

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Criminal Division

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)
)
 vs) Criminal No. 2025 CF2 3902
) Charge: CPWL
) Sentencing Date: June 27, 2025
DARTANIAN OWENS) Judge: D. Isreal

)

MEMORANDUM OPINION

On April 18, 2025, Defendant Dartanian Owens entered a guilty plea in the above-captioned case to one count of Carrying a Pistol Without a License (Outside Home or Business) in violation of D.C. Code § 22-4504(a).

Because the Court may sentence Mr. Owens who was 20 years old at the time of his conviction under the Youth Rehabilitation Act ("YRA"), D.C. Code §§ 24-901-907, the Court now issues this written statement on the record of the reasons for its determination.

In deciding to sentence pursuant to the YRA, the Court considers all of the factors set forth in that statute. Specifically, the Court evaluates:

(a) The youth offender's age at the time of the offense:

Mr. Owens was 20 years old at the time of the offense and thus

falls within the YRA's definition of a "youth offender." D.C. Code § 24 - 901 (6).

(b) The nature of the offense :

Mr. Owens pled guilty to one count of Carrying a Pistol Without a License (CPWL). The underlying facts indicate that Mr. Owens was driving a vehicle reported stolen in an armed carjacking when officers attempted to conduct a traffic stop. Mr. Owens fled from the vehicle while clutching his waistband, leading to the recovery of a loaded firearm along his flight path. The firearm was not brandished, aimed, or used to threaten anyone.

(c) Prior sentencing under the YRA :

Mr. Owens has been sentenced previously under the YRA in case number 2022CMD5257 for misdemeanor offenses including simple assault, second -degree theft, unlawful entry, and destruction of property. He also received a YRA sentence in 2023CF2005185 for attempted carrying a pistol without a license.

(d) Compliance with the rules of any facility to which the defendant has been committed or with the terms of pretrial release:

Mr. Owens has struggled with compliance while on supervision. His record reflects failure to report, noncompliance with drug testing, and unsuccessful completion of prior court -ordered

programming. However, he has remained misconduct -free while detained at the DC Jail pending this sentencing.

(e) Participation in rehabilitative District programs :

Mr. Owens has made inconsistent efforts to engage in rehabilitative services. He previously enrolled in a barbering program and worked informally as a barber. While under supervision, he failed to consistently attend outpatient substance abuse treatment but did complete a portion of his stay at the Reentry and Sanctions Center (RSC).

(f) Previous contacts with the juvenile and criminal justice systems:

Mr. Owens has juvenile contacts including a consent decree for robbery in 2021, followed by multiple misdemeanor convictions as an adult. This matter is his first felony conviction.

(g) Family and community circumstances at the time of the offense:

Mr. Owens was raised by a supportive mother and has a stable home plan to return to at 3062 Stanton Road SE, Apartment 202, Washington, DC. He is the father of a one-year-old son, for whom he has expressed a desire to provide stability moving forward. His mother confirms his struggles with grief after the death of his father and best friend in his early teenage years.

(h) The ability to appreciate the risks and consequences of his conduct:

Mr. Owens pled guilty and accepted responsibility for his conduct. He has expressed that his motivation for possessing the firearm was for protection, acknowledging poor decision-making but demonstrating a basic understanding of the risks associated with firearms.

(i) Reports of physical, mental, or psychiatric examinations:

Mr. Owens has no serious physical health concerns but has recently reported mental health struggles, including anxiety, sleep disturbances, and depressive thoughts. While at the DC Jail, he was prescribed Prazosin and Trazodone for mental health symptoms. Records suggest a history of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) related to unresolved grief and trauma.

(j) Use of controlled substances:

Mr. Owens has a documented history of Cannabis Use Disorder (mild) and conflicting records about Suboxone use, potentially for barter purposes while incarcerated. His substance use history primarily involves marijuana as a coping mechanism. He has not tested positive for harder substances such as opioids.

(k) Capacity for rehabilitation:

Despite setbacks on supervision, Mr. Owens has demonstrated

the capacity for rehabilitation , particularly when provided with structure. He has expressed a desire to complete his GED, engage in vocational training , and attend trauma-focused counseling to address his grief and mental health issues. The support of his mother, the desire to parent this young child, and his own stated goals indicate that rehabilitation remains possible with the right interventions.

(1) Victim impact statement:

There is no victim in this case. The government has reported no victim impact statement.

Full consideration of all these factors demonstrate to the Court that Mr. Owens should be treated as a youth offender for the purpose of sentencing. Accordingly, the Court granted a sentence pursuant to the YRA in this case.

DEBORAH ISREAL
DC SUPERIOR COURT