

**OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY**  
BLUE RIDGE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Jury convicts man of 15 counts of family violence, judge sentences him to life plus 10 years in prison**  
**State vs. Joseph English Gregory Newton**

**April 19, 2022** – District Attorney Shannon Wallace announces that on March 31, 2022, a Cherokee County jury convicted Woodstock resident Joseph English Gregory Newton, 31, of 15 charges related to violent attacks of his girlfriend who was two months pregnant during the final incident.

After a two-day jury trial, Newton was found guilty of kidnapping with bodily injury, criminal attempt to commit murder, criminal attempt to commit feticide, family violence aggravated assault, family violence aggravated battery, family violence battery (4 counts), family violence simple battery, false imprisonment, sexual battery, criminal trespass (2 counts), and tampering with evidence.

Judge Tony Baker sentenced Newton to life plus 10 years to serve in confinement in the state prison system.

On December 22, 2020, law enforcement first became aware of domestic violence in Newton's relationship with his live-in girlfriend. The previous night, Newton's girlfriend had attempted to leave their residence due to an argument. When Newton took away her car keys and cell phone, she left on foot. Newton then chased her through the neighborhood, yanked her by the hair, tore off her clothes, and dragged her across a yard and a driveway. Even though several people witnessed the violence, no one called law enforcement at the time.

“Although domestic violence is most pervasive out of sight, in many cases, family, friends, and even complete strangers witness violence but choose to remain silent. They may feel it isn't their place to intervene, or they may want to protect the privacy of the victim. The victim may even ask them to remain silent,” said Deputy Chief Assistant District Attorney Rachel Ashe of the Domestic Violence Unit. “As a community, we all need to take a hard look at cases like this and understand that violence is never acceptable and that sometimes we need to step up to protect a victim, even when the victim is not ready or is unwilling to seek aid.”

The victim sustained swelling, scratches, and bruising from this attack. She was eventually able to get away from Newton and a family member called 911 the next day. The Woodstock Police Department investigated the crime and arrested Newton.

After his arrest, the defendant was released on bond with conditions to avoid contact with his girlfriend. He did not comply with the order, and they resumed their relationship. Evidence at trial showed that their relationship continued to be tumultuous.

Law enforcement received another call regarding domestic violence with Newton on October 10, 2021. That day, Newton's girlfriend had decided to end their relationship for the sake of their unborn child. Newton was angry and responded by holding her against her will in their apartment, attacking her for hours, and expressing his desire to kill her and the baby.

During this attack, Newton punched his girlfriend, kicked her, spit on her, strangled her, dragged her by the hair, hit her with objects in their apartment, slammed her head against the floor, and stomped on her abdomen with his foot. Afterwards, as she lay on the floor in pain, he poured salt, sugar, and coffee grounds on her open wounds. At some point, he fell asleep and she escaped through an apartment window, got into her car, and called 911.

When first responders arrived to assist the victim, she had swollen eyes and lips, injuries and cuts on her arms and hands, and injuries to her neck. Officers noted numerous signs of strangulation, including neck pain, sore throat, difficulty swallowing, vision changes, lightheadedness, and droopy face. She was transported to the hospital, where she was treated and kept overnight. Doctors determined that she had suffered a subchorionic hemorrhage of the placenta, but expected the baby to survive.

Woodstock Police arrested Newton, who was hiding in the attic of their apartment.

“After enduring a brutal assault, this resilient young woman escaped her abuser and called 911 while driving to a safe place. During that call, she described the events that occurred and, for the first time, pleaded for help,” said District Attorney Wallace. “Even though Newton beat her for hours, she had the strength and courage to escape – ensuring that she and her baby would survive.”

At trial, the State presented more than 200 exhibits and called 13 witnesses to the stand, including law enforcement officers, domestic violence experts, medical professionals who cared for the victim, as well as a friend and neighbor who had witnessed some of the violence. Exhibits included photographs of the victim's injuries and jail calls in which Newton asked the victim to lie about what transpired on October 10, 2021.

“Over the course of their relationship, the victim suffered repeatedly at the hands of this defendant. She never called for help for herself and held on to much of the blame and responsibility for her injuries. Tragically, this blame shifting is something we see often in cases involving domestic violence. Ultimately, the defendant's final attack led her to call for help – not for herself but for her unborn child. Miraculously, she survived this relationship and our hope is that she continues to heal and thrive,” said Deputy Chief Ashe.

## **Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence typically follows a pattern, with tension building, followed by a major act of violence, a calm period, and then cycling back to tension building. As time passes, the violent episodes often get more serious and may lead to a lethal act.

Strangulation is one of the most lethal forms of domestic violence even though injuries may appear to be mild or victims may have no visible marks. According to the Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention, strangulation is the ultimate form of power and control in which the batterer asserts control over the victim's next breath. Odds for homicide increase substantially (750%) for victims who have been previously strangled.

If you or someone you know is impacted by domestic violence, please contact the Cherokee Family Violence Center, CFVC.org, 770-479-1703 (24/7 crisis hotline). In case of an emergency, call 911.

*The Office of the District Attorney for the Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit is committed to seeking justice, acting with integrity, and collaborating with partner agencies in the criminal justice system in order to protect the citizens of Cherokee County and the State of Georgia.*

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