



Judge sentences Kenneth Shipp to life in prison without parole for murder of Huntsville police officer

By Brian Lawson, The Huntsville Times

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Kenneth Shipp is led to jail by Madison County Sheriff's deputies after he was sentenced to life without parole for the 2007 shooting of Huntsville police officer Eric Freeman.

HUNTSVILLE, AL -- Circuit Judge Bruce Williams has sentenced Kenneth Shipp to life in prison without parole for the 2007 murder of Huntsville police officer Eric Freeman.

Williams agreed with the recommendation a jury made in February. The jury that convicted Shipp, 55, of capital murder **recommended by a 9-to-3 vote** that he should get life in prison without parole.

Shipp spoke in court today, asking the judge and Freeman's family for forgiveness. Williams, who had the option of overturning the jury's recommendation and sentencing Shipp to death, said the mitigating factors in this case outweighed the aggravating factors.

Members of the law enforcement community and Alabama Attorney General Troy King **publicly asked the judge to impose a death sentence.**

Shipp's defense attorneys, Robert Tuten and Jake Watson, argued during the trial and the sentencing phase that **Shipp was so impaired by alcohol and pharmaceutical drugs** that he wasn't capable of making the decision to kill Freeman.

Freeman, a father of five, was shot once by Shipp as he and another officer were escorting Shipp to a police car after a traffic accident. The shooting occurred on Dec. 14, 2007, at the intersection of Bailey Cove Road and Weatherly Road.

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