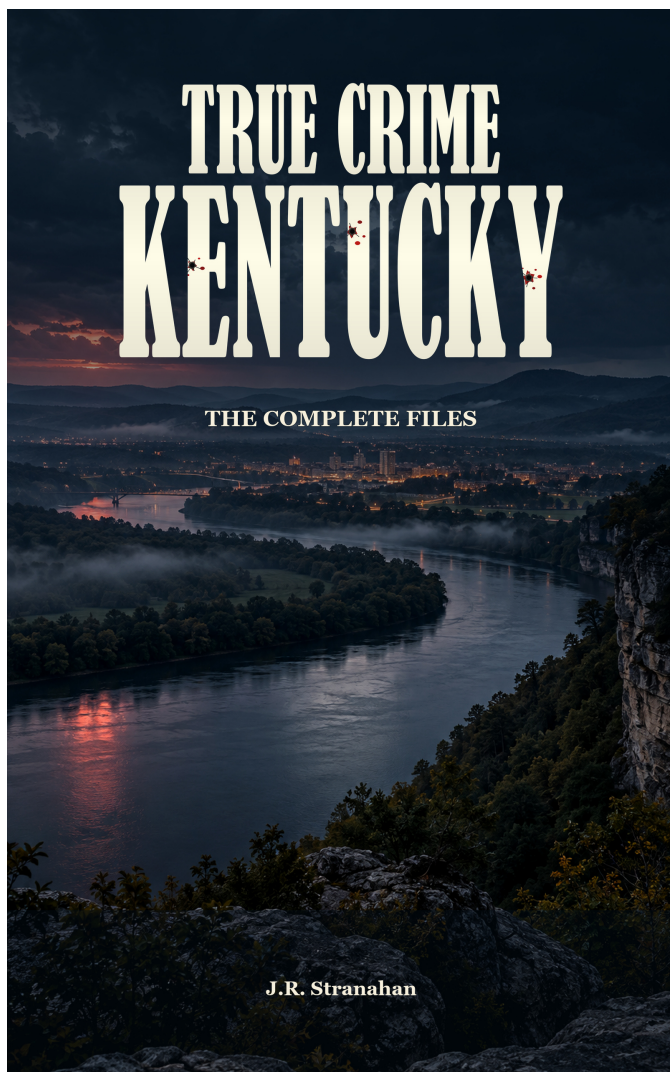




## True Crime Kentucky: The Complete Files

J.R. Stranahan

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## The Killing of Breonna Taylor

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# File 1: The Killing of Breonna Taylor

**Place and period:** Louisville, 2020-2026

**Present legal status:** Brett Hankison was convicted in federal court of violating Taylor's civil rights and received a thirty-three-month sentence; his appeal followed. Kelly Goodlett pleaded guilty in the warrant investigation. The remaining federal charges against Joshua Jaynes and Kyle Meany were dismissed with prejudice in March 2026.

This file belongs first to Breonna Taylor, her family, Kenneth Walker, and the neighboring residents endangered during the raid. The public record is necessarily organized around investigation and adjudication, but a criminal case is not the measure of a life. The account uses the available record to describe what happened and how institutions responded, while avoiding invented biography where sources are silent.

## The human scale

Police executing a search warrant entered Taylor's apartment shortly after midnight on March 13, 2020. That fact is the fixed point for this portion of *The Killing of Breonna Taylor*. Begin with the person harmed, the routines interrupted, and the community that had to live with the absence. In Louisville, later retellings sometimes collapse the investigation and the judgment into one continuous story. The public record does not. It preserves the order in which information appeared and the forum in which it was tested. The present legal posture is stated separately: Brett Hankison was convicted in federal court of violating Taylor's civil rights and received a thirty-three-month sentence; his appeal followed. Kelly Goodlett pleaded guilty in the warrant investigation. The remaining federal charges against Joshua Jaynes and Kyle Meany were dismissed with prejudice in March 2026.

For Breonna Taylor, her family, Kenneth Walker, and the neighboring residents endangered during the raid, the procedural vocabulary cannot be allowed to eclipse consequence. Walker fired one shot after the door was forced, and officers returned fire, killing Taylor. The detail belongs here because it changes the chronology, not because it supplies atmosphere. Begin with the person harmed, the routines interrupted, and the community that had to live with the absence. Keeping that boundary visible lets the reader understand both the institutional response and the loss that made the response necessary.

