

Tompkins County
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"Inclusion Through Diversity"

March 22, 2023

PRESS RELEASE / FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Zachary D. Starner, 36, of Lansing, was convicted by a jury this morning of the crime of Perjury in the Third Degree. Perjury in the Third Degree is a Class A misdemeanor punishable by up to 364 days in jail, a term of probation or a conditional discharge.

Starner had been on administrative leave from his job as a Tompkins County Sheriff's Deputy since his arrest on February 8, 2021. The Tompkins County Sheriff's Office conducted the investigation and Sheriff Derek Osborne was the arresting officer in connection with the perjury charge. Starner was convicted of providing false sworn testimony in connection with a criminal trial in Tompkins County Court in 2019.

The conviction came after a jury trial in the Ithaca City Court. The trial commenced on March 20, 2023, and concluded with the jury verdict just before noon on Wednesday, March 22, 2023.

DA Van Houten said "dishonesty from a law enforcement officer has no place in this community. This verdict represents a significant message that no one is above the law in Tompkins County. I want to commend ADA Veronica Fox for her strong advocacy and steadfast work on this difficult case."

Sheriff Osborne added "I am both grateful for the verdict and thankful to the jury who took this allegation as seriously as I did. I remain committed to allowing only the best public servants to serve as my deputies."

Sentencing has been scheduled for May 26, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. before Judge Richard M. Wallace.

Assistant District Attorney Veronica Fox prosecuted the case, assisted by ADA Heidi Paulino. Daniel Strollo from Rochester, New York, represented the defendant.
