



# JACKSON COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **TRAVIS WINTERS, BELLWOOD, ILLINOIS, SENTENCED TO DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FOR POSSESSION OF WEAPON IN A PENAL INSTITUTION AND THREATENING A PUBLIC OFFICIAL**

Michael C. Carr, Jackson County State's Attorney, announced today that on December 19, 2017, Travis S. Winters, age 41, of Bellwood, Illinois, was sentenced to the Illinois Department of Corrections after entering a plea of guilty to the offense of Possession of a Weapon in a Penal Institution, a Class 1 Felony, and Threatening a Public Official, a Class 3 Felony.

On November 29, 2016, the defendant, who was an inmate at the Jackson County Jail, wrote a letter addressed to the Corrections Staff of the Jail which contained a threat against one of the Corrections Officers. The defendant wrote that he would stab the Corrections Officer in the eyes with a pencil over a disagreement regarding commissary money. Deputies with the Sheriff's Department began investigating the threat, and during an interview with the defendant, he threatened to kill the Corrections Officer and threatened to kill other Officers in the Jail.

While the defendant was being interviewed, other Officers searched the defendant's cell. Officers discovered a weapon, commonly referred to as a "shank" in the defendant's cell. After confronting the defendant with the discovery of the shank from his cell, the defendant removed another shank from his sock. The shank, which is categorized as a weapon, is an item of contraband not allowed in a corrections facility.

On October 17, 2017, the defendant entered a plea of guilty to Possession of Contraband in a Penal Institution and to Threatening a Public Official. On December 19, 2017, a sentencing hearing was held where evidence was presented to the Court regarding an appropriate sentence. Following this sentencing hearing, the Court sentenced the defendant to nine (9) years in the Illinois Department of Corrections for Possession of Contraband in a Penal Institution, and an extended-term sentence of 8 years in the Department of Corrections for Threatening a Public Official. The Court ordered that the two sentences be served concurrently with each other. The defendant must serve a two-year period of Mandatory Supervised Release upon his release from the Department.

The investigation was conducted by the Jackson County Sheriff's Department. Assistant State's Attorney Casey E.A. Bloodworth was responsible for the prosecution of the case.