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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General James Uthmeier Charges Violent Career Criminal with Sexual Battery, Nine Additional Felonies

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier announced ten felony charges against career criminal Derrick Speights, Jr., 29, of Tampa. Speights is accused of violently beating and sexually abusing the victim to the point where she was unrecognizable and subsequently hospitalized.

“The victim in this case fought through what could have been her last breath, and our prosecutors will fight to bring justice in court,” **said Attorney General James Uthmeier.** “I am grateful to our law enforcement partners at the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office and Tampa Police Department for working the investigation and getting this dangerous felon back behind bars.”

The investigation began on September 28, 2025, when Speights allegedly connected with the victim online and arrived at the victim’s house armed with a handgun. The victim told detectives that he repeatedly, and violently, sexually and physically abused her, before stealing her phone, purse, cash, and house and car keys. Law enforcement located the victim’s vehicle abandoned one week later.

DNA evidence collected during the investigation matched Speights’ DNA. Speights was arrested on March 6, 2026, on a warrant for an unrelated case.

He is now facing the following charges:

- Armed Burglary of a Dwelling (first-degree felony);
- Sexual Battery with Great Bodily Harm/Deadly Weapon (life felony);
- Home Invasion Robbery (first-degree felony);
- Aggravated Battery with Great Bodily Harm/Deadly Weapon (second-degree felony);
- Felon in Possession of a Firearm (second-degree felony);
- Armed False Imprisonment (second-degree felony);
- Grand Theft (third-degree felony);
- Grand Theft of a Motor Vehicle (third-degree felony);
- Tampering with a Witness (third-degree felony); and
- Use of a Two-Way Communication Device to Commit a Felony (third-degree felony).

Speights is held without bond in the Falkenburg Road Jail in Hillsborough County. If convicted as charged, Speights faces multiple life sentences in the Florida Department of Corrections.

This investigation was a collaboration between the Office of Statewide Prosecution, Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office, and Tampa Police Department.

The case will be prosecuted by Special Counsel to the Attorney General Rita Peters in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit of Florida.

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