

**HARRIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
VOLUNTARY STATEMENT**

OF

Travis Jarel Vaughn

STATE OF TEXAS §
COUNTY OF HARRIS §

CASE #: **08-921**

Before me the undersigned authority in and for the State of Texas, on this 1/03/2008 A.D., at 2:30pm personally appeared Travis Jarel Vaughn, who after being duly sworn deposes and says:

My full name is Travis Jarel Vaughn and my personal information is on file with the Harris County Sheriff's Office. I am currently employed by The Harris County Sheriff's Office.

I have been informed that under the Penal Code of the State of Texas, Section 37.02; A person commits the offense of "Perjury" if, with the intent to deceive, and with the knowledge of a statements meaning, he makes a false statement under oath or swears to the truth of a false statement previously made, and the statement is required or authorized by law to be made under oath.

My full name is Travis Jarel Vaughn and I have been employed as a Detention Officer with the Harris County Sheriff's Office for approximately eleven months. I have no military training and have no training or expertise in martial arts.

On Tuesday, January 1, 2008 I was employed as a Detention Officer with the Harris County Sheriff's Office. On that date I was assigned as a Floor Rover on the second floor of the 701 Jail Facility. My duties on this date included relieving pod deputies, supervising floor workers, and assisting with maintaining the security of the facility.

I don't remember exactly what time it was, but sometime between 3:30pm and 4:30pm, I was standing in front of the Floor Control Center (FCC) of the second floor. I heard some noises coming from my right which was in the direction of some separation cells. It sounded like a lot of yelling. I could not understand any of the words that were being yelled. I thought the shouting was coming from floor workers so I yelled for them to hold the noise down. The loud shouting continued so I went around the corner to see what the source of the noise was. It was approximately ten seconds from the time that I first heard the noise to the time that I reached the source of the yelling. As I rounded the corner, I observed Detention Officer Nathan Hartfield struggling with a black inmate that I know as Clarence Freeman. I recognized the inmate because I have previously worked

the pod in which he is housed. Detention Officer Hartfield and Inmate Freeman were in the approximate middle of the hallway directly outside of segregation cell 2Z3. Detention Officer Hartfield was behind Inmate Freeman and had his left arm around the neck of Inmate Freeman. Detention Officer Hartfield's left elbow was under the chin of the inmate. Inmate Freeman was swinging his arms violently from side to side and up and down. Detention Officer Hartfield was telling Inmate Freeman to calm down and place his hands behind his back. I could hear and see the inmate gasping for air. There was a floor worker behind me as I approached the confrontation so I stopped and turned toward the floor worker. I instructed the floor worker to leave the area. I then turned back toward Detention Officer Hartfield and Inmate Freeman and observed them to now be on the floor in the middle of the hallway. Inmate Freeman was laying face down on his stomach and Detention Officer Hartfield was on the inmates back. Detention Officer Hartfield still had his left arm around Inmate Freeman's neck. I observed Inmate Freeman place both of his palms flat on the floor and try to push up while Detention Officer Hartman was trying to control him. I approached Detention Officer Hartfield and Inmate Freeman from their left side. I bent over at the knee and grabbed the left arm of Inmate Freeman. As I bent over I noticed an odor coming from Inmate Freeman and assumed that he had defecated on himself. I advised Detention Officer Hartfield that I had the inmates left arm and then advised Inmate Freeman to calm down, stop struggling, and to give me his other hand. Detention Officer Hartfield asked me if I had control of the inmate and I said that I did. Detention officer Hartfield then slowly slid off the inmates back to the right. When Hartfield got far enough off of the inmate I was able to grab his right hand and handcuff him.

After Inmate Freeman was handcuffed, Detention Officer Hartfield stood up. I noticed that Detention Officer Hartfield's shirt was partially untucked in the front and the second to top button on his uniform shirt appeared to have come unfastened. Sgt. Harris and Detention Officer Perry Bryant came to our location. Detention Officer Hartfield told the Sergeant what occurred. While they spoke, Inmate Freeman remained handcuffed and laying on his stomach on the floor. I observed the inmate breathing hard. I saw a small amount of blood coming out of Inmate Freeman's mouth. Detention Officer Hartfield spoke to Sgt. Harris for approximately thirty seconds and then walked back over to where Inmate Freeman was lying. Detention Officer Hartfield then assisted Inmate Freeman in standing up. As Inmate Freeman stood up, I noticed that he had urinated on the front of his pants. I didn't observe any other kind of physical injury to Inmate Freeman.

