FALL 2026

SAO UPDATE

The Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office • State's Attorney, Ivan J. Bates

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STATE'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE AND DATA DASHBOARD



On September 29, the State's Attorney's Office launched a new website, including a new Data Dashboard in partnership with Prosecutorial Performance Indicators (PPI) to provide the public with a quantitative look at the many facets of the Office's work, from cases and prosecutions to outcomes and other key measures that help tell the story of public safety and accountability in Baltimore City.

"Our office works for the people of Baltimore, and with that responsibility comes an obligation to be transparent about the work we do and accountable for the results we deliver. The public deserves access to meaningful information about how our criminal justice system operates and how our office is performing.

This dashboard provides a quantitative look at the many facets of our work, from cases and prosecutions to outcomes and other key measures that help tell the story of public safety and accountability in Baltimore City," said State's Attorney Ivan J. Bates. " By making this information accessible to everyone through our new website, we hope to provide greater insight into our work, identify trends, measure our progress, and give residents the tools to better understand the role of the State's Attorney's Office in our justice system. Data alone cannot tell the full story of our work or the people and communities it impacts. But sharing this information openly is essential to earning and maintaining the public's trust. I want to sincerely thank Senators Van Hollen and Alsobrooks for appropriating $775,000 to the Office of the State's Attorney for Baltimore City to support upgrades and modernization of the Office."

With a $775,000 federal appropriation secured with the support of Maryland's U.S. Senate delegation, the Office has made critical investments in technology and modernized key aspects of its operations. These improvements include launching a new, modern website that gives residents greater access to information about the Office and provides a more intuitive, user-friendly experience when seeking services, resources, and updates.

Linked from the State's Attorney's Office website, the Data Dashboard includes detailed information on Circuit and District Court cases and their outcomes, along with dozens of tools that let users filter information by offense type and defendant demographics.

Check out the new website at **stattorney.org**.

DEFENDANT CHARGED IN 1986 HOMICIDE COLD CASE



On September 21, State's Attorney Bates announced charges against Defendant David Alexander Williams for the fatal shooting of 23-year-old Teresa Ann Houck, who was found deceased in Druid Hill Park in October 1986. The Defendant is charged with First-Degree Murder and related charges after DNA testing confirmed a connection between the Defendant and the Victim. Individuals charged are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at trial. Cold Case Unit Chief Kurt Bjorklund will prosecute this case.

"Nearly forty years may have passed, but our commitment to seeking justice for Ms. Houck and her loved ones has never wavered. What began as an unspeakable act of violence, with evidence of an apparent sexual assault, ultimately provided the critical lead that allowed investigators to identify a suspect and bring this case before the courts. This arrest is a testament to the relentless determination of our law enforcement partners and the advancements in forensic technology that continue to give new hope to families who have waited decades for answers," said State's Attorney Ivan J. Bates. "I want to commend Chief Bjorklund for his tireless efforts and the diligent work of our partners at BPD. To the victim's loved ones, I want you to know that your loved one has not been forgotten, and neither has our responsibility to pursue justice on their behalf. No amount of time can erase that obligation, and we will continue working to ensure that those responsible for violent crimes are held accountable, no matter how many years have passed."

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DEFENDANT CHARGED IN 1986 HOMICIDE COLD CASE

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On October 22, 1986, at approximately 10:30 a.m., 23-year-old Teresa Ann Houck was found deceased in Druid Hill Park lying in a grassy area near the intersection of Red Run and Hanlon Drive, nude from the waist down and suffering from multiple gunshot wounds to the head, neck, and chest. She was pronounced deceased at the scene.

The investigation established that Ms. Houck was employed as a dancer at the Pussycat Club, located in the 400 block of East Baltimore Street in Baltimore City. Ms. Houck's automobile was found in a parking lot near the intersection of Baltimore Street and Holiday Street, a short distance from her place of employment, indicating she was likely transported from the area to Druid Hill Park by other means. Coworkers and acquaintances reported that Ms. Houck left the Pussycat Club on October 22, 1986, at approximately 2:00 a.m., and was never seen alive again.

