

# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA



## OFFICE OF THE COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY CITY OF PORTSMOUTH



### PRESS RELEASE

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Portsmouth, VA

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### **WINSTON BLACK SENTENCED TO 35 YEARS FOR SECOND DEGREE MURDER CONVICTION**

Portsmouth Commonwealth's Attorney Stephanie N. Morales announces that today in the Portsmouth Circuit Court, Winston Bernard Black Jr. pled guilty to second degree murder in connection with the 2011 killing of 44-year old Samuel Martin. Black will serve 35 years in prison under the plea agreement, concurrently with sentences for two unrelated killings. The Commonwealth's evidence would have proven that in November 2011, Winston Black and several other individuals tortured and killed the victim at a home on Broad Street in the city of Portsmouth.

Specifically, the Commonwealth's evidence would have proven that Black poured boiling water on the victim, hit his joints with a hammer, and eventually suffocated the victim. Later, several other individuals who were present while Black tortured the victim removed the victim's body from the house, drove to a vacant home in the Cradock area of Portsmouth, and lit the victim's body on fire. The victim was found with burns to over 50% of his body as well as evidence of blunt force trauma to his skull and ribs.

The defendant's conviction today is his third murder conviction from acts committed in the city of Portsmouth. The case was prosecuted by Chief Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney Cedric Wiggins and Senior Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Carmen Cabrero.

"Today's conviction demonstrates my office's commitment to vigorously pursuing justice in cold cases involving violent crimes. The justice system can never restore a loved one to their family in such a scenario, but nothing will stop our attorneys from fighting for justice for crime victims and their families. I am thankful for my team's tireless efforts in prosecuting this case."

- Stephanie N. Morales

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