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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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JURY FINDS RAWLS GUILTY OF ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF A FIREARM

State Attorney Melissa Nelson announces that a Duval County jury found Christopher Rawls guilty of Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon. With the verdict, Rawls faces up to 30 years in Florida State Prison. The Honorable Anthony Salem will sentence Rawls during a future hearing.

On Aug. 2, 2023, officers with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office responded to reported shots fired at an apartment on Lowell Avenue. Officers found the victim suffering from a gunshot wound to her stomach. She was taken to the hospital. Meanwhile, witnesses on scene told officers they saw Rawls leave on a bike. Another nearby witness told police Rawls ran into her garage in an attempt to hide, but she ran him off. He left a backpack behind that was entered into evidence. A K9 officer deployed his police dog, and Rawls was found and detained in a nearby shed. During a recorded police interview, Rawls admitted to carrying the firearm in his backpack. The firearm had been purchased by the victim. When she asked for it back, the two struggled over it and it discharged and struck her. Rawls is a previously convicted felon and is not legally allowed to possess a firearm.

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Joel Cooper and Lee Wingard.