

# KEOKUK COUNTY ATTORNEY

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## PRESS RELEASE

Summary of Notable Court Proceedings – September - December 2022  
December 30, 2022

Keokuk County, Iowa

**Matthew Schlegel**, 44, of Sigourney, was fined \$855 and sentenced to two years in prison after pleading guilty to First Degree Harassment, an aggravated misdemeanor, arising out of charges filed by the Keokuk County Sheriff's Department after investigating a report of Schlegel threatening the victim at her place of employment. Schlegel's previous criminal history included multiple harassment and assault convictions.

**James Hols**, 49, of Oskaloosa, Iowa (formerly of Sigourney, Iowa) was found to have violated the terms of his probation for the charge of Assault with Intent to Inflict Serious Injury, after evidence was presented that Hols violated his probation by committing an additional crime when he was found guilty by jury of Domestic Abuse Assault – Third or Subsequent Offense on June 15, 2022 in Mahaska County Case No. FECR064852 and sentenced therein as an habitual offender to fifteen years in prison and further evidence showed he tested positive for the use of methamphetamines while on supervised probation.

**Levi Wear**, 20, formerly of What Cheer, Iowa was found to have violated the terms of his probation for the charge of Possession of a Firearm by a Felon, after he pled guilty to Assault Causing Injury arising from charges filed by the Mahaska County Sheriff's Department as a result of Wear's behavior while incarcerated in the Mahaska County Jail awaiting placement at the Ottumwa Residential Facility. Wear's Keokuk County probation was revoked and his original five-year prison sentence was imposed together with prison sentences imposed in unrelated Mahaska County convictions for which Wear was also originally granted probation.

**Ryell McSparen**, 24, of Ottumwa, Iowa, was found to have violated the terms of his probation for the charge of Domestic Abuse Assault Impeding Airflow, an aggravated misdemeanor, for which he was found guilty of on October 22, 2021 arising from charges filed by the Keokuk County Sheriff's Department on April 30, 2021. McSparen's original two-year prison sentence was imposed as a result of his violation of probation to the Department of Corrections.

**Michael Flynn**, 32, of Kinross, Iowa, was fined \$855 and sentenced to a total of two years in prison after pleading guilty to Possession of Marijuana – Third or Subsequent Offense, an aggravated misdemeanor, Violation of No Contact Order, a simple misdemeanor, and found to have violated the terms of his probation for the charge of Domestic Abuse Assault Causing Injury, a serious misdemeanor. Flynn's charges were filed by the Keokuk County Sheriff's Department.

**Melvin Burtlow**, 70, of Ollie, was sentenced to twelve years in prison after pleading guilty to Sexual Abuse in the Third Degree, a Class C Felony, and Assault with Intent to Commit Sexual Abuse, an Aggravated Misdemeanor. Burtlow was also fined a total of \$1,625, will be required to register as a sex offender upon his release from prison, and No Contact Orders were entered preventing him from having contact with his victims. These offenses occurred within Burtlow's home against two victims who were minors at the time of the offenses.

**Russell Blackford**, 39, of Keota, was sentenced to two years in prison with all but 14 days suspended conditioned on his successful Court probation, after pleading guilty to Harassment in the First Degree, an Aggravated Misdemeanor, Possession of Marijuana – First Offense, a serious misdemeanor, and two counts of Violation of a No Contact Order. Blackford was further ordered to pay fines totaling \$2,780 plus court costs and surcharges and a five-year No Contact Order was issued ordering him to have no contact with the victim of the Harassment charge.

Convictions were also entered on thirty-eight other misdemeanor offenses including two Operating While Intoxicated – Second Offense, two Operating While Intoxicated – First Offense, one Possession of Methamphetamine offense, six Possession of Marijuana offenses, three Driving While Barred offenses, one Harassment – First Degree offense, two Assault While Displaying a Dangerous Weapon offenses, two Simple Assault offenses, one Theft – Fifth Degree offense, one Possession of Drug Paraphernalia offense, one Disorderly Conduct offense, one Interference with Official Acts offense, four Violation of No Contact Order offenses, one Criminal Mischief – Fifth Degree, one Use of Fireworks offense, one Reckless Driving offense, and eight Driving Under Suspension offenses.