



NEWS RELEASE

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PATERSON MAN INDICTED ON ATTEMPTED MURDER AND FIREARM OFFENSES RELATED TO POLICE-INVOLVED SHOOTING IN PATERSON

PATERSON, NEW JERSEY:

May 5, 2017

Passaic County Prosecutor Camelia M. Valdes announces the indictment of Dereen Wofford, age 38, of Paterson.

A Passaic County Grand Jury has returned Indictment No. 17-04-0391-I against Dereen Wofford for an incident that arose out of the City of Paterson on December 30, 2016. The indictment contains the following counts: five counts of first degree Attempted Murder in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:5-1/11-3a against five Paterson Police Officers; one count of second degree Possession of a Weapon for an Unlawful Purpose, namely a handgun, in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:39-4a; one count of second degree Unlawful Possession of a Weapon, namely a handgun, in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:39-5b; and one count of second degree Certain Persons Not to Possess Weapons, in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:39-7b. Attempted Murder carries a maximum term of twenty (20) years in New Jersey State Prison, and the second degree charges each carry a maximum term of ten (10) years in New Jersey State Prison.

A separate Grand Jury reviewed Paterson Police Officer Jonathan Bustios's use of force and found it to be justified.

The incident occurred in the area of Martin Street and 21st Avenue in the City of Paterson shortly after 1 p.m. on Friday, December 30, 2016. Paterson police responded to a residential building in that area on a call of a domestic dispute involving a weapon. While inside the building, five on-duty Paterson Police Officers (including Officer Bustios) encountered Mr. Wofford who was inside an apartment. Mr. Wofford refused to exit or let anyone into the apartment. Mr. Wofford then allegedly fired a handgun towards the five officers and pointed the handgun at one or more of them as they entered the apartment. During the course of the incident, Officer Bustios discharged a department-issued handgun. Mr. Wofford sustained non-life threatening injuries to his left arm and both legs, which were treated. No officers and no other civilians were injured. The handgun allegedly fired by Mr. Wofford was recovered.

The Passaic County Prosecutor's Office Shooting Response Team was activated and handled the investigation.

The defendant was initially charged on complaints by the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office following the incident. The defendant remains in custody in the Passaic County Jail. This matter is listed for arraignment before the Hon. Sohail Mohammed, J.S.C., on May 8, 2017.

Media inquiries should be directed to Chief Assistant Prosecutor Mary Catherine Ryan at mryan@passaiccountynj.org.

A criminal indictment is merely an accusation. Despite this accusation, defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.



Dereen Wofford