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SQUATTER SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR ILLEGALLY OCCUPYING ST. ALBANS HOME

Defendant Trespassed onto Vacant Property and Kept Multiple Pit Bulls in Basement; Pleaded Guilty to Burglary Last Month

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that True Jackson was sentenced to two to four years in prison for illegally occupying a vacant single-family home in St. Albans in 2024. Jackson claimed the home was his lawful permanent residence and kept pit bulls on the property.

District Attorney Katz said: “This defendant thought he could help himself to a vacant home that was not his. He moved in and listed the home as his official place of residence. An investigation by my Housing and Worker Protection Bureau revealed that he had no claim to the property. He has now pleaded guilty and was sentenced to prison. This case makes clear that we will prioritize removing squatters and prosecute those who make illegal claims to property.”

Jackson, 41, pleaded guilty to burglary in the third degree in July. Supreme Court Justice Gary Miret sentenced him yesterday as a predicate felon to an indeterminate term of two to four years in prison.

Jackson’s codefendants pleaded guilty earlier this year to criminal trespass and were given conditional discharges.

DA Katz said that, according to the charges and investigation, the defendants illegally moved into the home in St. Albans in the spring of 2024. Family members of the legal homeowner, who had moved out months earlier, noticed activity inside the property. No one had been given permission to be in the property.

On July 31, a police officer responded to a call of a domestic dispute at the home between Jackson and a codefendant, who are stepbrothers. During the incident, Jackson, his stepbrother and his stepbrother’s girlfriend said they lived inside the home and reported the address to the police as their official place of residence.

Jackson’s name was on a forged lease recovered during the execution of the search warrant.

Numerous pit bulls were found to be kept in the basement of the property, seemingly in good condition. They were transported to animal control.

Assistant District Attorney William Jorgenson, Bureau Chief of the District Attorney’s Housing and Worker Protection Bureau, prosecuted the case with the assistance of Assistant District Attorneys Brian Gersh

and Christina Hanophy, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

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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.

