6 I've been doing that just over 24 years. I went to St.  
7 Petersburg College, graduated from their forensic crime  
8 scene technology program. Shortly after graduation, I  
9 got hired by St. Pete and have been employed with them  
10 in the crime scene unit the whole time. And over the  
11 years, just been sent through schools and on-the-job  
12 training to keep up with everything and to stay  
13 certified, and I've been doing it ever since.

14 Q. Excellent. That made my job easy.

15 A. I've been doing it awhile.

16 Q. May I start by asking you what you did to  
17 prepare for your deposition?

18 A. I looked over my reports, of course. I -- I  
19 have two documented reports that I typed. And then I  
20 looked over my photographs, and then I looked over some  
21 of the FARO scans that I did -- the three dimensional  
22 documentation scans.

23 Q. And how long in total did it take for you to  
24 prepare today?

25 A. Probably a couple hours just to look over it

1 and double-check, make sure I know what's going on with  
2 the case and what I did.

3 Q. And is there anything else that you need to  
4 review in order to give testimony today?

5 A. No, I'm pretty good. I'm going to have to  
6 probably look at the report because there is a lot of  
7 stuff that I did, and it's hard to recall from memory  
8 everything, but I'll do my best.

9 Q. That sounds good. There were two cases  
10 involving the same defendant, Mr. Whitfield. And today  
11 we're just going to talk about case number 21-01099-CF,  
12 which is your report number 2021004037.

13 A. Gotcha. Okay.

14 Q. So all of the materials that you reviewed only  
15 had to do with that case today, and I'm going to  
16 confine my questions to that case.

17 A. That's correct. I don't know if I had any  
18 involvement in the other one, but I know I had the  
19 involvement with the 21-4037.

20 Q. Excellent. I'd like to ask you a few  
21 follow-up questions about your training.

22 A. Sure.

23 Q. And you gave me a lot of the basics. But I'd  
24 like to ask when you first became certified to use the  
25 FARO.

1           A. I don't know what year it was. We did all the  
2   certification through one of our lead crime scene  
3   technicians. He is a certified FARO instructor, and  
4   he's the one that was giving the classes on certifying  
5   us for the FARO. And I don't know when exactly that  
6   was.

7           Q. Which is a fair answer. And if you don't have  
8   any recollection, that's fine for my purposes.

9           A. Okay.

10          Q. But maybe you could give me a ballpark. Have  
11   you been certified for 10 years, 5 years, two months,  
12   something like that?

13          A. It's -- it's probably been -- I don't know --  
14   five years, six years maybe. It's been a while. And  
15   he constantly -- we do training with him a couple times  
16   a year with it. But I think ever since we got the  
17   machine and then we started getting -- you know, saying  
18   that we've been through the school and instructed, it's  
19   been at least six years.

20          Q. Do you like the FARO technology?

21          A. I do, yes. Yeah.

22          Q. And what about your other certifications?  
23   What else are you certified in?

24          A. Just not really, like, certifications, but  
25   just classes that I've done to -- gone to. It's just

1 we're not -- I don't hold a certification like a police  
2 officer does. So it's just we get put through  
3 training. We'll do certain trainings, and then just  
4 the typical you've -- you've gone through the training,  
5 and then you sign off on it, so.

6 Q. And is there --

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. -- is there any other standard or any other  
9 agency that gives you a certification or says you're  
10 good to go in terms of processing evidence?

11 A. Not that I -- I don't know.

12 Q. Do you think any of your colleagues have any  
13 certifications like that?

14 A. They've probably just -- he has the  
15 certification to be an instructor or to teach the FARO.  
16 We have the NIBIN training for the -- the shell casings  
17 and for the -- for the casings. So we have people that  
18 are certified to use that machine and do stuff like  
19 that.

20 Q. Okay. And have you done any teaching  
21 yourself?

22 A. No.

23 Q. All right. I want to talk to you about your  
24 involvement in -- I'm just referring to your report --  
25 in case number 2021004037. Tell me how you first



1 became involved in the case.

