State of Minnesota
County of Blue Earth

District Court
5th Judicial District

Prosecutor File No. 0070113098
Court File No. 07-CR-26-1385

State of Minnesota,

Plaintiff,

vs.

RALPH HEIGHT GERK DOB: 09/09/1963

111 Allan Court
Mankato, MN 56001

Defendant.

COMPLAINT

Summons

The Complainant submits this complaint to the Court and states that there is probable cause to believe Defendant committed the following offense(s):

COUNT I

Charge: Criminal Neglect - Intentionally neglects or knowingly permits conditions to exist
Minnesota Statute: 609.233.1
Maximum Sentence: 364 days jail, $3,000 fine, or both.
Offense Level: Gross Misdemeanor

Offense Date (on or about): 01/01/2026

Control #(ICR#): 26005834

Charge Description: From approximately January 1, 2026, through February 24, 2026, in the City of Mankato, County of Blue Earth, Minnesota, Ralph Height Gerk did as a caregiver, intentionally neglect a vulnerable adult or knowingly permitted conditions to exist that resulted in the abuse or neglect of a vulnerable adult.

STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

On February 25, 2026, at approximately 11:08 pm, Mankato Public Safety Officers were dispatched to a residence in the City of Mankato at the request of EMTs at the residence.

A 93-year-old woman (the Victim) was being evaluated by EMTs at the home. Ralph Height Gerk, DOB: 09/09/1963, is the son of the Victim and they both reside at the home. There are no other residents of the home, as the Victim is a widow.

Officers entered the home to provide assistance to the EMTs on scene and the condition of the home was noted to be barely habitable. There were numerous cats in the home, most appearing to be malnourished. One officer noted in a report that the smell of cat urine from the home exuded out into the cul-de-sac and could be smelled even 20 – 30 feet away from the home and upon entering the home, it was intense. The rooms in the home were piled with stacks of clutter that one ambulance personnel noted as “the worst” they had seen. There was rotten food, animal feces and garbage at various places in the home. The Officer noted that there was “barely room to move in most of the house and only a walkway to minimal spaces.”

Ambulance personnel and firefighters utilized a mega-mover to move the Victim from the bed to the cot/gurney. Ambulance personnel later advised that the Victim’s bed sores were so substantial and untreated that she was stuck to the sheets on the bed, and when they tried to peel her away from the sheets, there were places where her skin had peeled away from her body and she screamed out in pain. Ambulance personnel noted their disgust at the living situation and how long it would take for the Victim to deteriorate for her condition to be as severe as it was.

Once at the hospital, doctors indicated that the Victim was significantly dehydrated, consistent with no, or minimal fluid intake for several days. The Victim had bruising and bed sores on her hip. There was wood covering of paper towels and duct tape, which appeared to have been placed with care on the Victim’s wound, but had clearly been placed by someone with no wound care experience, as paper products are not recommended to be placed directly onto open wounds and duct tape is not used by medical personnel.

Upon arriving at the hospital, the Victim stated to medical personnel that she had been experience increasing weakness and vomiting. A Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center Report indicated that the Victim stated that she had not been out of bed in months. The Victim reported that her caretaking son “has not really been taking care of me.” There were multiple pressure sores on the Victim’s body, including her shoulder, both hips, back, buttocks, and there was a severe open ulcer on her right foot with bruising/purple-red discoloration all over the Victim’s body. The Victim’s physical appearance was described as “unkept with eyes matted. Extensively long finger and toenails. Hair stuck in patient eyes. Pt arrived in brief heavily saturated in urine and stool. Patient reports the last 2 days she has been unable to eat or drink anything due to vomiting. She has been without her medications for 2 days due to this.”