OVER 1,300 OLDER ADULTS GATHER FOR FOURTH ANNUAL LUNCHEON AND RESOURCE FAIR






On September 15, the State's Attorney's Older & Disabled Persons Unit hosted the fourth annual Older Adult Luncheon and Resource Fair for Baltimore City residents ages 60 and up. This event provides older adults with valuable information on protecting themselves and their community from elder abuse and financial fraud. Dozens of City and State agencies were also present, allowing attendees to speak directly with organizations that can provide resources, answer questions, and connect them with services. Over 1,200 older adults filled the Martin's West venue from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. For more information about the State's Attorney's Older & Disabled Persons Unit, **visit stattorney.org/victim-witness/older-disabled.**

MENTAL HEALTH COURT: BALANCING ACCOUNTABILITY, TREATMENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY

For individuals living with serious mental health conditions, navigating the criminal justice system can present unique challenges. The Mental Health Court (MHC) Unit at the State's Attorney's Office works at the intersection of criminal justice and mental health care, helping ensure cases are handled with the specialized knowledge, resources and oversight these circumstances require.

Maryland's first MHC grew out of a pilot program launched in 2002 to establish consistent procedures for cases involving competency evaluations in District Court. The program eventually expanded into a dedicated, officially certified Problem-Solving Court, serving as a model for mental health courts throughout Maryland and beyond. Building on the success of the District Court MHC, the Circuit Court implemented an MHC in 2011. Unlike traditional prosecutorial units, the Mental Health Court Unit focuses on cases involving defendants with specific mental health needs and legal circumstances. The unit handles cases across three primary tracks: competency to stand trial, pleas of Not Criminally Responsible (NCR), and a treatment-based probation program for eligible defendants.

When a defendant's competency to stand trial is questioned, the court orders an evaluation to determine whether the individual can understand the proceedings and assist in their defense. These cases receive specialized oversight while the competency issue is addressed. The unit also handles NCR cases, which involve a legal determination of criminal responsibility and may result in commitment to the Maryland Department of Health for treatment, followed in some cases by conditional release and continued monitoring.

The probation track offers eligible defendants a voluntary, treatment-focused alternative that combines clinical services with judicial oversight. Participants must meet legal and clinical eligibility requirements and agree to follow an individualized treatment plan. Rather than completing probation without regular court involvement, participants return for scheduled review hearings where the judge and the multidisciplinary team assess progress, address challenges and reinforce accountability.

These cases require a comprehensive understanding of mental health law, clinical evaluations, treatment options and the public mental health system. Experienced prosecutors work closely with judges, defense attorneys, case managers, supervising agents, clinicians and other agencies to develop appropriate responses to each case.

Mental Health Court was developed to address a recurring challenge: individuals with serious mental health conditions can cycle through the criminal justice system without receiving

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additional safety concerns and leave individuals vulnerable to further involvement with the justice system after release. By bringing criminal justice and mental health professionals together, MHC helps identify appropriate cases earlier, improve access to treatment, reduce repeat criminal activity and avoid unnecessary incarceration when appropriate.

Accountability remains central to the process. Participants are expected to comply with court-ordered conditions and treatment recommendations, and the court can adjust treatment plans or impose sanctions when necessary. The State remains actively involved throughout the process, monitoring progress and working with the team to address setbacks as well as successes.

For the prosecutors who serve in the unit, the work requires patience, adaptability and a commitment to supporting both victims and defendants. Every day brings different challenges, from reviewing clinical reports and preparing cases to participating in hearings involving state hospitals and coordinating with agencies across Maryland.

District Court Mental Health Court Chief Irene Dey, who has been in public service for 28 years, says one of the most rewarding aspects of her career has been helping victims feel heard and supported throughout the criminal justice process. In many cases, victims are family members or loved ones who have spent years trying to connect a defendant with appropriate treatment.