2 A. I was just working that day and got in contact  
3 with our communication center. And I guess it was they  
4 had had a homicide. And then my sergeant says, "You're  
5 going to work it," and you go out and work it.

6 Q. Who was your sergeant at the time?

7 A. That would've been -- it should be Sergeant  
8 Cluster.

9 Q. So did you first speak to Sergeant Cluster, or  
10 were you dispatched via the radio?

11 A. It probably came in through the sergeant that  
12 there was a homicide, and then he makes a determination  
13 on what's going to happen.

14 Q. Did you learn anything about exactly what had  
15 happened?

16 A. No, not -- not until I got there.

17 Q. Okay. What first happened when you arrived?

18 A. I'd met with Detective Mallory Webster, and  
19 then Christina Kenney was there too.

20 Q. What did they tell you?

21 A. There was a homicide, and it appeared someone  
22 was shot.

23 Q. Did they tell you anything else?

24 A. I don't know. That's about it.

25 Q. So what did you do first in order to process

1 the scene?

2 A. Well, we did -- we were waiting on a search  
3 warrant, so we did everything outside of the apartment,  
4 and that's where I took the overall photographs outside  
5 of the apartment complex -- that building. And then I  
6 did the FARO scans from the outside and waited for the  
7 search warrant to get read.

8 Q. So tell me, who is it who's telling you where  
9 to go and what to do? Is that a matter of your  
10 personal judgment when you arrive on the crime scene,  
11 or --

12 A. Or --

13 Q. -- is somebody directing you and saying, "FARO  
14 over here by this tree. FARO over here"?

15 A. No, it's all just my experience in where I  
16 decide to take my photographs from and how to document  
17 the scene.

18 Q. So did you get any instructions from the  
19 detectives?

20 A. I mean, when they said that they want FARO, I  
21 just say, "Okay." I know how FARO works. I know how  
22 the distances -- it needs to be. I know what it's  
23 going to capture. Just like I know when I take my  
24 pictures, I know what it's going to capture and the  
25 angles and stuff I need to be at to capture the scene.

1 Q. So the detectives really didn't give you any  
2 direction on your work outside. You just did it  
3 according to your own professional judgment?

4 A. Correct.

5 Q. So what are the things that you did to start  
6 processing the outdoors?

7 A. The FARO and the photographs.

8 Q. Was there anything else?

9 A. I collected a couple blood swabs from the  
10 outside, I believe, on the sidewalk.

11 Q. And what were those blood swabs to be used  
12 for?

13 A. To identify who's bleeding.

14 Q. So for DNA testing?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. Was there anything else that you did on  
17 the outside?

18 A. Nope. I believe that's it.

19 Q. All right. The search warrant came in?

20 A. Um-hum.

21 Q. And what did you do next?

22 A. Then I started taking photographs inside the  
23 scene.

24 Q. And the photographs were first?

25 A. Yes.

1           Q. When you entered the crime scene, did you  
2 have -- were any of the victims there?

3           A. Yes, there was. The deceased was on the  
4 floor --

5           Q. All right.

6           A. -- just inside the door.

7           Q. But there was no other victim present?

8           A. No.

9           Q. So you didn't actually have any observations  
10 of the alive victim or hear anything from the alive  
11 victim?

12          A. No.

13          Q. And that's true throughout the course of your  
14 investigation?

15          A. Correct.

16          Q. All right. So what was the first thing that  
17 you noticed when you walked in the door?

18          A. Well, there was a dead guy on the floor.

19          Q. Anything else pop out?

20          A. I mean, just the apartment itself. But, I  
21 mean, when you ask me what's the first thing you  
22 notice, I mean, he's blocking the door. You can't help  
23 but see him. And as far as -- no, not -- nothing else  
24 right off the bat.

25          Q. Had you been to the Emerald Pointe Apartments

1 before?

