



# NEWS RELEASE

**Prosecutor Camelia M. Valdes**  
Passaic County Prosecutor's Office  
401 Grand Street  
Paterson, NJ 07505  
(973) 881-4800

---

## **FORMER PATERSON POLICE OFFICER INDICTED FOR AGGRAVATED ASSAULT AND OFFICIAL MISCONDUCT**

---

PATERSON, NEW JERSEY:

January 18, 2023

Passaic County Prosecutor Camelia M. Valdes announces the Indictment of former Paterson Police Officer Spencer Finch, 46, of Mahwah, New Jersey.

A Passaic County Grand Jury has returned an Indictment charging the defendant with one count of second degree Official Misconduct, in violation of N.J.S. 2C:30-2a, one count of second degree Aggravated Assault, in violation of N.J.S. 2C:12-1b1, and one count of third degree Tampering With Public Records or Information, in violation of N.J.S. 2C:28-7a1.

It is alleged that on December 22, 2018, the defendant, then a Paterson Police Officer, responded to an incident at the Quick's Food Store in Paterson, New Jersey. The victim was detained by police outside of the store while the incident was being investigated. According to the defendant's offense report narrative and Use of Force Report, the victim became belligerent with police and shouted profanities. When the defendant attempted to place the victim under arrest for Robbery, the victim punched the defendant in the chest. The defendant tackled the victim to the ground, resulting in the victim's face striking the sidewalk. When the defendant stood the victim up again, the victim pushed off a wall and tried to strike the defendant again. The defendant then struck the victim in the head with a flashlight. The victim suffered a broken nose, an avulsion of two teeth, a partial avulsion of a third tooth, and lacerations to the lip and scalp.

The defendant's use of force was presented to a Passaic County Grand Jury. The Grand Jury was tasked with determining whether the defendant's use of force was legally justified under the law. The Grand Jury reviewed and considered evidence obtained during the investigation. Following that presentation, the Grand

Jury determined that the defendant's actions were unjustified and the defendant should be charged with criminal offenses.

An Arraignment on the Indictment will be scheduled by the Passaic County Superior Court Criminal Division.

Following the defendant's arrest on this direct Indictment, the State filed a motion for pre-trial detention. A hearing on that motion will be scheduled by the Passaic County Superior Court Criminal Division.

Official Misconduct and Aggravated Assault each carry a maximum term of ten (10) years in New Jersey State Prison. Tampering with Public Records or Information carries a maximum term of five (5) years in New Jersey State Prison.

The defendant was previously Indicted and charged with Official Misconduct, second degree Aggravated Assault, Tampering With Public Records or Information, third degree Possession of a Weapon for an Unlawful Purpose, in violation of N.J.S. 2C:39-4d, and third degree Perjury, in violation of N.J.S. 2C:28-1a. Those charges stemmed from a separate incident that occurred on May 26, 2021. That Indictment is scheduled for a Pretrial Conference on February 16, 2023 before Judge Marilyn C. Clark.

Any member of the public who wishes to make a complaint to this office regarding police misconduct of any Passaic County agency may contact the Public Integrity Unit of the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office or the tips line at 1-877-370-PCPO or [tips@passaiccountynj.org](mailto:tips@passaiccountynj.org).

Media inquiries should be directed to Chief Assistant Prosecutor Peter Foy at [pfoy@passaiccountynj.org](mailto:pfoy@passaiccountynj.org).

A criminal indictment is merely an accusation. Despite this Indictment, the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.



**Spencer Finch**