

URGENT ACTION

MISSOURI CONDUCTS ITS FIRST EXECUTION OF 2025

Lance Shockley was executed in Missouri on 14 October 2025 for the murder in 2005 of a police officer. The Governor denied clemency on 13 October.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

The State of Missouri executed Lance Shockley on 14 October 2025, he was charged with the 2005 murder of a police officer investigating a 2004 fatal drunk-driving accident, in which the fiancé of his sister-in-law died. The state claimed Shockley killed the officer to stop the investigation, while the defence argued that police had focused solely on him, ignoring other possible suspects. His trial was marked by serious concerns about fairness, including the participation of a juror who had authored and shared a violent, anti-defendant novel during deliberations, and the failure of his defence lawyer to challenge this or call witnesses in support of a mistrial. The Missouri Supreme Court described the case against him as “strongly circumstantial,” and there was no direct evidence linking him to the crime. Shockley consistently maintained his innocence, and his appeal lawyers had sought DNA testing of key evidence, which was denied.

In the announcement of his decision to deny clemency, Governor Mike Kehoe stated that the murder of the Missouri State Highway Patrol Sergeant “who was investigating Lance Shockley’s criminal actions at the time, was an attack not only on a dedicated law enforcement officer, but on the rule of law itself. Violence against those who risk their lives every day to protect our communities will never be tolerated. Missouri stands firmly with our men and women in uniform. Mr Shockley has received every legal protection afforded to him under the Missouri and United States Constitutions, and his conviction and sentence will remain for his brutal and deliberate crime. The State of Missouri has – and will continue to – pursue justice to the fullest extent of the law. Carrying out Lance Shockley’s sentence is evidence of our commitment to the pursuit of justice”.

Final appeals to the courts had been to pursue Lance Shockley’s wish to have his two daughters, who are ordained ministers, to serve as his spiritual advisors and for one of them to be in the death chamber at the time of his execution. The state rejected the request, and the US District Court denied his appeal. On 13 October, the US Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit upheld this decision and refused to grant a stay of execution. On 14 October, the US Supreme Court declined to review the matter and refused to grant a stay of execution.

The execution by lethal injection went ahead at the State Prison in Bonne Terre at 6.01pm on 14 October. Lance Shockley was pronounced dead at 6.13pm.

This was the first execution in Missouri this year. Missouri now accounts for 102 of the USA’s 1,644 executions since 1976. There have been 37 executions in the USA this year, by lethal injection (31), nitrogen gas (4), and firing squad (2). This is the most executions in a single year since 2013. The executions have been carried out in 11 states (Alabama (4), Arizona (1), Florida (14), Indiana (2), Louisiana (1), Mississippi (1), Missouri (1), Oklahoma (2), South Carolina (4), Tennessee (2) and Texas (5). Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases unconditionally.

NAME: Lance Shockley

THIS IS THE FIRST AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 88/25

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/0276/2025/en/>

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