The 2020-2026 record from Louisville contains a point that resists shorthand: No drugs were found in the apartment. The present legal posture is equally specific: Brett Hankison was convicted in federal court of violating Taylor's civil rights and received a thirty-three-month sentence; his appeal followed. Kelly Goodlett pleaded guilty in the warrant investigation. The remaining federal charges against Joshua Jaynes and Kyle Meany were dismissed with prejudice in March 2026. Begin with the person harmed, the routines interrupted, and the community that had to live with the absence. One proposition may be established while a neighboring proposition remains disputed. Treating them separately is not hesitation; it is accurate reporting.

A headline can make this episode appear settled in a sentence. The underlying record is narrower. Hankison fired through covered windows and a door; the federal jury convicted on the Taylor count and acquitted on the neighbors count. From there, the inquiry moves through source, timing, corroboration, and legal consequence. Begin with the person harmed, the routines interrupted, and the community that had to live with the absence. None of those steps authorizes invented dialogue or a claim about what Breonna Taylor, her family, Kenneth Walker, and the neighboring residents endangered during the raid privately thought.

Location matters in this file. Louisville determined which agencies, courts, and communities carried the case, while 2020-2026 marks the span over which the public learned it. The criminal cases concerned different conduct and defendants, so their outcomes cannot be

compressed into one verdict. Begin with the person harmed, the routines interrupted, and the community that had to live with the absence. The result is a chronology with identifiable custodians rather than a collection of free-floating claims.

This part of the account begins with a modest question: what did the cited source actually establish? Its answer is plain: Police executing a search warrant entered Taylor's apartment shortly after midnight on March 13, 2020. The answer does not automatically prove motive, identity, or every charge in the case. Begin with the person harmed, the routines interrupted, and the community that had to live with the absence. The remaining status is stated without embellishment: Brett Hankison was convicted in federal court of violating Taylor's civil rights and received a thirty-three-month sentence; his appeal followed. Kelly Goodlett pleaded guilty in the warrant investigation. The remaining federal charges against Joshua Jaynes and Kyle Meany were dismissed with prejudice in March 2026.

The case file gives different kinds of information different weight. Walker fired one shot after the door was forced, and officers returned fire, killing Taylor. A contemporaneous observation, a laboratory result, a charging allegation, and an appellate finding do not perform the same job. Begin with the person harmed, the routines interrupted, and the community that had to live with the absence. Describing those jobs plainly is especially important when the story concerns Breonna Taylor, her family, Kenneth Walker, and the neighboring residents endangered during the raid.

## The first account

By the time *The Killing of Breonna Taylor* reached public memory, sequence had become easy to lose. Hankison fired through covered windows and a door; the federal jury convicted on the Taylor count and acquitted on the neighbors count. Restoring sequence shows what investigators knew, what prosecutors alleged, what the defense contested, and what a court or jury ultimately resolved. Separate what witnesses reported at the time from what investigators later inferred. An older headline cannot replace the current status: Brett Hankison was convicted in federal court of violating Taylor's civil rights and received a thirty-three-month sentence; his appeal followed. Kelly Goodlett pleaded guilty in the warrant investigation. The remaining federal charges against Joshua Jaynes and Kyle Meany were dismissed with prejudice in March 2026.

There is no need to enlarge the evidence to make this file serious. The criminal cases concerned different conduct and defendants, so their outcomes cannot be compressed into one verdict. That proposition is consequential on its own. Separate what witnesses reported at the time from what investigators later inferred. The account therefore avoids borrowing certainty from unrelated defendants, other jurisdictions, or later cases that happen to resemble events in Louisville.

The public record speaks most reliably when attribution travels with the claim. Here is the supported proposition: Police executing a search warrant entered Taylor's apartment shortly after midnight on March 13, 2020. The source may recount an allegation, summarize trial proof, or state a judgment, and the language must match that function. Separate what witnesses reported at the time from what investigators later inferred. That practice protects the accuracy of the case and the dignity of Breonna Taylor, her family, Kenneth Walker, and the neighboring residents endangered during the raid at the same time.

At this stage of the file, absence is also information. The available materials establish this much: Walker fired one shot after the door was

forced, and officers returned fire, killing Taylor. They do not establish every rumor that accumulated during 2020-2026. Separate what witnesses reported at the time from what investigators later inferred. Refusing to bridge those gaps with speculation keeps the unresolved portions visible instead of disguising them as narrative momentum.

