



*Office of the New York State Attorney General Letitia James*

Office of Special Investigation

August 22, 2025

# Report on the Investigation into the Death of Watson Morgan

## **SUMMARY**

New York Executive Law Section 70-b (Section 70-b) authorizes the Attorney General's Office of Special Investigation (OSI) to investigate, and, if warranted, to prosecute offenses arising from any incident in which the death of a person is caused by a police officer or a peace officer. When, as in this case, OSI does not seek charges, Section 70-b requires OSI to issue a public report. This is OSI's public report on the death of Ornela Morgan, Gabriel Morgan, and Liam Morgan, who were shot and killed on the night of December 29-30, 2023, by off-duty Bronxville Police Department (BPD) Sergeant Watson Morgan, who then took his own life.

## **FACTS**

According to BPD records, Watson Morgan had been a police officer at BPD since 2007 and held the rank of Sergeant. According to a Clarkstown Police Department (CPD) phone recording, BPD Lieutenant William Carroll called the CPD for a welfare check on Sergeant Morgan on December 30, 2023 at 12:16 a.m. Lieutenant Carroll told CPD that Sergeant Morgan did not show up for work on December 29, 2023, for his scheduled shift, which began at 11:30 p.m. Lieutenant Carroll gave CPD Sergeant Morgan's address in New City, which is in the Town of Clarkstown, in Rockland County.

The following description is based on CPD Officer Peter Saladino's Domestic Incident Report (there is no video): Officer Saladino and other CPD police officers arrived at Sergeant Morgan's house and observed lights on in the house, and window blinds closed; they knocked on the front door and got no response, but found the door unlocked; the officers entered the home and found the bodies of Sergeant Morgan's wife and son, Ornela Morgan and Gabriel Morgan, in the living room, and the bodies of Sergeant Morgan and his son, Liam Morgan, in a bedroom.

CPD Detective Jason Manzella was assigned to investigate the deaths. Detective Manzella told OSI that he and other CPD officers searched the house and found it to be orderly, with no signs of forced entry. As detailed below, a gun registered to Sergeant Morgan and four expended shell casings were recovered in the house.

### **Autopsy**

Dr. Laura Carbone of the Rockland County Office of Medical Examiner conducted all four autopsies and determined that Ornela Morgan died of a perforating gunshot wound to the back of the head, Liam Morgan died of a perforating gunshot wound to the back of the head, and Gabriel Morgan died of two perforating gunshot wounds, one to the back of the head and one to the right side of his head. Dr. Carbone determined Sergeant Morgan died of a single self-inflicted penetrating gunshot wound to the right side of his head; she found a stippling pattern to the entrance wound, indicating the gun was fired at a close range, and recovered a 9mm deformed, copper-jacketed bullet. No other injuries were present on any of the bodies. Sergeant Morgan's toxicology report showed he did not have any drugs or alcohol in his system.

## Ballistics

CPD Crime Scene officers went to Sergeant Morgan's house and recovered two 9mm shell casings in the living room and two 9mm shell casings in the bedroom where Liam Morgan's and Sergeant Morgan's bodies were found. The crime scene officers found a 9mm Smith & Wesson pistol, registered to Sergeant Morgan, lying next to his body. The pistol had a capacity, if fully loaded, of 16 rounds, with 15 bullets in the magazine and one bullet in the firing chamber. Crime scene officers found that the recovered gun had 10 bullets in the magazine and one bullet in the firing chamber, indicating it had been fired five times. Detective Manzella test-fired the recovered pistol and found it to be operable. CPD Detective Robert Fortune submitted the shell casing from Detective Manzella's test-firing and one shell casing recovered from Sergeant Morgan's home to the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) for comparison. The results showed that both shell casings came from the same firearm.



*A crime scene photo of Sergeant Morgan's pistol, depicting the round from the chamber (top left), 10 rounds from the magazine (bottom left), and the magazine (bottom center).*

## DNA

New York State Police Crime Lab Forensic Scientist Yongkai Mo tested DNA swabs of Sergeant Morgan's gun from the trigger, grip, and slide. Mr. Mo found two DNA profiles on the trigger swab, three DNA profiles on the grip swab, and two DNA profiles on the slide swab. Sergeant Morgan's DNA was in all three swabs.

## **CONCLUSION**

A full review of the evidence supports the conclusion that Sergeant Morgan was solely responsible for the deaths of Ornela Morgan, Liam Morgan, Gabriel Morgan, and himself. OSI found no evidence indicating that any other person was involved. Therefore, OSI has no basis on which to seek charges against any living person and closes the matter with the issuance of this report.

Dated: August 22, 2025