2 A. Oh, yes.

3 Q. How many times?

4 A. On duty or off duty?

5 Q. Both.

6 A. A lot.

7 Q. Do you know by any chance --

8 A. No. No, I'm not going to --

9 Q. I mean, off duty --

10 A. I'm not going to tell you a number.

11 Q. Okay. But in terms of off duty --

12 A. I have friends that live there, you know?

13 Q. Is it a -- is it sort of a high crime --

14 A. I wouldn't say high crime, no.

15 Q. Okay. So when you went in, dead body. You  
16 start taking pictures. How long does it take you to  
17 take the photographs?

18 A. I have no idea.

19 Q. Do you know how many photographs you took?

20 A. On this day?

21 Q. Yes.

22 A. Yeah. On this day, I took -- I'll refer to my  
23 report here -- 356 photographs.

24 Q. Is that all you did that day?

25 A. No, that's not all I did that day. No.

1 Q. So what else did you do?

2 A. I did -- I processed the -- the front door for  
3 fingerprints. I did the FARO scans inside of the --  
4 the residence. I collected some touch or contact DNA  
5 swabs. I collected, I believe, some casing. I did  
6 some contact swabs off of a 45 auto casing, some DNA  
7 swabs off of some Xbox controllers, some suspected  
8 blood swabs in -- in the -- inside the apartment.

9 Q. And when you take those swabs for DNA, what is  
10 the overall objective?

11 A. To find out who might've touched that item to  
12 place either -- or to identify the victim or a suspect  
13 or a witness.

14 Q. And how do you choose what you're going to  
15 swab and what you're not going to swab when there's an  
16 apartment full of things?

17 A. There are items that are able to be  
18 fingerprinted. And if those items are able to be  
19 fingerprinted, then we fingerprint them. The -- of  
20 course, the blood swabs or the DNA swabs or, like, DNA  
21 swabs for the DNA saliva around the mouth of a bottle  
22 or a cap or something like that, those are all those  
23 swabs.

24 But then if the item can be fingerprinted,  
25 we'll fingerprint it. If the item -- if the surface of

1 the item isn't suitable for fingerprints, then we'll do  
2 the swabs -- the touch DNA swabs off of those items.

3 Q. Okay. So I want to just exclusively ask you  
4 to focus on the DNA swabs.

5 A. Okay.

6 Q. When you decide I'm going to swab this and  
7 swab that --

8 A. Right.

9 Q. -- is that basically your decision entirely?

10 A. No, that's a lot of the evidence collection  
11 that gets done and the stuff that the detectives want  
12 done for their -- for their investigation. That's when  
13 we start working with them on what they want collected  
14 and how they want it collected.

15 Q. So FARO and pictures, your decision?

16 A. Um-hum.

17 Q. DNA swabs, blood swabs, fingerprints, that you  
18 get --

19 A. Evidence collection, yeah, is -- is --

20 Q. -- directed by the detectives?

21 A. Yeah. "We want to do this. We need to do  
22 this. I want this collected. I want this swabbed."  
23 So it's all up to them, and then we make it happen.

24 Q. So referring specifically to February 2nd of  
25 2021, knowing that you did some work on the 3rd as

1 well --

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. -- but on the 2nd, when you were swabbing --

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. -- and lifting --

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. -- who was telling you what to do?

8 A. It is -- either been Mallory Webster or  
9 Christina Kinney. I can't remember exact who it was at  
10 that point.

11 Q. And they're presumably telling you to swab the  
12 things that are most likely to have DNA, right?

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. And they're presumably asking you to take  
15 lifts from the things that are most likely to have  
16 fingerprints, right?

17 A. Correct.

18 Q. Is there any other reason they would ask you  
19 to do specific items?

20 A. Not unless -- like some of the door handles  
21 and stuff, you might think that they're suitable for --  
22 for fingerprints, but really the way they're touched  
23 and they're smudged, the fingerprint -- there's -- very  
24 seldom do you get the -- the fingerprints on a door  
25 handle like that that's being constantly touched and



1 prints put -- placed on top of prints. So they might  
2 ask for the touch DNA swabs on items like that.

3 Q. Did you find any items that you took custody  
4 of?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. On February 2nd?

7 A. Yes, I did.

8 Q. What'd you find?

9 A. I -- well, I collected all the -- the  
10 suspected blood swabs, the contact DNA swabs, and then  
11 the only item that I have that I collected was that Jag  
12 45 auto plus P casing in the living room, marked -- it  
13 was marked with Evidence Marker Number 14.

14 Q. And what did you do with that?

15 A. I collected it and turned it in to property  
16 and evidence, eventually, yes.

17 Q. Did you have any further role with the  
18 processing of that?

19 A. Just -- I did the touch DNA swab off of that  
20 casing.

21 Q. Anything else?

22 A. With the casing?

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. No.

25 Q. Okay. Was there anything else that you

1 collected?

2 A. Besides the swabs, I don't recall anything  
3 else besides that casing and those -- I mean, I can go  
4 through every -- the suspected blood swab from evidence  
5 marked --

6 Q. No, it's okay.

7 A. Okay.

8 Q. I was just wondering if --

9 A. No.

10 Q. -- the cell phone (cross talk).

11 A. And then -- and then, of course, I collected  
12 the fingerprints that I did -- was able to lift --

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. -- from the front door. Those were also  
15 collected and then turned into our latent print  
16 department for comparison.

17 Q. Perfect. Did you see the cell phone, and did  
18 you see any evidence of drugs?

19 A. I do have it documented of -- there could've  
20 been possible drugs, because nothing's tested. But one  
21 of the plastic baggies in the living room, I have  
22 documented possible drugs on -- on the left side of the  
23 drawer, and then another plastic baggie, possible drugs  
24 on the right side of the drawer in the living room.

25 Q. What did those baggies look like?

1 A. I don't remember --

2 Q. And do you remember --

3 A. -- offhand.

4 Q. -- what kind of drugs you thought it might be?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Did there come a time when you finished up on  
7 February 2nd?

8 A. Yes. I pretty much finished everything, and  
9 it -- I cleared -- it says I cleared the scene around  
10 5:35 at night, which is 17:35 hours.

11 Q. Is it unusual to take a break overnight?

12 A. Yes. Is it unusual or usual?

13 Q. Unusual --

14 A. If --

15 Q. -- in a homicide -- while you're processing a  
16 homicide scene.

17 A. It all depends on the scene. If -- if they  
18 need to hold the scene for further processing because  
19 you're running out of daylight, because, of course,  
20 daylight's your best light for searching. You don't  
21 want to be doing it at night with flashlights. But  
22 it's -- if we need to hold the scene, then we will hold  
23 the scene and go back. They'll put the police officers  
24 on it to secure it overnight, and then we'll come back  
25 the next day.

1           And if we have to secure it for two days and  
2   three days till they feel that the scene's been fully  
3   processed and -- and they feel comfortable, then  
4   they'll end up releasing it.

5           Q.   And is that something that people talk about  
6   along with the detectives, or who makes that decision?

7           A.   The detectives along with their sergeant.  
8   Yeah.   And as in -- I mean, when you start running out  
9   of daylight, you really should stop doing your -- your  
10   searching if you can.   You know, you always have  
11   weather involvement, but you always got to beat the  
12   weather, regardless.   But, yeah, it's their call.  
13   You've been out there all day.   Everyone's tired.  
14   Everyone needs to take a break mentally.

15          Q.   That makes sense.   Was weather an issue in  
16   this case?

17          A.   I don't recall it was.

18          Q.   And what kind of special techniques does law  
19   enforcement use in order to make sure that there's no  
20   infiltration or no problems that occur when you take a  
21   break from the scene?

22          A.   They stay on the scene.   So there's always the  
23   scene officer securing the scene, or they'll have it  
24   roped off, like, secured.

25          Q.   What did you do after you left that night?

1           A. I went home and went to sleep. That was it.

2           All the evidence was -- I put it in the -- the  
3 evidence locker in the -- in our forensic office. I  
4 documented that it was stored in evidence locker number  
5 2. And then I keep it in there until all the evidence  
6 gets processed, packaged, and then it was eventually  
7 turned in on February 4th of '21.

8           Q. When you went to the evidence locker, did you  
9 have any conversations with any colleagues about the  
10 case?

11          A. Oh, I don't remember. I don't write that  
12 stuff down if I did.

13          Q. Completely fair.

14               Did you return to the scene at any point?

15          A. The next day I did.

16          Q. What time?

17          A. And that was on February 3rd, and that was at  
18 8:30 in the morning --

19          Q. And --

20          A. -- on February 3rd.

21          Q. -- did you speak to anyone before you got  
22 started?

23          A. Detective Mallory Webster was there and then  
24 Christina Kenny as well -- were both there at the  
25 scene.

1           Q. Did they give you any instructions or talk to  
2 any -- or tell you anything about the case?

3           A. I don't remember specifics. Just -- I just  
4 started -- the windows, and the doors were sealed, so I  
5 was photographing showing that no one had tampered with  
6 the windows since we had left.

7           Q. Did you do anything else?

8           A. And then went back in there. We started doing  
9 more of the DNA swabs. It says "the -- the drawer  
10 pulls," which is, like, the hardware on the cabinets  
11 and stuff in the bathroom. And once again, those are  
12 too small of areas for fingerprints so that's why  
13 you're going for the DNA on the -- the touch DNA stuff  
14 on those handles.

15                   And then there was the gallon of water in the  
16 living room, which we did the DNA stuff -- touch off of  
17 the handle and then did the cap and the mouth area for  
18 the saliva DNA on that. Some cigarette butts in the  
19 back room, there was 11 of those I collected.

20                   And then I dusted pretty much the rest of  
21 the -- the house. I got it documented -- documented as  
22 the kitchen, the bathroom and laundry door, the  
23 vanities, the actual Madden -- or the Xbox game system,  
24 the game that was in the system, because I had swabbed  
25 the controllers the day before, and then lifted some

1 fingerprints from those items, documented all that.

2 Q. Anything else?

3 A. I took 63 photos that day, and once again,  
4 those were -- all that evidence was stored in locker  
5 number 2 until it was all turned in on that February  
6 4th.

7 Q. So when you finished that day with your work  
8 on the scene --

9 A. Um-hum.

10 Q. -- was everyone finished at the same time, or  
11 were you done before others?

12 A. I don't know. I just know I left at 12:47 in  
13 the afternoon, so I don't know if other people stayed  
14 to do anything else, but that's when I was done.

15 Q. Was there anything unusual at all that you can  
16 recall about the processing of this crime scene?

17 A. No. Unusual? No.

18 Q. And over your many years of being a crime  
19 scene technician and forensic specialist, how many  
20 homicide scenes have you processed?

21 A. I'd say over 500. I've been involved in and  
22 processed probably over 500.

23 Q. So once you collect your swabs and your lifts  
24 and all of the other evidence that you collect, do you  
25 have any further role in processing the evidence?

1           A. No, only if some -- some cases that the  
2 evidence you've collected needs to come back and be  
3 processed further, either it could be fingerprints on  
4 something you might want to use a chemical on or some  
5 other type of stuff, or photographing or if the  
6 detective wants something else done. But, I mean, I  
7 think in this case it was pretty much just come back  
8 and package stuff up and get it turned in.

9           And then once I let it go and once I turn it in  
10 to property and evidence, it's all up to the detectives  
11 at that point to decide, hey, I want to take the swab  
12 from number 14 or the swab from number 28. It -- it's  
13 up to them on what they want to send out. So I have no  
14 control over what they send out to the lab for testing.

