

# State of South Carolina

Charleston County  
101 Meeting Street, Suite 400  
Charleston, SC 29401  
Phone (843) 958-1900  
Fax (843) 958-1905



Berkeley County  
300-B California Avenue  
Moncks Corner, SC 29461  
Phone (843) 723-3800 ext. 4529  
Fax (843) 719-4588

**SCARLETT A. WILSON**  
*Solicitor, Ninth Judicial Circuit*

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Contact: Ashley Kay  
[KayA@scsolicitor9.org](mailto:KayA@scsolicitor9.org)

## **Judge Sentences Tyler Gage Black to Four Years Incarceration upon Guilty Plea to Assault & Stalking**

*Charleston, S.C.*-- Solicitor Scarlett Wilson announced today that defendant Tyler Gage Black was convicted of Assault and Battery in the First Degree and Stalking upon entry of a guilty plea on the eve of a jury trial. Black faced a maximum of 15 years on the combined charges if run consecutively. He was sentenced to 8 years incarceration by the Honorable Dale E. Van Slambrook, who presided over the plea, but the sentence was suspended to the service of 4 years active incarceration followed by 5 years of probation with counseling. A permanent restraining order was also entered for the future protection of the victim.

Assistant Solicitor Chad Simpson prosecuted the case against Black, assisted by Investigator Joshua Pierce. Mr. Black was represented by attorney Peter McCoy.

On May 17, 2023, Tyler Black's girlfriend gave him a ride home from a local bar. Once they reached his James Island home, an argument ensued, after which his girlfriend tried to leave the area in her nearby vehicle. When she tried to run to her car, Mr. Black punched her with a closed fist and pulled her into his residence. While inside, he slapped her multiple times, headbutted her, and pushed her head against a table, causing visible injuries to her face and lip. When her screaming began to risk alerting neighbors, she gained the space to flee the home and make it to her car.

Black followed her in his vehicle to a nearby Walmart parking lot, where he eventually gave up the pursuit. The victim fled to a friend's house downtown, intentionally choosing a location she believed Black would not know. This proved untrue, however, when a short time later Black let it be known through text messages that he knew her location. To prove the point, he left take-out food on her car. This terrified the victim, who feared additional harm, a fear only compounded for the next several hours as Black sent her over one hundred text messages and called her over forty times. Many of these messages were overtly threatening to her and anyone assisting her at the location. Several threatened direct harm and indicated that he was coming over to get her. Black's crimes were reported to the Charleston Police Department the following morning, as the victim sought treatment of her injuries at MUSC.

The Ninth Circuit Solicitor's Office is especially appreciative of the victim, who endured so much that terrible day and in the years to follow while seeing this matter to its resolution. Lead investigator Brandon Windham with the Charleston Police Department helped secure the evidence needed for the convictions. Assistant Solicitor Chad Simpson added, "We are thankful that Judge Van Slambrook determined that an active sentence was appropriate in this case – partner violence is a serious issue in South Carolina, and it demeans the prolonged suffering of victims when it is treated as routine and given probationary sentences."

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