Consider the detail in its proper scale: No drugs were found in the apartment. It is neither disposable nor self-executing. Its force depends on where it sits among the other records from Louisville. Separate what witnesses reported at the time from what investigators later inferred. A measured account can explain that relationship without turning legal caution into a repetitive disclaimer.

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## Building a chronology

The most useful context is the context that changes interpretation.

Walker fired one shot after the door was forced, and officers returned fire, killing Taylor. In the Louisville record, that detail helps explain why a particular investigative or legal step followed. Dates and sequence matter because later knowledge can make early decisions seem more certain than they were. General crime lore would add volume but not understanding, so it is left outside the account.

The end of a proceeding is not always the end of a case's public life. No drugs were found in the apartment. Families, institutions, and communities continued to live with the result after 2020-2026. Dates and sequence matter because later knowledge can make early decisions seem more certain than they were. The legal status is reported in its own terms: Brett Hankison was convicted in federal court of violating Taylor's civil rights and received a thirty-three-month sentence; his appeal followed. Kelly Goodlett pleaded guilty in the warrant investigation. The remaining federal charges against Joshua Jaynes and Kyle Meany were dismissed with prejudice in March 2026. It does not imply that every question or consequence disappeared.

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## Physical evidence

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## Witness evidence

Consider the detail in its proper scale: No drugs were found in the apartment. It is neither disposable nor self-executing. Its force depends on where it sits among the other records from Louisville. Credibility is tested through opportunity to observe, consistency, corroboration, motive, and cross-examination. A measured account can explain that relationship without turning legal caution into a repetitive disclaimer.

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## Digital and documentary trails

For Breonna Taylor, her family, Kenneth Walker, and the neighboring residents endangered during the raid, the procedural vocabulary cannot be allowed to eclipse consequence. Police executing a search warrant entered Taylor's apartment shortly after midnight on March 13, 2020. The detail belongs here because it changes the chronology, not because it supplies atmosphere. Records can preserve timing and contact, but interpretation still depends on context and authentication. Keeping that boundary visible lets the reader understand both the institutional response and the loss that made the response necessary.

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## Charging choices

By the time *The Killing of Breonna Taylor* reached public memory, sequence had become easy to lose. Hankison fired through covered windows and a door; the federal jury convicted on the Taylor count and acquitted on the neighbors count. Restoring sequence shows what investigators knew, what prosecutors alleged, what the defense contested, and what a court or jury ultimately resolved. An indictment states allegations; a plea or verdict resolves only the counts and defendants actually adjudicated. An older headline cannot replace the current status: Brett Hankison was convicted in federal court of violating Taylor's civil rights and received a thirty-three-month sentence; his appeal followed. Kelly Goodlett pleaded guilty in the warrant investigation. The remaining federal charges against Joshua Jaynes and Kyle Meany were dismissed with prejudice in March 2026.

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## The courtroom

What happened to Breonna Taylor, her family, Kenneth Walker, and the neighboring residents endangered during the raid generated records made for different audiences: investigators, lawyers, judges, jurors, officials, and the public. Walker fired one shot after the door was forced, and officers returned fire, killing Taylor. Those records overlap, but they are not interchangeable. A trial is structured proof under rules, not a complete replay of every event or every rumor surrounding it. Reading across them carefully prevents a later summary from erasing an earlier uncertainty or a later reversal.

The most useful context is the context that changes interpretation. No drugs were found in the apartment. In the Louisville record, that detail helps explain why a particular investigative or legal step followed. A trial is structured proof under rules, not a complete replay of every event or every rumor surrounding it. General crime lore would add volume but not understanding, so it is left outside the account.

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## Appeal and review

A headline can make this episode appear settled in a sentence. The underlying record is narrower. The criminal cases concerned different conduct and defendants, so their outcomes cannot be compressed into one verdict. From there, the inquiry moves through source, timing, corroboration, and legal consequence. An appellate court tests legal error and the governing record, not whether judges would retell the case the same way. None of those steps authorizes invented dialogue or a claim about what Breonna Taylor, her family, Kenneth Walker, and the neighboring residents endangered during the raid privately thought.

