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Lawyer found dead was in bitter divorce

By KATE HOWARD
Staff Writer

The body of a Nashville lawyer was found in a closet in his West End area home Monday morning in what police are characterizing as a suspicious death.

A housekeeper told police that she found James Cannon, 44, inside a closet in an upstairs bedroom about 10:15 a.m.

There were no obvious signs of trauma, Metro police spokesman Don Aaron said, but police are investigating the death as a homicide because of the "totality of the circumstances."

Cannon, a partner in Franklin-based Medical Reimbursements of America, filed for divorce from his wife this year and had sole custody of their three children.

He lived with them at the 710 Bowling Ave. home where he was found.

His wife was living in a separate house.

Police investigating the crime found the children with their mother at her home, in apparent violation of a court order. Aaron said it's too soon to say whether she is a suspect.

"At this point, we need to find out what caused the death and the circumstances that led up to it," Aaron said.

Aaron said Kelley Cannon was being interviewed by police at her home Monday afternoon.

Two had 'animosity'

Nashville attorney John Hollins Jr. said he was representing James Cannon in a custody battle with his wife.

Hollins said the judge's custody order was violated May 21 when Kelley Cannon took the youngest child, who is 18 months old, and left with her. According to police, she rammed James Cannon's car and led police on a pursuit before she was caught.

"There was significant animosity between the two of them," Aaron said.

After that incident, Cannon obtained an order of protection against his estranged wife, Hollins said.

James Cannon returned to court last week attempting to extend that order of protection, Hollins said.