

TRUMBULL COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

Dennis Watkins, Prosecutor
Repeat Violent Offenders newsletter

UPDATE, Oct. 2, 2023

The Ohio 11th District Court of Appeals last week affirmed two convictions and prison sentences of two inmates tied to Trumbull County violent crimes.

Judge Matt J. Lynch, with Judges Mary Jane Trapp and John Eklund concurring, ruled in favor of the state in the appeal of Kenmari D. James who appealed his convictions for murder, attempted murder, having weapons while under disability and escape. The case was prosecuted at trial by First Assistant Prosecutor Christopher Becker who prevailed with the guilty verdicts from the jurors.



James, 30, left, a repeat violent offender who is serving a 38-year to life sentence in the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility, was convicted in the murder of La’Nesha Workman on the night of April 17, 2020 at her Warren home.

The three appellate judges ruled that three court errors during trial alleged by James’ attorney were without merit. During appeal, the case was successfully argued by Assistant Prosecutor Ryan Sanders.

In a second opinion, appellate Judge Eugene Lucci wrote for a unanimous court that the conviction and sentence of Michael A. Rivers was upheld, ruling that four alleged court errors at trial were without merit. That decision was concurred by fellow appellate Judges Trapp and Robert J. Patton. Sanders successfully argued the case before the appellate court on Sept. 6.



Rivers, 40, left, also a repeat violent offender, was sentenced to 14 to 18 years in prison after a Trumbull County jury in December 2022 found him guilty of one count of aggravate burglary with two attendant firearm specifications and two counts of having weapons while under disability. Assistant Prosecutor Gabriel Wildman represented the state at trial.

The case involved a break-in at a Champion home in March 2020 where Rivers was found with a firearm. Because of his past convictions – Rivers was paroled in 2020 for drug trafficking and possessing criminal tool convictions, he was not allowed to possess any firearms.

For more information, contact newsletter editor Guy Vogrin of Trumbull County Prosecutor’s Office at 330-675-2485