



PRESS RELEASE

Suspect Arraigned for Crimes against Children – Police concerned about other unwanted contacts with children

The Warren Police Department would like to inform the public about charges issued against a suspect for crimes against children from earlier this week. Our goal is to make the public aware as there is concern that this suspect may have had other unwanted contacts with children in Warren and surrounding communities. This suspect is identified as 22-year-old Elijah Lawrence (pictured below).

On Sunday (04/14/2024) at approximately 03:48pm, Warren Police Officers were dispatched to the Home Depot (25879 Hoover Rd) regarding an assault complaint involving a juvenile victim. Officers arrived and made contact with store staff who directed officers to an 11-year-old female victim and her family members. The investigation showed that the 11-year-old victim and her sister entered the women's bathroom at the business. At this same time, another adult entered the bathroom shortly after the two juvenile females. While inside the women's bathroom, the two juvenile females realized the adult was in fact a man. Upon realizing this, the two juvenile females went to exit the bathroom at which time the male followed behind them. Upon exiting the bathroom, the male inappropriately touched the 11-year-old victim. The 11-year-old immediately notified her adult family members who, in turn, notified store staff. Store staff located the male suspect in the store and began to follow him while 911 was being contacted. Sensing that he was being followed, this male suspect then ran out of the store with store staff continuing to follow him. This male suspect was last seen running into an area neighborhood. Officers arrived quickly and checked the area with negative results. The investigation also showed that this male suspect likely broke into a car in the Home Depot Parking lot prior to engaging in this assault. Officers also learned that this suspect stole a bicycle as he fled from the Home Depot.

On Monday (04/15/2024), less than 24 hours after this incident, investigators had positively identified this suspect and tracked him to his Warren residence. Investigators placed Elijah Lawrence under arrest without force or injury. Investigators executed a search warrant at Lawrence's residence wherein evidence crucial to the assault investigation was seized. On 04/16/2024, the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office charged Lawrence with 1 count of Criminal Sexual Conduct 2nd Degree (15-year felony), 1 count of Possession of Child Sexually Abusive Material (4-year-felony), and two counts of Larceny less than \$200.00 (93-day misdemeanor). Lawrence has previous conviction for motor vehicle theft, several felony arrests contacts, and is a habitual 2nd offender.

On 04/17/2024, Lawrence was arraigned by Judge Faunce of the 37th District Court wherein a not guilty plea was entered. Bond was set at \$250,000 cash/surety with a GPS tether required if bond is posted. His next court date is 05/07/2024 in the 37th District Court.

The Warren Police Department is concerned that Lawrence may have had additional unreported, unwanted contacts with juveniles in the City of Warren. Lawrence is currently a suspect in a "peeping tom" incident from Eastpointe. We are asking the public to look at Lawrence's picture, speak with your children or other juvenile family members, and ask them if they have had any unwanted contacts with Lawrence.

If so, please contact Warren Special Victim's Detective Talos at 586-574-4816.



Elijah Lawrence, booking photo

**For further information, please contact Warren Police
Commissioner Charles Rushton @ 586-574-4803 or 586-823-
9845**

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