



# JACKSON COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Michael C. Carr, State's Attorney

Tuesday, May 24, 2016

**RICHARDO BRANDON, MURPHYSBORO, SENTENCED TO THE ILLINOIS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FOR**  
**AGGRAVATED DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE**

Michael C. Carr, Jackson County State's Attorney, announced today that a Murphysboro resident, Richardo Brandon, age 41, was sentenced to the Illinois Department of Corrections following a plea of guilty on March 16, 2016.

On October 16, 2015, at approximately 2:30 p.m., an officer with the Murphysboro Police Department observed an individual leaving the Amstar Gas Station in Murphysboro. As the individual proceeded to his vehicle, the officer observed the individual stagger in front of the business, get into his vehicle, and leave the gas station. As the vehicle pulled out of the gas station, the vehicle was driving very slowly, and the driver failed to use a turn signal. A traffic stop was then conducted on the vehicle, and the driver was identified as the defendant, Richardo Brandon.

The officer detected a strong odor of alcoholic beverage coming from the defendant and his speech was slurred. A Standard Field Sobriety Test was conducted on the defendant, which he failed. The defendant was then arrested and taken to the Murphysboro Police Department where he refused any further testing.

On October 16, 2015, the defendant was cited for Driving Under the Influence, a Class A Misdemeanor; and Improper Turn Signal, a petty offense. On December 30, 2015, the Jackson County State's Attorney's Office refiled the case and charged the defendant with Aggravated Driving Under the Influence, a Class 1 Felony; and Improper Turn Signal, a petty offense; based on the defendant's prior convictions.

On March 16, 2016, the defendant made an open plea of guilty to the amended charge of Aggravated Driving Under the Influence, a Class 2 Felony. The Improper Turn Signal charge was dismissed as a part of the plea. An open plea of guilty is an open admission of guilt to which a Judge assigns a sentence. The Class 2 Felony charge carries a minimum sentence of three (3) years in the Illinois Department of Corrections with a maximum sentence of seven (7) years. Upon completion of any sentence to the Illinois Department of Corrections, the defendant must

serve two (2) years of mandatory supervised release, also known as parole. The defendant was also eligible to receive up to forty-eight (48) months of probation, and a fine of up to \$25,000.

On May 24, 2016, a Jackson County Judge sentenced the defendant, in *absentia*, to four (4) years in the Illinois Department of Corrections, two (2) years of Mandatory Supervised Release, and the defendant must pay the costs of the case totaling \$262.00. Under Illinois law, “in *absentia*” means that a defendant can be tried and sentenced without his presence when he willfully fails to appear at either the trial or sentencing hearing. In this case, the defendant was advised of this fact, but failed to appear at the sentencing hearing, despite being given prior notice. A warrant has been issued for his arrest.

The investigation was conducted by the Murphysboro Police Department. Assistant State’s Attorney Patrick J. Brewster was responsible for the prosecution of this case.