



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
TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2026

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

QUEENS MAN SENTENCED TO UP TO 17 YEARS IN PRISON FOR TARGETING EX-GIRLFRIEND FOR ATTACK

Brayahan Agudelo, While Being Investigated for Role in Car Theft Ring, Asked Undercover Officer to Paralyze Former Girlfriend; Defendant Assaulted Ex-Girlfriend and Instructed Mother to Continue Fear Campaign After His Arrest

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Brayahan Agudelo was sentenced to 13.8 to 17 years in prison after pleading guilty to strangulation, stalking, burglary and other crimes for attacking his ex-girlfriend in 2025 and then enlisting an undercover police officer to harm her. Agudelo is accused of soliciting the officer, who was investigating the defendant in another case, to paralyze his ex-girlfriend in exchange for a firearm or a car. Agudelo's mother, Maria Cruz, also pleaded guilty in connection with the same case.

District Attorney Katz said: "This defendant terrorized his ex-girlfriend. Then when he couldn't do that anymore because he was in custody, his mother did it in his stead. The extent to which the defendant was willing to go to cause harm came to light during our investigation into his role in a car theft ring. Fortunately, working with our law enforcement partners at the NYPD, we were able to put a stop to this abhorrent conduct and find safe housing for the woman and her family. The defendant will now serve up to 17 years in prison."

Agudelo, 32, of Jackson Heights, pleaded guilty in December to strangulation in the second degree, burglary in the first degree, stalking in the first degree, three counts of endangering the welfare of a child, conspiracy in the fourth degree, burglary in the second degree, criminal contempt in the first degree, and tampering with a witness in the fourth degree.

Supreme Court Justice Michael Yavinsky sentenced him Friday to a minimum of 13.8 years in prison and a maximum of 17 years in prison to be followed by five years of post-release supervision.

Cruz, 53, of Jackson Heights pleaded guilty in January to tampering with a witness in the fourth degree and stalking in the fourth degree and was sentenced by Supreme Court Justice Frances Wang to three years' probation and 420 hours of community service.

DA Katz said that, according to the indictment and investigation, on April 10, 2025, at approximately 10:30 p.m., Agudelo put his arms around the neck of his ex-girlfriend at her home and applied pressure, causing her to lose consciousness. The 2-year-old daughter of the victim and Agudelo was present at the time. When police arrived, Agudelo had left. The victim was taken to the hospital for treatment.

The ex-girlfriend called 911 on April 14, April 16, April 22 and April 25 to report Agudelo standing outside her apartment door. The defendant fled each time before police responded.

On April 24, at approximately 12:17 a.m., Agudelo entered his former girlfriend's residence through a bedroom window, brandished a knife and threatened her. When she attempted to run from the apartment, Agudelo pulled her by the hair to prevent her from leaving and took her cell phone.

The victim managed to break away and opened her front door to scream for assistance. When police arrived, Agudelo had fled the apartment. The victim was observed to have bruise marks and indicated her arm was in pain.

On April 24 Agudelo engaged in a conversation with an undercover police officer investigating auto thefts as part of [Operation Hellcat](#). The defendant asked the undercover if he could "make his wife a paraplegic," referring to Agudelo's former girlfriend. The defendant told the undercover in a conversation the next day that he wanted her hit in the back and physically disabled. Agudelo and the undercover detective agreed on compensation and a date the attack was to take place.

Police arrested Agudelo on April 25, 2025.

On April 28 and April 29, Agudelo made phone calls from jail to his mother, Maria Cruz, and directed her to go to his ex-girlfriend's home and to her grandchildren's school to convince the victim not to testify against him. During one conversation, the defendant provided his mother with a security code to access his former girlfriend's apartment building and gave her specific instructions to evade security cameras. Agudelo told his mother to confront the former girlfriend with the defendant's brother so that one could restrain and beat the woman while the other talked to her. This violated an order of protection issued against Agudelo.

Cruz reported back to her son that she followed his instructions, but the victim was not at home at the time. Video surveillance obtained during the investigation showed Cruz inside the building and outside the victim's apartment door on April 28 and 29.

The Queens District Attorney's Office, working with law enforcement partners, arranged for safe housing for the victim and her family.

Agudelo was among 20 defendants indicted in May 2025 as part of the Operation Hellcat investigation into the theft of vehicles throughout New York City and its suburbs. He was accused of selling stolen cars and a gun to an undercover officer.

In February, Agudelo pleaded guilty to criminal possession of stolen property in the second degree and criminal sale of a firearm in the third degree and is expected to be sentenced to up to six years in prison on May 12.

Assistant District Attorney Paige Nyer, Section Chief in the District Attorney's Domestic Violence Bureau, prosecuted the domestic violence case with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Kristiana Stiles under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Mary Kate Quinn, Bureau Chief, Audra Beerman, Tara Coughlin and Howard McCallum, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and under the overall supervision of former Executive Assistant District Attorney for Special Prosecutions Joyce A. Smith.

Assistant District Attorney Lissa L. Yang, Section Chief of the District Attorney's Major Economic Crimes Bureau Auto Crime Unit, is prosecuting the auto theft case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Mary Lowenburg, Bureau Chief, Catherine C. Kane, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Joseph T. Conley III.

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.