Officers attempted to interview Gerk on numerous occasions and stopped by the residence on more than one occasion. On March 20, 2026, Gerk agreed to be interviewed outside his residence in Mankato. When asked about the severity of the Victim’s injuries, Gerk stated that the Victim had not wanted to move around for two months or so before February 24, 2026, when he had called for an ambulance. He stated that the Victim had become more sedentary during that time. Gerk stated that he had noticed the open sores on the Victim’s right ankle approximately one week before he had made the emergency call for an ambulance (February 24, 2026). Gerk stated that he had been ill for approximately four weeks before the emergency call. Gerk stated that he did not believe that his illness had hindered his ability to provide care for the Victim. Gerk stated that the Victim is very selective about what she eats and drinks and that he could “not make [the Victim] do anything” that she did not want to do. Gerk did not believe that his care for

the Victim in the months leading up to her hospitalization had fallen short. He stated that he provided daily care for her incontinence but denied that he had noticed the bruising/body discoloration observed by medical personnel at the hospital when she was admitted on February 24, 2026. Gerk stated that he had no medical training.

During the March 20, 2026, interview, the public safety officers were not invited into the home, but noted that even outside, they could smell a distasteful and strong odor coming from the home. There were five vehicles in the driveway, many did not appear to be operational. There were several boxes stacked up on the porch and there were a number of outdoor cats seen around the home.

SIGNATURES AND APPROVALS

Complainant requests that Defendant, subject to bail or conditions of release, be:
(1) arrested or that other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court; or
(2) detained, if already in custody, pending further proceedings; and that said Defendant otherwise be dealt with according to law.

Complainant declares under penalty of perjury that everything stated in this document is true and correct. Minn. Stat. § 358.116; Minn. R. Crim. P. 2.01, subds. 1, 2.

Complainant	Matthew Huettl Patrol Sergeant 710 S Front St Mankato, MN 56001-3803 Badge: 3142	Electronically Signed: 04/06/2026 01:25 PM Blue Earth County, Minnesota

Being authorized to prosecute the offenses charged, I approve this complaint.

Prosecuting Attorney	Deja L. Weber 401 Carver Road PO Box 3129 Mankato, MN 56002 (507) 304-4600	Electronically Signed: 04/06/2026 12:58 PM

FINDING OF PROBABLE CAUSE

From the above sworn facts, and any supporting affidavits or supplemental sworn testimony, I, the Issuing Officer, have determined that probable cause exists to support, subject to bail or conditions of release where applicable, Defendant's arrest or other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court, or Defendant's detention, if already in custody, pending further proceedings. Defendant is therefore charged with the above-stated offense(s).

[X] SUMMONS

THEREFORE YOU, THE DEFENDANT, ARE SUMMONED to appear as directed in the Notice of Hearing before the above-named court to answer this complaint.

IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR in response to this SUMMONS, a WARRANT FOR YOUR ARREST shall be issued.

[ ] WARRANT

To the Sheriff of the above-named county; or other person authorized to execute this warrant: I order, in the name of the State of Minnesota, that the Defendant be apprehended and arrested without delay and brought promptly before the court (if in session), and if not, before a Judge or Judicial Officer of such court without unnecessary delay, and in any event not later than 36 hours after the arrest or as soon as such Judge or Judicial Officer is available to be dealt with according to law.

[ ] ***Execute in MN Only*** [ ] ***Execute Nationwide*** [ ] ***Execute in Border States***

[ ] ORDER OF DETENTION

Since the Defendant is already in custody, I order, subject to bail or conditions of release, that the Defendant continue to be detained pending further proceedings.

Bail: $
Conditions of Release:

This complaint, duly subscribed and sworn to or signed under penalty of perjury, is issued by the undersigned Judicial Officer as of the following date: April 6, 2026.

Judicial Officer Kristine Weeks
District Court Judge

Electronically Signed: 04/06/2026 07:09 PM

Sworn testimony has been given before the Judicial Officer by the following witnesses:

COUNTY OF BLUE EARTH
STATE OF MINNESOTA

State of Minnesota

Plaintiff

vs.

Ralph Height Gerk

Defendant

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER RETURN OF SERVICE
I hereby Certify and Return that I have served a copy of this Summons upon the Defendant herein named.

Signature of Authorized Service Agent: