In the Missouri Court of Appeals
Eastern District

DIVISION TWO

STATE OF MISSOURI,	)	No. ED112976
	)	
Respondent,	)	
	)	
vs.	)	
	)	
DEANDRE D. WALTON,	)	
	)	
Appellant.	)	FILED: February 17, 2026

Appeal from the Circuit Court of the City of St. Louis
The Honorable Paula P. Bryant

Before: Michael S. Wright, Presiding Judge, Philip M. Hess, Judge, and Virginia W. Lay, Judge.

Introduction

Deandre Walton (Walton) appeals his convictions for two counts of first-degree murder, two counts of armed criminal action, and unlawful possession of a firearm. In his sole point on appeal, Walton argues the trial court erred in denying his motion to suppress statements and in admitting evidence of his statements at trial. We affirm.

Factual and Procedural Background

Viewed in the light most favorable to the verdicts, the evidence presented at trial established the following relevant facts. In the evening of February 28, 2022, Walton believed Victims removed or had attempted to remove catalytic converters from cars he was working on. When Walton approached, Victims ran. Walton chased Victims and fired 24 shots from his semi-

automatic handgun, killing both Victims. Walton left the scene and later threw the handgun into the Mississippi river. Video obtained from nearby businesses captured the gunfire and Walton's distinctive sneakers—white Nikes with a black Swoosh and red on the back heel.

On the night of the shooting, Walton contacted his FBI handler regarding other matters and informed him he had information to provide police about the homicide. Walton and his FBI handler met with Saint Louis Metropolitan Police Department (SLMPD) Detective B.W. on March 2, 2022. Walton told investigators another individual shot Victims. Detective B.W. took note of Walton's appearance at the station and went back to review the surveillance video of the shooting. Detective B.W. noticed Walton's sneakers matched the same distinct ones worn by the shooter in the video. Additionally, the individual described by Walton as the purported shooter did not match the depiction of the shooter in the video. Detective B.W. obtained Walton's phone records which placed him in the area at the time of the shooting. Detective B.W. believed Walton was the shooter and requested Detective T.M. set up a meeting with Walton to bring him in to investigate further.

Detective T.M. contacted Walton to arrange a meeting at North Patrol on March 15, 2022. Detective T.M. did not inform Walton that Detective B.W. wanted to speak with him nor did he mention the homicide, only telling Walton they needed to discuss something. When Walton arrived, Detective T.M. informed him homicide detectives needed to speak to him about the incident and that he would have to be handcuffed to be brought to the homicide division at police headquarters. Walton requested his vehicle be left with his mother and turned over his keys to Detective T.M. Getting into Walton's vehicle, Detective T.M observed in plain view a firearm in the driver's side door pocket. Detective T.M. asked Walton if the firearm belonged to him, which Walton confirmed. Knowing Walton was a convicted felon, Detective T.M. placed him under

arrest for unlawful possession of a firearm and read Walton his *Miranda*[1] rights. Walton was then transported to police headquarters to speak with homicide detectives. After being placed in the interview room, Walton was instructed to remove his belt, shoelaces, and earrings. Responding to Walton's concerns about the instructions and feeling like he was being arrested, Detective B.L. told Walton the detectives just wanted to talk to him and that he had to remove these things because of procedure and liability.

Before beginning the interview, Homicide Detective B.W. and his partner offered Walton water and allowed him to use the restroom. Detective B.W. took down Walton's pedigree information and told Walton he wanted to discuss Walton's prior statement about the investigation. Detective B.W. then read Walton his *Miranda* rights on video. Walton stated he understood his rights and continued to speak with the detectives. After Walton gave his version of events, the detectives expressed disbelief of Walton's story, showed Walton a still photograph of Victims taken from surveillance footage, and remarked on the good quality of the cameras. The detectives also told Walton his phone records put him not only near the scene but contradicted his version of his whereabouts after the shooting. Walton admitted he was the shooter.

The State charged Walton with two counts of first-degree murder, two counts of armed criminal action, and one count of unlawful possession of a firearm by a felon. The case proceeded to trial on June 24, 2024. The jury returned guilty verdicts on each count. On September 18, 2024, the trial court sentenced Walton as a prior and persistent offender to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole on the two first-degree murder counts, fifteen years on the two armed criminal action counts, and seven years on the unlawful possession of a firearm by a felon. This appeal follows.

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[1] *Miranda v. Arizona*, 384 U.S. 436 (1966).

