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July 28, 2023

### **CLAY COUNTY WOMAN FOUND GUILTY OF ILLEGALLY POSSESSING FIREARM**

State Attorney Melissa Nelson announces that a Clay County jury found Jeanetta Merrwether guilty of Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon. With the verdict, Merrwether faces up to 15 years in Florida State Prison. The Honorable Steven Whittington will sentence Merrwether at a future hearing.

In the early morning hours of May 15, 2022, the Clay County Sheriff's Office responded to a Bay Circle East home. Merrwether called police to report she had been hit in the head and was bleeding. When officers arrived, they interviewed both Merrwether and a witness — the two were in a relationship. The investigation revealed they were arguing when Merrwether pulled out a firearm from under her bed and pointed it at the witness. There was a struggle between the two and the witness hit Merrwether with the butt of the gun to get her off of him, which resulted in the injury. Merrwether, a convicted felon, is not legally allowed to have a firearm. Merrwether admitted to officers that she knew she was not legally able to have a firearm, but she kept it anyway for protection. The investigation further determined Merrwether pulling the firearm on the witness was offensive, not defensive, in nature during the course of the argument.

The case was investigated by the Clay County Sheriff's Office and was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorney Jamie Cona and Kristen Huether.