



718.286.6000
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2026

CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315
QDACommunications@queensda.org

**FAR ROCKAWAY MAN INDICTED FOR FIRST-DEGREE MURDER FOR KILLING MOTHER
AND SISTER IN FAR ROCKAWAY HOME**

*Defendant Set Fire to Residence and Confronted Responding Police Officers with Shotgun and Tactical Vest;
Defendant Faces Life in Prison, if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Kegan Thomas was indicted on charges of murder in the first degree, attempted murder in the first degree, murder in the second degree, arson and other crimes for killing his mother and sister in the family's Far Rockaway home. Thomas allegedly started a fire and caused an explosion in the home that also took the lives of the family dog and cat.

District Attorney Katz said: "As alleged, the defendant killed his mother and sister in cold blood by shooting them to death. He then deliberately set a fire and caused an explosion inside of the family's home during a standoff with the police. When he emerged from the residence, he was carrying a shotgun and wearing a tactical vest. He approached responding police officers while holding the shotgun pointed in their direction and failed to comply with NYPD orders to put his hands up. He was shot by responding officers. This horrifying act of violence destroyed a family and left a community in shock. The defendant has been charged with first-degree murder and now faces life in prison if he is convicted."

Thomas, 33, of Far Rockaway, was arraigned on a 12-count indictment today charging him with three counts of murder in the first degree, attempted murder in the first degree, two counts of murder in the second degree, arson in the second degree, three counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth degree and two counts of aggravated cruelty to animals.

Queens Supreme Court Judge Ushir Pandit-Durant ordered him to return to court January 15, 2027. He faces life in prison without the possibility of parole, if convicted.

DA Katz said that, according to the charges and investigation, on July 25, at approximately 11:55 a.m., Thomas shot to death his 66-year-old mother, Clemer Ponce, and 29-year-old sister, Selena Ponce, with a shotgun inside a bedroom in the first-floor apartment at 25-33 Ocean Crest Boulevard in Far Rockaway.

When members of the NYPD arrived on the scene responding to a report of shots fired, Thomas was outside of the house and was not wearing a tactical vest or holding a shotgun. Thomas then went back inside the home as police approached.

Police officers then banged on the door of the home and ordered Thomas to come outside. An explosion erupted from inside the home with smoke and fire coming from the location.

A few seconds later, Thomas exited the home wearing a black hat and tactical vest and carrying a shotgun he is alleged to have pointed in the direction of the responding officers. Multiple police officers shouted to Thomas to put his hands up. He failed to comply and officers discharged their weapons, striking him.

The FDNY fire marshal later entered the location and determined that the fire inside the home was deliberately set. A pitbull-boxer mix was found deceased in the living room and a kitten was found dead in the garage. Both animals, family pets, died of smoke inhalation, according to a necropsy.

Two switchblade knives were recovered from the defendant.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Gregory Lasak of the District Attorney's Homicide Bureau is prosecuting the case with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Jennie Evangelista under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys John Kosinski, Bureau Chief, Karen Ross and Jonathan Selkove, Deputy Chiefs, and under the overall supervision of Chief Assistant District Attorney Shawn Clark.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

#

Note to Editors: Archived press releases are available at www.queensda.org.

