

Office of the State Attorney  
Fourth Judicial Circuit of Florida  
www.sao4th.com



MELISSA W. NELSON  
STATE ATTORNEY

311 West Monroe Street  
Jacksonville, FL 32202-4242  
TEL: (904) 255-2500

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: David Chapman

Phone: (904) 255-3004

Cell: (904) 524-6626

[ChapmanD@coj.net](mailto:ChapmanD@coj.net)

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### **JURY FINDS COPELAND GUILTY OF ARMED BURGLARY, OTHER CRIMES**

State Attorney Melissa Nelson announces that a Duval County jury found Johntez Copeland guilty of Armed Burglary, Possession of a Controlled Substance, and Resisting an Officer without Violence to his/her Person. With the verdict and if the Court determines Copeland to be a Prison Release Reoffender, he faces up to a life sentence in Florida State Prison. The Honorable Jeb Branham will sentence Copeland at a later date.

On Aug. 20, 2022, a "Be On The Lookout" or BOLO alert was issued by the Jacksonville Sheriff's office for a group of men in a U-Haul who walked into a retail store and stole as many items as they could carry. Around 10:15 that night, officers patrolling McDuff Road and West Beaver Street saw a vehicle matching the description. The officers pulled the U-Haul over and the driver — identified as Copeland — ran. An officer chased Copeland and saw him drop bags of drugs from his pockets. Officers set up a perimeter and collected the evidence Copeland dropped. A woman reported Copeland entered her home and asked her not to tell the police he was there. An officer and a K9 apprehended Copeland. While handcuffed, an officer found a revolver in a holster a few feet from where Copeland was found. The woman told the police that was her firearm, and Copeland must have taken it when he broke into her home to hide. The substances were sent to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement laboratories for analysis, and it was confirmed to be a narcotic.

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Doug Baer Jr. and Andrew Szatkowski.