

Pierce County

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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YOUNG MOTHER STABBED TO DEATH BY BOYFRIEND

TACOMA, WA - - Today Prosecutor Mark Lindquist charged Joseph Lester, 23, with Murder in the First Degree and, in the alternative, Murder in the Second Degree. Lester stabbed to death his girlfriend Kiesha Lewis, a 21-year-old mother of two, at a University Place residence on Halloween.

Sheriff's Deputies responded to a duplex in the 6000 block of 57th Avenue West in the early evening on October 31. They followed a trail of blood into the home and found Lewis lying face down in a large pool of blood. Medics rendered aid but Lewis was pronounced dead at the scene. An autopsy performed showed that Lewis had been stabbed multiple times, including in the head and throat.

A witness told investigators that as Lester's car drove past him he heard the driver say, "I'm doing to her what she did to me." This was an apparent reference to a prior incident in which Lewis allegedly stabbed Lester during a fight. Additional witnesses observed Lester and Lewis talking outside the residence just before the stabbing, then heard Lewis yell, "he's killing me," as she ran bleeding into the home. The couple's nine-month-old son was in the car with Lester during the incident.

An Amber Alert was issued after Lester fled the scene with the couple's child. The alert was cancelled later in the evening when Lester arrived at Good Samaritan Hospital to turn himself into police. Lester, who had custody of the child, brought the child to the scene and left the scene with the child. The child was taken into protective custody.

"Ironically, this murder occurred on the last day of Domestic Violence Awareness Month," Prosecutor Mark Lindquist said, "and it highlights the need for continuing efforts to reduce domestic violence through vigorous prosecution and prevention."

Charges are only allegations and a person is presumed innocent unless he or she is proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. Lester will be arraigned today at 1:30 p.m. in Room 270 in the County City Building in Tacoma.

For additional information contact Becky Stover at 253-798-4910 or rstover@co.pierce.wa.us.