

# DA clears sheriff's deputy in fatal shooting

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Keri Thornton

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District Attorney Jack Thorp announced this week that he has cleared a sheriff's deputy who was involved in a deadly shooting.

Thorp said Cherokee County deputies Curtis Elkins and James Carver were dispatched to South 550 Road on Oct. 14 for a call requesting law enforcement service.

“Upon arrival, Deputy Elkins encountered a person later identified as Jericho Wynos. Apparently upon arrival, and upon asking to speak with Mr. Wynos, Elkins observed Wynos brandish a spear,” Thorp said.

According to the investigation, Wynos advanced toward Elkins with the spear, although Elkins told Wynos to discard the weapon.

“According to the report, [Elkins] attempted to use a less lethal method of defending himself, by deploying his Taser. According to the report, the Taser wasn't effective, and Wynos threw the spear at, and hit, Deputy Elkins,” Thorp said.

Wynos then armed himself with a large knife as Elkins retreated, lost his footing, and fell on his back.

“Deputy Elkins observed that Wynos was armed with a large knife and was advancing toward him. At this point, Deputy Elkins discharged his firearm while lying on his back and mortally wounded Wynos,” Thorp said.

Thorp said Elkins had the right to take Wynos into custody for assault and battery on a police officer after Wynos threw the spear. However, Thorp stressed, Wynos tried to use deadly force on the deputy.

“It was at this point that Deputy Elkins utilized deadly force. He was justified under Oklahoma law,” Thorp said.

Sheriff Jason Chennault said Elkins will return to duty on Wednesday, Nov. 11. Chennault said Elkins completed his administrative steps in the process.