



718.286.6000
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2022

CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315
QDACommunications@queensda.org

DEFENDANT CHARGED WITH ANTI-SEMITIC ATTACK IN FAR ROCKAWAY

Faces Up to Four Years in Prison if Convicted

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that James Purcell, aka James Porcell, 34, has been charged with assault as a hate crime for allegedly attacking a Jewish man in Far Rockaway on Tuesday.

District Attorney Katz said, “This defendant is accused of assaulting an individual of the Jewish faith while making anti-Semitic statements. We will not tolerate assault motivated by hate in the most diverse county in the world. These acts are offenses against our shared values and our shared right to safety and peace in our neighborhoods. This defendant is charged appropriately and will be held to account.”

Purcell, of Ocean Crest in Far Rockaway, Queens, was arraigned today before Queens Criminal Court Judge Jessica Earle-Gargan on a six-count criminal complaint. The defendant is charged with assault in the third degree as a hate crime, assault in the third degree, obstructing governmental administration in the second degree, resisting arrest, aggravated harassment in the second degree, and harassment in the second degree. If convicted, Purcell faces up to four years in prison.

According to the criminal charges, at approximately 11:40 a.m. on September 13, 2022, the defendant approached a 58-year-old man as he was walking near the intersection of Beach 25th Street and Beach Channel Drive. The defendant allegedly began to yell anti-Semitic remarks, stating in substance “shut up Jew, I’ll make you shut up.”

District Attorney Katz said Purcell then allegedly punched the victim in the face and continued to assault him with his fists while shouting hateful remarks.

Upon responding to the scene, members of the 101st Police Precinct tried to apprehend the defendant after the victim pointed him out on the street. At that time, Purcell ignored multiple commands to stop and fled from the officers. Once the defendant was apprehended, he allegedly flailed his arms and twisted his body in an attempt to avoid being placed under arrest.

Assistant District Attorney Michael Brovner, Bureau Chief of the District Attorney’s Hate Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for the Supreme Court Trials Division Pishoy B. Yacoub.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

#

Note to Editors: Archived press releases are available at www.queensda.org.

