

TRUMBULL COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

Dennis Watkins, Prosecutor

Repeat Violent Offenders newsletter

UPDATE: February 21, 2024

Defendant's story leads to sudden end of trial



An investigation by the Trumbull County Prosecutor's Office and the Trumbull County Veterans Services Office uncovered some falsehoods with a defendant's testimony at trial this week in Common Pleas Court.

As a result, defendant Kotey D. Paden, 31, of Sodom Hutchings Road, Vienna, on Wednesday, February 21, 2024, pleaded guilty to a third-degree strangulation charge as well as misdemeanor offenses of domestic violence and endangering children to end the trial before Judge Cynthia W. Rice.

Paden had testified in his own defense on Tuesday afternoon he was a combat veteran while serving in the U.S. Military overseas. But acting upon a tip, Assistant Prosecutor Gabriel Wildman said he called Herman Breuer, director of the county's Veteran Services Commission to investigate Paden's military record.

“After several hours of looking into records, (Breuer) discovered that Paden was dishonorably discharged from service because of criminal offenses. It was also found that he did not serve overseas,” Wildman said. Wildman told the judge and the defense attorney early Wednesday that Breuer would be available as a rebuttal witness at trial. However, Paden decided to plea to the indictment.

Earlier in the trial, a woman testified that Paden struck her and choked her while she and her young son were at Paden’s Vienna residence in September 2023. The woman told jurors she was struck while holding the boy.

Judge Rice ordered Paden to undergo a background investigation conducted by the probation department. Also Paden is on the veterans docket for a felony case in Mahoning County involving aggravated vehicular assault.

“We are most grateful for the hard work displayed by Herm Breuer in this case. He worked late into the night getting at the truth,” Wildman said.

For more information, contact Guy M. Vogrin, investigator/public information officer for the Trumbull County Prosecutor’s Office at 330-675-2485.