



# Cheyenne Police Department

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*Protecting the legend...*

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**For Immediate Release**

**May 29, 2020**

## **Homicide Investigation Determined To Be Self-Defense**

CHEYENNE, Wyo.— On May 22, 2020 at around 11pm, officers with the Cheyenne Police Department responded to The Lamp Lounge (101 West 6<sup>th</sup> St), regarding a male, later identified as Aaron Briggs, 36, of Cheyenne, who entered that location and was bleeding from his upper body. Briggs collapsed and was transported to Cheyenne Regional Medical Center for treatment. Briggs was declared deceased by attending medical staff on May 22, 2020 at around 1145pm.

Between May 23, 2020 and May 27, 2020 detectives with the Cheyenne Police Department conducted multiple interviews with witnesses and examined multiple pieces of evidence collected as a result of two search warrants executed in Cheyenne and the autopsy of Briggs in Fort Collins, Colorado. Video was also reviewed from The Lamp Lounge and surrounding businesses.

The investigation determined that earlier in the day of May 22, 2020, Briggs arrived at The Lariat Motel, room #7 under the influence of alcohol and became aggressive with Benjamin Ketcham, 31, of Cheyenne, and others present in the motel room. Ketcham was one of the current residents of the motel room.

Briggs was told to leave the motel room and ultimately did so. Later that evening, Briggs returned to The Lariat Motel, room #7 and began to threaten and intimidate Ketcham and others. Briggs was carrying a large metal chain he wore looped over both shoulders. Briggs was again told to leave the room and refused to do so. Ketcham, who was on the bed, stood up and pulled out his handgun and told Briggs to leave.

Briggs, upon seeing Ketcham holding the gun, removed the chain from his neck and swung it at Ketcham. As Briggs swung the chain at Ketcham, Ketcham raised the handgun and fired one shot, striking Briggs in the upper torso. Following the gunshot, Briggs ran to The Lamp Lounge.

While Wyoming law provides for immunity for an individual who exercised reasonable force in self-defense, it is only available under certain, narrow, factual circumstances. After a thorough investigation and collaboration with the Laramie County District Attorney's Office, a mutual decision was made to dismiss charges of 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Murder against Benjamin Ketcham.