

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTH  
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR LAKE  
COUNTY, FLORIDA

STATE OF FLORIDA

CASE NO. 2024-CF-1924-A

vs.

JULIE ANN SULPIZIO,

Defendant.

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CLERK OF CIRCUIT  
AND COUNTY COURT  
LAKE COUNTY  
TAVARES, FLORIDA

2025 FEB 28 A 11:17

FELONY DIVISION

**ORDER ADJUDGING DEFENDANT INCOMPETENT TO PROCEED AND  
COMMITMENT TO DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

THIS CAUSE having come to be heard before the Court, and the questions of the competency of the Defendant in this cause to proceed having been raised in accordance with the provisions of Rule 3.210 and 3.211, Fla.R.Crim.P., the Office of the Public Defender retained the services of Julie F. Harper, Psy.D. and Bhushan S. Agharkar, M.D., and the State of Florida retained the services of Jason Demery, Ph.D to examine the Defendant and to report on whether the Defendant is competent to proceed and, if not, report on any recommended treatment for the defendant to attain competence to proceed. The Court having received:

- the written report  
 the oral testimony  
 both written reports and oral testimony

of the above-named experts and others in relation to the issue of the Defendant's competency to proceed and need for treatment, the court hereby makes the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law:

## FINDINGS OF FACTS

1. The Defendant is not competent to proceed due to Psychotic Spectrum Disorder and Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorder, r/o Schizoaffective Disorder, Bipolar type.
2. The Defendant is charged with Principal to Murder in the First Degree of a Law Enforcement Officer – Premeditated (capital felony), three counts of Principal to Attempted First Degree Murder of a Law Enforcement Officer (life felony), Conspiracy to Commit Murder in the First Degree – Premeditated (first degree felony), Battery on a Law Enforcement or other officer (third degree felony), and three counts of battery (first degree misdemeanor).
3. The Defendant is in imminent danger of harm to herself or others and neglect of self-care.
4. The Defendant meets the criteria for involuntary placement with the Department of Children and Families.

## CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

A. The Defendant is incompetent to proceed due to the Defendant's mental illness as defined in Section 916.106(11), Florida Statutes.

B. The Defendant is incompetent to proceed with

pre-trial hearings

entry of a plea

the trial of the case

sentencing

violation of probation or community control proceedings

hearings on issues regarding a defendant's failure to comply with court orders or conditions

\_\_\_\_\_ other matters where the mental competence of the defendant is necessary, i.e. \_\_\_\_\_

C. The Defendant, who is incompetent to proceed, is presently charged with several felonies.

D. The Defendant meets the criteria for involuntary placement with the Department of Children and Families as provided in Section 916.13(1), Florida Statutes. to wit

(1) The Defendant is manifestly incapable of surviving alone or with the help of willing and responsible family or friends, including available alternative services, and, without treatment, the Defendant is likely to suffer from neglect or refuse to care for herself and such neglect or refusal poses a real and present threat of substantial harm to the Defendant's well-being; and,

(2) There is a substantial likelihood that in the near future the Defendant will inflict serious bodily harm on herself or another person, as evidenced by recent behavior causing, attempting, or threatening such harm.

E. There are no available, less restrictive alternatives, including treatment in community residential facilities or community settings, which would offer an opportunity for improvement of the Defendant's condition, which are appropriate.

F. There is a substantial probability that the mental illness causing the Defendant's incompetence will respond to treatment and the Defendant will regain competency to proceed in the reasonably foreseeable future.

Based upon the FINDINGS OF FACT and CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, it is ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that:

1. The Defendant is incompetent to proceed due to the Defendant's mental illness as

defined in Section 916.106(11), Florida Statutes and all further proceedings are hereby stayed.

2. The Defendant is hereby committed to the Department of Children and Families.

3. The Defendant meets the criteria for commitment to a treatment facility of the Department of Children and Families as provided in Section 916.13(1), and is hereby committed to the Department of Children and Families to be placed in a mental health treatment facility pursuant to Section 916.13(2), Florida Statutes.

4. The Clerk of the Court is directed to forthwith forward a certified copy of this Order along with copies of any written reports submitted to this Court by experts appointed by the Court relating to the issues of competency and need for treatment; copies of any other psychiatric, psychological or social work reports submitted to the Court relative to the mental state of the Defendant; and a copy of the charging instrument and all supporting affidavits or other documents used in the determination of probable cause to:

Forensic Admissions Coordinator  
Department of Children and Families  
Mental Health Program Office  
1317 Winewood Boulevard  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700

5. Upon notification of an available bed space by the Department of Children and Families, the Sheriff of Lake County Lake County shall, on the date specified, forthwith transport and deliver the Defendant to a treatment facility designated by the Department, together with a certified copy of this Order and the other documentation outlined in paragraph 4 above. As a result of the Defendant's deteriorating status, this placement is to be classified as an emergency status.

6. The Department, through the Administrator of the facility to which the Defendant is admitted, shall report directly to this Court, with copies to the attorneys for the State and the

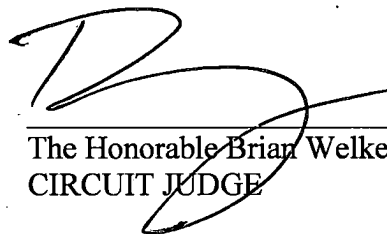
Defense on the issues of competency to proceed and the need for continued commitment as provided in Section 916.13(2), Florida Statutes and in Rule 3.212(5), Fla.R.Crim.P.

7. In the event the Defendant's presence is required at any hearing in this cause, the Court shall issue an Order to Transport, directing the Sheriff of Lake County or his designee to resume custody of and transport the Defendant back to the jurisdiction of this Court.

8. In the case of those Defendants found incompetent to proceed with the trial of the case, the requirements of Rule 3.191, Fla.R.Crim.P., are hereby temporarily suspended.

9. This Court retains jurisdiction in this cause, pursuant to Section 916.16, Florida Statutes, and the Defendant shall not be discharged or released from commitment within the Department Children and Families without further Order of this Court.

DONE AND ORDERED at Tavares, Lake County, Florida, this 28 day of February, 2025.

  
The Honorable Brian Welke  
CIRCUIT JUDGE

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a copy of the foregoing Order has been furnished to the Office of the State Attorney, Post Office Box 7800, Tavares, FL 32778; to the Office of the Public Defender (ATTN: Morris Carranza), 123 N. Sinclair Avenue, Tavares, FL 32778; 32778 (mcarranza@pdo5.org); to Jensey Heding, Legal Assistant to: Joyce Miller, Assistant Regional General Counsel, Circuit 5, Department of Children & Families, 1300 Duncan Drive, Bldg. D, Tavares, FL 32778; to the Department of Children and Families, Forensic Program Coordinator, Mental Health Program Office, 1317 Winewood Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida, 32399-0700; to Lauren W. Pilkinton, MA, Adult System of Care Manager, LSF Health Systems, 9428

Baymeadows Road, Bldg, III, Suite 320, Jacksonville, FL 32256 and to the Lake County

Sheriff's Office, Tavares, Florida; this 28<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2025.

  
DEPUTY CLERK/JUDICIAL ASSISTANT