



JACKSON COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

Michael C. Carr, State's Attorney

Jackson County Courthouse • 1001 Walnut • Third Floor • Murphysboro, IL 62966
(618) 687-7200 • FAX (618) 687-7215

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Michael C. Carr, State's Attorney

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LARRY D. COATS, CARBONDALE, SENTENCED TO DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FOR RETAIL THEFT

Michael C. Carr, Jackson County State's Attorney, announced today that Larry Coats, 48, of Carbondale, Illinois, was sentenced to the Illinois Department of Corrections after entering a guilty plea to the charge of Retail Theft.

On November 25, 2016, (Black Friday) around 11:49 p.m., two officers from the Carbondale Police Department were patrolling the Walmart parking lot in Carbondale, Jackson County, Illinois. During their patrol, they noticed Coats frantically trying to load a 58" Samsung Smart TV into the side door of a white van with a female driving. The officers recognized the driver of the van and knew that her driving privileges were suspended. They also knew the driver had been involved in past retail thefts in the Carbondale area. They stopped the squad car and approached the van.

When officers asked the defendant his name, he gave them a false name. He also told them that he paid for the television in the store in a self-checkout lane. Coats could not produce a receipt for the television and based on his demeanor, officers suspected that he had stolen the television, leading them to further investigate. While officers were awaiting retrieval of the store security video, the defendant changed his story several times. When the video became available, the officers watched it and noticed the defendant place the television in his shopping cart with the help of a store employee. The defendant can then be seen selecting a case of Heineken beer and leaving the store without paying for either the beer or the television. The television originally had an anti-theft device on it, but the device had been removed prior to the officers finding it in the defendant's possession.

Larry Coats has been previously convicted of fourteen theft related offenses in Illinois, Missouri, and New Jersey. His prior convictions include Retail Theft, Theft, Burglary, Residential Burglary, Forgery, and Receipt of Stolen Property.

Larry Coats was sentenced to serve three (3) years in the Illinois Department of Corrections, which will be followed by one (1) year of Mandatory Supervised Release.

The investigation was conducted by the Carbondale Police Department. Assistant State's Attorney Abigail Dinn was responsible for the prosecution of this case.