

FULTON COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEYS OFFICE

DA DISPATCH

SEPTEMBER 2024



PEACE & PREVENTION



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FULTON COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

A W A R E N E S S M O N T H

Thursday | October 3rd:

DV Movie and Discussion – It Ends with Us | 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Location: FCDA Multipurpose Room

Moderators: Shaniqua Christian and Jazmin Willingham

Thursday | October 10th:

FCDA Domestic Violence Awareness Day | 3:00-6:00 PM

Location: The Atrium

Thursday | October 17th:

“Go Purple Day” | 1:30 PM

Please wear purple, and join us for a picture for this national day of action.

Location: The Atrium

Saturday | October 19th:

Stop Domestic Violence Abuse 5K | 8:00 AM

Location: Westside Park – 1660 Johnson Road NW Atlanta, GA

REGISTER HERE



Tuesday | October 22nd and Thur | October 24th DV Workshops at Local Highschools

Wednesday | October 23rd:

Discussion Panel [Common but Uncommon Abuse] | 2:00-4:00 PM

Location: FULCO Lab

Moderator: Julissa Melendez, Partnership Against Domestic Violence

Panelists:

Lieutenant Lascalles Simpson, Atlanta Police Department

Assistant Chief Paula Duprey, Fulton County District Attorney's Office

Ursala Berger, Certified Transformational Life Coach

Thursday | October 24th:

Aequitas Training | 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Location: FCDA Multipurpose Room

Presenter: John Wilkerson

Topic: Vicarious Trauma/ Self-Care

Partnership Against Domestic Violence Candlelight Vigil | 6:00 PM

Location: Kilpatrick Townsend Atlanta, GA

Monday | October 28th:

Toiletry Drop-Off | 10:00 AM

Location: Various

Throughout October, we will be collecting toiletry donations on the 7th floor to support victims of domestic violence. These essential items will be distributed to various shelters across Atlanta, helping those in need regain a sense of dignity and care. Your generous contributions will make a significant impact in the lives of individuals striving for safety and recovery.



FULTON COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

ADULT DIVERSION

FANI T. WILLIS, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

JOB FAIR

The Adult Diversion Division of Fulton County District Attorney's Office hosted a Job Fair where attendees had the opportunity to explore new career paths and meet with employers from various industries actively hiring for full-time or part-time positions. Participants were encouraged to bring their resumes and take advantage of networking opportunities with other job seekers and potential employers. At this event, on the spot record restriction services were offered complimentary headshots were provided by the DA's Office amazing Graphics Team.

The Diversion Unit educated the citizens of Fulton County on the benefits of diverting cases and highlighted the many successes of the program to include: Over 700 cases enrolling into the Diversion Program, directly allowing them the benefit of Dismissal and Record Restrictions in lieu of Convictions, as well as over \$230,000.00 in restitution funds being returned to victims. This program has saved the State of Georgia over \$15,000,000.00 due to its existence.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON DIVERSION AND RECORD RESTRICTION:

RAMONA TOOLE, DEPUTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
ramona.toole@fultoncountyga.gov

EPIFFANY HENRY, DEPUTY CHIEF - ADULT DIVERSION DIRECTOR
epiffany.henry@fultoncountyga.gov



Emotional Storm: How to Manage Your Feelings at Work When You're Feeling Blue

In the bustling world of trials, motions, and relentless P and As, it's not uncommon to feel a wave of sadness wash over you at work. Whether it's due to personal struggles, FCDA pressures, or just one of those days, managing your emotions is crucial for maintaining both your mental health and productivity. Here are some effective strategies to help you navigate through the blues without letting them derail your day.

1. The first step in managing your emotions is to acknowledge them. Denying or suppressing what you feel can lead to increased stress and anxiety. Take a moment to identify your emotions—are you feeling overwhelmed, frustrated, or simply sad? Understanding what you're experiencing is crucial. Write it down, talk to a trusted colleague, or take a few deep breaths to ground yourself.
2. When the weight of your feelings becomes too heavy, it's essential to take breaks, but do so mindfully. Step outside for a breath of fresh air, take a short walk, or engage in a quick meditation session. The seasons are changing and the air is crisp. Moments of respite can help clear your mind and provide a fresh perspective. Even a few minutes spent away from your desk can work wonders for your emotional state.
3. Mindfulness techniques can be incredibly effective in managing emotions. Simple breathing exercises, such as inhaling deeply for four counts, holding for four, and exhaling for four, can help calm your nerves and center your thoughts.
4. Sometimes, a friendly chat can be the perfect remedy for feeling blue. Reach out to a colleague for a coffee break or simply to talk. Did you know there's a cool coffee shop down Mitchell? Sharing your feelings with someone who understands can lighten your emotional load.
5. When you're feeling down, setting overly ambitious goals can feel daunting. Instead, break your tasks into smaller, manageable steps. Celebrate small victories, and be kind to yourself if you need to adjust your workload (I know some people who need to do this, but I'm not calling any names).
6. If feelings of sadness persist, consider seeking professional help. Fulton County offers an Employee Assistance Program that provides access to counseling and support. There's no shame in asking for help, and taking this step can lead to significant improvements in your emotional health.
6. Finally, take a moment to reflect on your accomplishments, no matter how small. Gratitude can shift your focus from what's wrong to what's right in your life. Create a list of things you're proud of, both personally and professionally, and revisit it when the blues strike.