Standard of Review

"Appellate review of the denial of a motion to suppress is limited to a determination of whether the trial court's decision is supported by substantial evidence." *State v. Lawson*, 693 S.W.3d 82, 98 (Mo. App. E.D. 2023). We will reverse the decision "only if it was clearly erroneous." *Id.* We view the evidence presented at the suppression hearing and at trial in the light most favorable to the ruling. *Id.* "If the trial court's ruling is 'plausible' in light of this evidence, we will not reverse even if we would have weighed the evidence differently were we in that position." *Id.* We defer to the trial court on issues of fact and credibility, but we review questions of law de novo. *Id.*

Discussion

Walton claims in his sole point on appeal the trial court erred in denying his motion to suppress statements and admitting those statements at trial because doing so violated Walton's rights to silence, counsel, privilege against self-incrimination, due process, and fair trial. We disagree because Walton was informed of his *Miranda* rights, indicated he understood them, and continued speaking with detectives.

"When *Miranda* warnings are properly given, 'an accused may knowingly and intelligently waive his rights and agree to answer questions or make a statement.'" *State v. Lawson*, 693 S.W.3d 82, 101 (Mo. App. E.D. 2023) (quoting *State v. Wilson*, 449 S.W.3d 803, 807 (Mo. App. E.D. 2014)). This Court determines whether a *Miranda* waiver was valid "under the totality of the circumstances surrounding the interrogation." *Id.* The waiver inquiry has "two distinct dimensions." *State v. Mendez-Ulloa*, 525 S.W.3d 585, 592 (Mo. App. E.D. 2017) (quoting *Berghuis v. Thompkins*, 560 U.S. 370, 382 (2010)). "First, the waiver must be voluntary, in the sense that it was the product of free and deliberate choice, not of intimidation, coercion, or

deception." *Id.* "Second, the waiver must be knowing and intelligent, in that it was made with a full awareness of the nature of the *Miranda* rights being abandoned and the consequences of the decision to abandon those rights." *Id.*

Walton does not dispute that the waiver was knowing and intelligent and instead only claims that it was involuntary due to police deception. Walton argues if the detectives had informed him of the true nature of their investigation, he would not have waived his *Miranda* rights. "A waiver is generally knowing and voluntary if the defendant understood the warnings—if the defendant knew he could remain silent, could request an attorney be present during the interrogation, and that the State could and would use any statement to obtain a conviction." *State v. Ruff*, 360 S.W.3d 880, 886 (Mo. App. S.D. 2012) (quoting *State v. Mateo*, 335 S.W.3d 529, 537 (Mo. App. W.D. 2011)). "That the individual is being investigated for a criminal matter should be implied from the issuance of one's *Miranda* rights, but is of no consequence to the voluntariness of the waiver." *Id.*

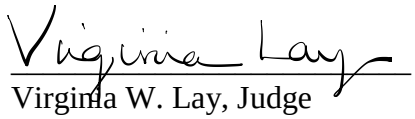
In *Ruff*, the appellant alleged his *Miranda* waiver was not voluntary, knowing, and intelligent because he was not told he was being interviewed about a criminal matter, believing instead it was about insurance and child support. *Id.* at 884-85. The court rejected this argument because the appellant "was informed of both his rights and the consequences of waiving them." *Id.* at 887. The court further reasoned that because the appellant was aware of the illegality of his conduct and had been in jail before, coupled with the fact he was informed of his rights before the interview, "should have placed [the appellant] on notice that speaking to [the detective] regarding his sexual relationship with [the victim] was contrary to his interests." *Id.*

Here, Walton's waiver of his *Miranda* rights was voluntary because he was informed of those rights and stated he understood them. Like in *Ruff*, that Walton was being criminally

investigated should have been implied from the issuance of his *Miranda* rights, "but is of no consequence to the voluntariness of the waiver." *Id.* at 886. Walton likewise "should have been on notice" that speaking to the detectives was contrary to his interests. Walton is not a stranger to the criminal justice system.[2] He was told he was being taken to police headquarters to speak to homicide detectives. Detective B.W. told Walton he wanted to talk about Walton's prior statement before giving *Miranda* warnings. Walton continued speaking with the detectives. When the detectives told Walton they believed he was the shooter and confronted him with evidence that contradicted his story, Walton confessed.[3] The trial court's decision to deny Walton's motion to suppress his statements and admit that evidence at trial was supported by substantial evidence. Point denied.

Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, we affirm the trial court's judgment.



Virginia W. Lay, Judge

Michael S. Wright, Presiding Judge, concurs.
Philip M. Hess, Judge, concurs.

[2] Walton was sentenced as a prior and persistent offender.
[3] Indeed, the rights Walton indicated he understood included the right to "decide *at any time* to exercise these rights and not answer any questions or make statements."