



# **PRESS RELEASE**

## **Domestic Abuser Sentenced to Life in Prison September 16, 2021**

Bryan, TX – Today, Judge Kyle Hawthorne sentenced Craig Burluson, 42, of College Station, to the maximum sentence of life in prison for the offense of Assault Family Violence with a Previous Conviction.

On January 5, 2019, officers from the College Station Police Department responded to a local residence after several bystanders reported that a male was assaulting a female in the front yard of a residence. One of the bystanders began recording the Defendant breaking out the windows of the victim's SUV with a golf club and threatening his victim with the metal club. The camera footage also captured the defendant kicking the victim to the ground and assaulting her. Before police arrived, the Defendant fled the scene. The College Station Police Department issued a warrant for the Defendant's arrest and began looking for the Defendant's whereabouts.

A few weeks later, Bryan Police were called to the victim's workplace after a suspect matching the Defendant's description vandalized the victim's vehicle, slashing her tires, smashing her repaired windshield, and damaging the paint. The suspect fled prior to police arrival. Because of their concerns for the victim's safety and difficulty finding and arresting the Defendant, the College Station Police Department placed the Defendant on the Brazos County Domestic Violence High Risk Team List.

On May 6, 2019, a different victim who was seeking shelter at Phoebe's Home, the local domestic violence shelter, outcried about being recently abused by Craig Burluson. The staff at Phoebe's Home recognized the Defendant's name from the High-Risk Team and — with the victim's permission — notified the Brazos County District Attorney's Office and the Bryan Police Department.

An officer with the Bryan Police Department interviewed this victim. She revealed that the defendant admitted to her that he had committed a murder in Houston two weeks prior at the Economy Inn and Suites. The victim also reported that Defendant had threatened a different male victim with a firearm two days prior to the interview and had stolen his money. The victim stated that she was in fear of Burluson due to his violence and these incidents. The officer contacted Houston Police Homicide and discovered that the Defendant was the lead suspect in a murder in Houston at the Economy Inn and Suites which was committed on April 21, 2019. Bryan Police also interviewed the victim of the Aggravated Robbery and sought their own warrant for his arrest.

With this new information, Bryan Police immediately began searching for Burluson. They located him in the early hours of the next morning at the bathroom of Henderson Park. When confronted





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by law enforcement, Burleson attempted to hide a firearm in his possession. This firearm was later matched to the shell casings and bullets recovered at the scene of the Houston murder.

Prosecutors presented evidence of these offenses during the punishment phase at trial. They also presented evidence of the defendant's extensive criminal history, which included previous convictions for Manslaughter, Unlawful Possession of a Firearm by a Felon, and multiple charges related to violence and stalking towards multiple ex-girlfriends and an ex-wife. In total, the defendant had previously been sentenced to prison four times.

This case was prosecuted by Jessica Escue and Gretchen Connick. Together, these cases were investigated and assisted by the College Station Police Department, Bryan Police Department, and Houston Police Department.

**“Judge Hawthorne’s sentence has brought an end to the decades of violence, terror, and devastation that Craig Burleson has created in our community. This sentence is a result of multiple agencies working together to ensure that Burleson’s many victims can finally sleep soundly.”**

— Jessica Escue and Gretchen Connick, Assistant District Attorneys

