

OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY

JAYMI STERLING
STATE'S ATTORNEY



41605 COURTHOUSE DRIVE
P.O. Box 1755
LEONARDTOWN, MD 20650

ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Distribution

Media Inquiries:
SaoPio@stmaryscountymd.gov

St. Mary's County Jury Convicts Leonardtown Man of Domestic Violence Assault

LEONARDTOWN, MD (May 14, 2026) – State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced today that Shawn Michael Clarke, 43, of Leonardtown, Maryland was convicted of assault and motor vehicle theft stemming from a domestic violence incident.

On October 26, 2025, deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office responded to a car wash in California, Maryland, regarding a domestic assault in progress inside a vehicle. Upon arrival, the female victim told deputies she escaped by jumping out of the moving vehicle. Her attacker then fled the scene in her car. Deputies observed multiple marks and abrasions on the victim.

After a 2-day jury trial, a St. Mary's County jury found Clarke guilty of the following offenses:

- Second-degree assault (maximum penalty of 10 years in prison); and
- Unlawful taking of a motor vehicle (maximum penalty of 5 years in prison).

“The victim was forced to jump out of a moving car to escape the Defendant's relentless attacks. No person should have to risk their life to survive an act of domestic violence,” said State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling. “Thanks to the courage of the victim, the Defendant now faces serious consequences for his actions.”

Clarke will continue to remain held without bond pending a sentencing hearing where he faces a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison.

Senior Assistant State's Attorney Donna Pettersen, Chief of the Domestic Violence Unit, prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of St. Mary's County.

Deputy Nathaniel Morrison of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office was the lead investigator.

The Honorable Amy Lorenzini presided over the case.

###