Circuit Court Mental Health Court Chief Tracy Varda, who has been with the Circuit Court Mental Health Court program since its inception, says it is fulfilling to see a defendant who has struggled in the community because of mental health issues, take full advantage of the opportunities in MHC and turn their lives around. The program has seen defendants who have never received the appropriate treatment later thrive in the community once they are properly medicated and/or have received the appropriate mental health services.

CONVICTIONS & SENTENCES

Defendant Reginald Raysor was found guilty of Second-Degree Felony Murder, Attempted Armed Robbery, Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Crime of Violence, and Illegal Possession of a Regulated Firearm. The Defendant attempted to rob and fatally shot 59-year-old Reginald Bernard Harrod on September 14, 2024, at the 1100 block of Springfield Avenue while the victim was sitting in his car.

CONVICTIONS & SENTENCES

Defendant Bryan Cherry was sentenced to Life without the possibility of parole for fatally beating Sierra Johnson with a crowbar on July 14, 2024, in the 800 block of Abbott Court. This sentence will be served consecutively to the Defendant's current Life, suspending all but 40 years, sentence for Attempted Murder and Deadly Weapon in another Baltimore City case. This Defendant also pleaded guilty in Baltimore County in March for killing two women.

Defendant Shea Green pleaded guilty to Theft Scheme and Financial Exploitation of a Vulnerable Adult after stealing $70,000 from her 91-year-old godmother. Green admitted to assuming power of attorney and then emptying her Godmother's savings account within four months.
The victim was a widowed schoolteacher who had been diagnosed with dementia. The fraud was uncovered when one of the neighbors, who had known the victim since she was a child, found her home with no food in the refrigerator and learned she had not eaten all day. The neighbors stepped in and pooled resources to provide food. Shortly thereafter, a tax sale notice was uncovered. Adult protective services were called in, and the neighbors helped the victim report possible fraud to the banks and obtain a check to bring the taxes up to date and preserve the victim's home. Throughout these events, bank records show the victim had sufficient funds to cover her expenses, but the money was diverted through Zelle transactions to the Defendant. The Defendant was sentenced to 10 years, suspending all but time served, and three years of probation. She was on home detention for 116 days before trial and has been ordered to return full ownership of the victim's home after coercing them to transfer the deed to the Defendant in 2018.

Defendant Buddy Rositzky was found guilty by a jury of First-Degree Assault, Use of a Firearm in a Crime of Violence, and two City gun ordinance violations. On March 7, 2026, the Defendant chased and shot at an off-duty MTA bus driver after she passed him in traffic at 3:00 a.m. on Washington Blvd. as he and his friends were joyriding on mopeds. The Victim quickly shot back in self-defense, and a shootout ensued, ending with both the Victim and Defendant crashing their vehicles. The Defendant was sentenced to 25 years in prison plus a $1,000 fine.

Defendant Tamal Johnson was found guilty on all counts, including First-Degree Murder, Use of a Handgun in the Commission of a Crime of Violence, and Wear/Carry/Transport of a Firearm by a Prohibited Person. The Defendant fatally shot Taniya Gray on Mother's Day in 2025 at the 4100 block of Mountwood Road.

OCTOBER IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH



NEED HELP?
CALL: 410-396-1897
VictimWitness@stattorney.org

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State's Attorney Bates joined Colin Kaepernick at Coppin State University for the release of the former quarterback's new book, The Perilous Fight.



State's Attorney Bates and the Office's External Affairs Team welcomed students back on the first day of school.



The State's Attorney's Office hosted the 3rd annual Back to School Community Cookout & Backpack Giveaway in August.



The State's Attorney's Office hosted a delegation of law enforcement officials, prosecutors, and judges from across Europe and the United Kingdom as part of the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program.



State's Attorney Bates and staff attended community events across Baltimore on National Night Out.



State's Attorney Bates and the External Affairs Team hosted a community walk in the 45th District.

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR BALTIMORE CITY:

The mission of the Office of the State's Attorney for Baltimore City is to create true public safety through partnerships with elected officials, law enforcement, and our residents. The Office fulfills this goal through the successful prosecution of all crimes in Baltimore City.

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