



## **CHRISTOPHER R. TUNNELL**

**ASHLAND COUNTY  
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY**

February 20, 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Ashland County Prosecutor Announces Charges in Mifflin Death Investigation**

**ASHLAND COUNTY, OHIO** — Ashland County Prosecuting Attorney Christopher R. Tunnell announces that charges have been filed in the Ashland County Court of Common Pleas, with the Honorable Judge David Stimpert presiding, following a death investigation in Mifflin, Ohio.

On February 19, 2026, at approximately 5:04 p.m., emergency services from the Mifflin Township Fire Department, Mifflin Village Police Department, and the Ashland County Sheriff's Office were dispatched to 39 Maine Street, Mifflin, Ashland County, Ohio, in reference to an unresponsive person. First responders arrived on scene and located Brandon Nathaniel Sheaffer (DOB: March 5, 1999), of Mifflin, Ohio, lying unconscious and unresponsive inside the residence. Life-saving measures were initiated; however, Mr. Sheaffer did not survive.

The Ashland County Coroner's Office has not yet determined the official cause and manner of death. The investigation remains ongoing.

As a result of the investigation to date, Joseph Frederick Doering (DOB: September 14, 1986), of Mansfield, Ohio, has been charged with Reckless Homicide, a felony of the third degree, and Possession of Methamphetamine, a felony of the fifth degree. The charges allege that Mr. Doering recklessly caused the death of Mr. Sheaffer during an incident in which the parties were allegedly engaged in methamphetamine use and other high-risk behavior. Detectives located methamphetamine and additional evidence inside the residence during the investigation.

Mr. Doering was taken into custody and remains incarcerated at the Ashland County Jail. A bond hearing has been scheduled for 8:30 a.m., Monday, February 23, 2026 before the Ashland County Court of Common Pleas.

The Ashland County Grand Jury is expected to review the matter for consideration of any additional charges at a later date.

The Ashland County Prosecutor's Office reminds the public that a charge is merely an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

Agencies assisting in the investigation include the Ashland County Sheriff's Office, Mifflin Police Department, Ashland Police Department, Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District, Mifflin Fire Department (Ashland), Mifflin Fire Department (Richland), Ashland County Coroner's Office, Ohio Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation, and the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Office.

IN

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ASHLAND COUNTY, OHIO

2026 FEB 20 P 3 11

STATE OF OHIO,

Plaintiff,

DEBORAH A. MYERS  
CLERK OF COURTS  
Case No. 26-CR-039  
ASHLAND, OHIO

vs.

JOSEPH FREDERICK DOERING  
AKA: JOSHEPH DOERING, JOSHEPH  
DURING  
LKA: 451 BEETHOVEN ST  
MANSFIELD, OH 44902  
DOB: 9/14/1986  
SSN: XXX-XX-4167

COMPLAINT

Defendant.

COUNT ONE: RECKLESS HOMICIDE, 2903.041(A), 2903.041(B) F3.

In that on or about February 19, 2026, in Ashland County, Ohio, JOSEPH FREDERICK DOERING did recklessly cause the death of BRANDON NATHANIEL SHEAFFER, in violation of Ohio Revised Code Section 2903.041(A), 2903.041(B), RECKLESS HOMICIDE, a felony of the third degree.

COUNT TWO: AGGRAVATED POSSESSION OF DRUGS, 2925.11(A), 2925.11(C)(1)(a) F5.

In that on or about February 19, 2026, in Ashland County, Ohio, JOSEPH FREDERICK DOERING did knowingly obtain, possess, or use a controlled substance or a controlled substance analog and the drug involved in the violation is a compound, mixture, preparation, or substance included in Schedule I or II, to wit: Methamphetamine a Schedule II Drug, in violation of Ohio Revised Code Section 2925.11(A), 2925.11(C)(1)(a), AGGRAVATED POSSESSION OF DRUGS, a felony of the fifth degree.

*D.A. Wenrich* #324  
Luke Wenrich - Complainant  
Ashland County Sheriff's Office

SWORN to and subscribed before me by Luke Wenrich this 20<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2026.

*Amey Johnson*  
Deputy - Clerk of Courts

