

Salem Man Sentenced to Seven and a Half Years for Robbery

On October 22, 2024, after a two-day jury trial, Christopher Cortez Tolbert was found guilty by a Marion County jury of Robbery in the First Degree, Kidnapping in the Second Degree, and Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle. Before the jury returned its verdict, Tolbert also pled guilty to Fleeing or Attempting to Elude Police Officer, Failure to Perform Duties of a Driver When Property is Damaged and Resisting Arrest.

On the night of February 9, 2024, while a Salem resident was stopped in his vehicle at a stop sign, Tolbert opened the passenger side door of the vehicle and got in. There, he pointed a screwdriver at the victim and said "Go." The victim drove Tolbert around Salem for ten to fifteen minutes before Tolbert made the victim stop and switch seats. From there, Tolbert drove the vehicle. The victim asked Tolbert to let him go but Tolbert refused. The victim said Tolbert kept the screwdriver in his hand the whole time he was driving.

After a couple hours, Tolbert drove the victim to Polk County near Premier RV Resort. He demanded the victim give him \$3,000. The victim refused. Tolbert broke the victim's phone. Tolbert also took the victim's necklace, wallet, and IDs before telling the victim he could go. The victim was able to find help through contacting the night guard at Premier RV, who contacted the police.

Tolbert was arrested approximately an hour later by the Salem Police Department after fleeing from two Keizer Police Department officers in the victim's car. Tolbert lost control of the vehicle during the chase, damaging another vehicle and fleeing on foot. When arrested, Tolbert resisted. He was found with the victim's IDs in his pocket and a screwdriver in his backpack.

Marion County Circuit Court Judge Audrey J. Broyles presided over the trial. Defense counsel Michelle Vlach-Ing represented Tolbert, and the state was represented by Deputy District Attorney Mae D'Amico. On October 25, 2024, Marion County Circuit Court Judge Audrey Broyles sentenced Tolbert to a total of 90 months (7.5 years) at the Department of Corrections.

Tolbert also received an additional 61 months for separate cases involving Robbery in the Third Degree, Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle, and Fleeing or Attempting to Elude Police Officer.

At the time of his arrest, Tolbert was 32 years old and had 47 arrests and multiple previous convictions.

The Marion County District Attorney's Office would like to thank both the Salem Police Department and Keizer Police Department for their professional, quick response and thorough investigation on this matter.

Please contact DDA D'Amico with any questions at (503) 588-5222.