I immediately took control of Inmate Freeman and Detention Officer Bryant and I escorted him down the elevators and to the 701 Medical Clinic. Inmate Freeman walked under his own power to the clinic but he appeared kind of wobbly. The inmate leaned from side to side as he walked. Inmate Freeman did not talk at all as we walked. Inmate Freeman was still breathing heavily. It appeared that he was breathing heavily due to the altercation. It was approximately five minutes between the time I placed my cuffs on

Inmate Freeman to the time that we reached the 701 clinic. When we reached the 701 clinic I removed the handcuffs from Inmate Freeman's wrist so that the nurse could take his blood pressure. Inmate Freeman kept praying and saying "God, I'm going to make it through this". "All I wanted was a tray". I did not hear Inmate Freeman complain of any type of pain and did not hear him complain of not being able to breathe. The nurse instructed an inmate clinic worker to get Inmate Freeman a bar of soap and a clean jumpsuit. Inmate Freeman then took the bar of soap and the jumpsuit and went into a clinic holding cell to wash up. Inmate Freeman came out of the cell in the clean jumpsuit and the nurse took inmate Freeman behind a curtain. I could not see what occurred behind the curtain. While the nurse and Inmate Freeman were behind the curtain, I instructed Detention Officer Bryant to go back upstairs. A few minutes later, the nurse and Inmate Freeman returned from behind the curtain. The nurse instructed Inmate Freeman to stand on a scale and he did so. She then asked Inmate Freeman his height and he responded that he was five feet ten inches tall. The nurse instructed Inmate Freeman to sit in a chair and he did so. The clinic worker inmates then brought out a stretcher and the nurse instructed Freeman to lay down on the stretcher. Freeman got onto the stretcher and layed down but stated that he was unable to breathe while lying in his back. The nurse instructed Freeman to get up and then brought a wheel chair and an oxygen tank to Inmate Freeman. Oxygen tubes were placed in Inmate Freeman's nose. An inmate worker pushed the wheel chair and another inmate worker pushed the oxygen cart as the nurse and I escorted Inmate Freeman to the 1200 Baker Street jail clinic. I walked ahead of Inmate Freeman and did not observe his physical condition as we walked.

When we arrived at the clinic located at 1200 Baker Street Jail, Inmate Freeman was instructed to sit on an examining table. A doctor then examined Inmate Freeman. I did not observe the doctor examine Inmate Freeman and could not hear what was said. Sgt. Harris arrived at the 1200 clinic and instructed me to go find an Inmate Statement Form for Inmate Freeman so that he can complete it before he was transported to LBJ Hospital. I then went to the third floor administration office of the Baker St. Jail and obtained an Inmate Statement Form. I returned to the clinic with the form and gave it and an ink pen to Inmate Freeman. I instructed Inmate Freeman on how to complete the form and told him to write down what happened on the form. Inmate Freeman responded by saying "Yes, sir." It took Inmate Freeman approximately ten minutes to complete his statement. I took it from him when he was done. Immediately after I took the statement form from Inmate Freeman he was placed on a stretcher. I observed paramedics place an oxygen mask on Freeman's face. Sgt. Harris and I then left the clinic and returned to the second floor of the 701 jail facility.

After returning to the 701 jail, I was instructed by Sgt. Harris to write a statement on what occurred. I did so and then took the statement to Sgt. Harris. I left the statement with Sgt. Harris and returned to my regular duty assignment.

CASE NUMBER:

Based on everything that I observed during this incident, I do not feel that Detention Officer Hartfield used more force than necessary to subdue Inmate Freeman.

I am able to read and write the English language and I have read this statement which I have made consisting of 4 typed page(s) and I find it to be true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Travis Jarel Vaughn

Sworn and subscribed to before me the undersigned authority in and for the State of Texas on this 6/4/2008 at 10:08:56 AM.

Dennis Wolfford, 3347
Peace Officer State of Texas