15          Q. And in the same vein, you don't really know  
16 what comes back from the lab, right?

17          A. Correct.

18          Q. And is that true in all your cases? So you  
19 never really get feedback on what you found?

20          A. No, not -- no, we don't. There's a way we can  
21 go back and look and search it and see after a while.  
22 But a lot of times, maybe it hasn't -- the item  
23 hasn't -- the detectives haven't sent the item out, so  
24 it's kind of like you just forget about it down the  
25 way.



1 Q. Have you ever met Cornelius Whitfield?

2 A. No.

3 Q. And no personal observations about him?

4 A. No.

5 MS. RUSSELL: Okay. I don't believe I have  
6 any further questions, but I can turn it over to my  
7 cocounsel.

8 MS. SEIFER-SMITH: I don't have any  
9 questions.

10 MR. MCGREEN: None for me.

11 THE WITNESS: No?

12 MR. KOSKINAS: That's it.

13 THE WITNESS: That's it?

14 MR. KOSKINAS: Thank you, sir.

15 THE WITNESS: Okay.

16 MS. RUSSELL: Thank you.

17 MS. SEIFER-SMITH: Thank you.

18 THE WITNESS: You got a copy of all my  
19 reports?

20 MS. RUSSELL: I did.

21 THE REPORTER: Okay. Off the record at 1:24  
22 p.m.

23 (Deposition concluded at 1:24 p.m.)

24

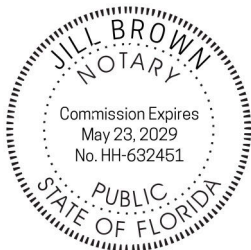
25

## CERTIFICATE OF OATH

STATE OF FLORIDA  
COUNTY OF PINELLAS

I, Jill Brown, the undersigned authority, certify that  
SCOTT FRANKLAND appeared before me via videoconference on  
March 18, 2025, and was duly sworn.

WITNESS my hand and official seal this 26th day of  
March, 2025.



Jill Brown

Notary Public, State of Florida

Commission No.: HH 132691

Commission Expires: 5/23/2025

Produced Identification   X  Type of Identification Produced        FL DL   X  Appeared  X  physically

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

STATE OF FLORIDA

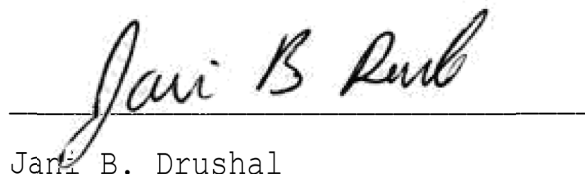
COUNTY OF PALM BEACH

I, Jani B. Drushal, transcriber for the Executive  
Reporting Service:

Do Hereby Certify that the foregoing transcript, pages  
1 through 28, inclusive, constitutes a true and correct copy  
of the proceedings (transcribed to the best of my ability).

I FURTHER CERTIFY I am neither an attorney or counsel  
of any of the parties hereto, nor a relative or employee of  
any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor  
financially interested in the event of said cause.

DATED this 26th day of March, 2025.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jani B. Drushal", is written over a horizontal line.

Jani B. Drushal

AAERT CER-2242

Executive Reporting Service

4699 Central Avenue

St. Petersburg, Florida 33713

1 IN RE: DEPOSITION OF SCOTT FRANKLAND  
 2 TAKEN: 3/18/2025 IN THE CASE OF  
 3 STATE OF FLORIDA VS. CORNELIUS TREVON WHITFIELD

ERRATA SHEET

DO NOT WRITE ON TRANSCRIPT - ENTER CHANGES

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5	Page No.	Line No.	Change	Reason
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21 Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have read the  
 22 foregoing document and that the facts stated in it are true.

23 \_\_\_\_\_

24 DATE SCOTT FRANKLAND

25