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# Uncertainty

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# Institutions

The end of a proceeding is not always the end of a case's public life. Police executing a search warrant entered Taylor's apartment shortly after midnight on March 13, 2020. Families, institutions, and communities continued to live with the result after 2020-2026. Police, prosecutors, defense counsel, courts, laboratories, journalists, and families each occupy different roles. The legal status is reported in its own terms: Brett Hankison was convicted in federal court of violating Taylor's civil rights and received a thirty-three-month sentence; his appeal followed. Kelly Goodlett pleaded guilty in the warrant investigation. The remaining federal charges against Joshua Jaynes and Kyle Meany were dismissed with prejudice in March 2026. It does not imply that every question or consequence disappeared.

Walker fired one shot after the door was forced, and officers returned fire, killing Taylor. That fact is the fixed point for this portion of *The Killing of Breonna Taylor*. Police, prosecutors, defense counsel, courts, laboratories, journalists, and families each occupy different roles. In Louisville, later retellings sometimes collapse the investigation and the judgment into one continuous story. The public record does not. It preserves the order in which information appeared and the forum in which it was tested. The present legal posture is stated separately: Brett Hankison was convicted in federal court of violating Taylor's civil rights and received a thirty-three-month sentence; his appeal followed. Kelly Goodlett pleaded guilty in the warrant investigation. The remaining federal charges against Joshua Jaynes and Kyle Meany were dismissed with prejudice in March 2026.

For Breonna Taylor, her family, Kenneth Walker, and the neighboring residents endangered during the raid, the procedural vocabulary cannot be allowed to eclipse consequence. No drugs were found in the apartment. The detail belongs here because it changes the chronology, not because it supplies atmosphere. Police, prosecutors, defense counsel, courts, laboratories, journalists, and families each occupy different roles. Keeping that boundary visible lets the reader understand

both the institutional response and the loss that made the response necessary.

The 2020-2026 record from Louisville contains a point that resists shorthand: Hankison fired through covered windows and a door; the federal jury convicted on the Taylor count and acquitted on the neighbors count. The present legal posture is equally specific: Brett Hankison was convicted in federal court of violating Taylor's civil rights and received a thirty-three-month sentence; his appeal followed. Kelly Goodlett pleaded guilty in the warrant investigation. The remaining federal charges against Joshua Jaynes and Kyle Meany were dismissed with prejudice in March 2026. Police, prosecutors, defense counsel, courts, laboratories, journalists, and families each occupy different roles. One proposition may be established while a neighboring proposition remains disputed. Treating them separately is not hesitation; it is accurate reporting.

A headline can make this episode appear settled in a sentence. The underlying record is narrower. The criminal cases concerned different conduct and defendants, so their outcomes cannot be compressed into one verdict. From there, the inquiry moves through source, timing, corroboration, and legal consequence. Police, prosecutors, defense counsel, courts, laboratories, journalists, and families each occupy different roles. None of those steps authorizes invented dialogue or a claim about what Breonna Taylor, her family, Kenneth Walker, and the neighboring residents endangered during the raid privately thought.

Location matters in this file. Louisville determined which agencies, courts, and communities carried the case, while 2020-2026 marks the span over which the public learned it. Police executing a search warrant entered Taylor's apartment shortly after midnight on March 13, 2020. Police, prosecutors, defense counsel, courts, laboratories, journalists, and families each occupy different roles. The result is a chronology with identifiable custodians rather than a collection of free-floating claims.

## Status at manuscript lock

The controlling status for this account is: Brett Hankison was convicted in federal court of violating Taylor's civil rights and received a thirty-three-month sentence; his appeal followed. Kelly Goodlett pleaded guilty in the warrant investigation. The remaining federal charges against Joshua Jaynes and Kyle Meany were dismissed with prejudice in March 2026. That sentence is deliberately narrower than a television summary. It does not merge co-defendants, convert accusations into findings, or imply that an appeal erased a human death. Later proceedings may change the legal posture, but they should not be projected backward onto the record described here.

# Sources from the edition

## The Killing of Breonna Taylor

- U.S. Department of Justice, Hankison verdict: <https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/pr/former-louisville-kentucky-metro-police-officer-found-guilty-federal-civil-rights-crimes> - United States v. Hankison appellate filing: <https://www.justice.gov/crt/media/1419901/dl> - Federal indictment record: <https://www.justice.gov/archives/jmd/media/1236391/dl>

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