



## Yuma County Sheriff's Office

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# PRESS RELEASE

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DR# 2024-125301

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 19, 2025 – 3:20 PM

## **\*UPDATE 2\* Fatality Collision (HOMICIDE)**

**Location of Incident:** S. Avenue 36 E and westbound Interstate 8 Exit Ramp - Yuma, AZ

**Update 2** – During the course of the investigation, the Yuma County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Bureau determined this case to be a Homicide. Shortly after the investigation commenced, investigators identified a suspect, and an arrest warrant was issued.

The suspect, **Donovan Jamal Thomas**, 36, of Scott, Louisiana, was located in the State of New York. He was taken into custody and extradited to Yuma, Arizona, on May 16, 2025.

Thomas was booked into the Yuma County Detention Center for 1st Degree Murder, Kidnapping, and Leaving the Scene of an Accident w/ Death or Injury.

The family of the victim has been notified. His bond is currently set at \$1,000,000.00.

**Update 1 - December 26, 2024 – 10:30 AM** : The victim of the fatal collision has been identified as Ijah Se'lah Smith, 34, of Atlanta, GA. Next of kin notification has been made.

This case remains under investigation at this time.

### **Original – December 20, 2024 – 3:00 PM**

On December 20, 2024, at approximately 10:03 AM, the Yuma County Sheriff's Office received a report of a deceased subject located in the area of S. Avenue 36 E at the westbound Interstate 8 exit ramp.

The Yuma County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Bureau responded and assumed the investigation.

The initial investigation indicates a pedestrian was struck by a vehicle which departed the scene. The victim sustained fatal injuries as result of the collision.

This case remains under investigation at this time.

Anyone with information regarding this case, please contact the Yuma County Sheriff's Office at 928-783-4427 or 78-CRIME to remain anonymous. You can also visit our website at [www.yumacountysheriff.org](http://www.yumacountysheriff.org) to submit an anonymous tip.

Information Released By: Tania Pavlak, Public Affairs Specialist