Feeling blue at work is a common experience, but it doesn't have to define your day. By acknowledging your feelings, taking mindful breaks, connecting with colleagues, and practicing self-compassion, you can navigate through the emotional storm and emerge stronger. Remember, it's okay to have tough days, but with the right strategies, you can maintain your balance and continue thriving at work.

Ilona Rolack

Deputy Victim Witness Advocate



LAW CORNER

Dealing with Motion to Bifurcate Trial and Sever Possession of Firearm by Convicted Felon Charges

In certain cases, the Defendant can file a motion to sever charges in the indictment that they deem to be too prejudicial to remain on the indictment in conjunction with the other enumerated offenses in said indictment. This is not uncommon in cases involving the charge of “Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon.” The rationale here is that there is an inherent prejudicial effect in the charge since the allegation is that the Defendant is a convicted felon and thus, the jury may decisions based on his “bad character” as opposed to the evidence supporting the indictment in the case. This will obviously be a moot point if it is the only charge in the indictment against the Defendant, but it is a consideration the court may have to make if there are other counts alleging different offenses. In certain cases, the Court may be required to sever the charge from the remaining counts in the indictment and essentially hold a bifurcated trial. In those cases, the court will hold a trial on the other charges, a jury will render a verdict, and subsequent to that, evidence will be presented as to the defendant’s convicted felon status so that the jury can decide if the defendant is guilty of being in possession of a firearm as a convicted felon. In cases involving a possession of a firearm by convicted felon charge that also serves as the predicate offense for another charge, case law is abundantly clear that a motion to sever the charge and bifurcate the trial in such a case should be denied. *Cooks v. State*, 299 Ga. 787 (2016) (motion to bifurcate a possession of firearm by convicted felon charge where it serves as a predicate offense for Felony Murder should be denied); see also *Lang v. State*, 344 Ga. App. 623 (2018) (Trial court did not commit error by denying motion to bifurcate in gang case where the possession of a firearm by a convicted felon charge was material to the criminal gang activity count as it was the underlying felony for that count). However, if the Defendant’s status as a convicted felon is not material or related to any other charge on the indictment save for the charge involving possession of a firearm by a convicted felony, the Georgia Supreme Court has held that a trial court shall bifurcate the trial so that the jury will hear the evidence on the more serious charges and render a verdict on those before commencing with the second phase of the trial and hearing evidence of the Defendant’s status as a convicted felon. *Vann v. State*, 266 Ga. App. 238 (2004). An argument could be made if the Defendant’s status as a convicted felon, albeit unrelated to other counts in the indictment, could be admissible in the State’s case-in-chief if it is part of the proof required for Rule 404(b) evidence.

Gautam Rao
Deputy District Attorney, Training





ATLANTA
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

Join Fulton County District Attorney's Office in partnership
with Atlanta Public Schools for

PEACE & PREVENTION

A COMMUNITY VIOLENCE PREVENTION SUMMIT

The Peace and Prevention Summit was a community event hosted by the Fulton County District Attorney's Office, in partnership with Atlanta Public Schools, to bring the community together while providing services and education that focused on violence prevention. This event met a requirement of our Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative grant. The purpose and importance of the event were to convene with the community and to show how our office is helping combat community-based violence in the courtroom and the community.

Youth and parents participated in panel discussions and workshops on topics affecting youth and their families. Parents attended the Court and Elected Officials Panel (Panelists: Councilman Byron Amos, Chief Judge Renata Turner, Chief Senior ADA Jawara Mars, APS Board Member Alfred "Shivy" Brooks) while youth attend the E4: Enrollment, Enlistment, Employment, and Entrepreneurship Panel (Panelist: Femi Johnson, Shane' Terry, Tre Pleas, Sgt. Daniels, and Sgt. Orystaloski). Parents chose to attend one of the following workshops: Human Trafficking (DDA Earnelle Winfrey and ADA Tarrance Miller), Parenting in the Wake of Trauma (Dr. Chanda Pilgrim), and Stories from Our Mothers (Mothers Against Gang Violence and Demonica Banks). Options for youth workshops included Youth and the Law (Senior ADA Lashawnda Woods-Roberts), The Art of Conversation (The Progress Place), Do's and Don'ts of Teen Dating Violence (DDA Asia Baysah, Chief Inv. Paula Duprey, and Jazmin Dilligard). Youth, parents, and community members were able to attend our Lunch and Learn: The Gang Crisis in Fulton County (Justin French). The event culminated with a Job and Resource Fair with over 30 vendors.

For More Information, Contact:
Kendall Watkins at
kendall.watkins@fultoncountyga.gov

SCAN HERE FOR >>>>>>>>
Peace & Prevention Video





FULTON COUNTY 3RD QUARTER FOCUS AWARDS

On Thursday, September 19th, the 3rd Quarter F.O.C.U.S. Awards celebrated Fulton County employees who have made significant contributions not only within their departments, but to the county as a whole. We are proud to announce that three members of our office were recognized with awards!



Joseph Rickman and Aminah Dickerson – Impact Award

The 3rd Quarter "Impact" Award was presented to Assistant Chief Investigator Joseph Rickman and Senior Investigator Aminah Dickerson for their exceptional dedication and investigative work. Mr. Rickman and Ms. Dickerson are responsible for investigating serious crimes in Fulton County and preparing cases for trial. In one particularly challenging case, they went above and beyond to provide closure to a grieving family who tragically lost a loved one.

The two investigators successfully secured crucial witnesses for a difficult murder trial within a short timeframe. They worked tirelessly—nights, weekends, and every day—until the witnesses were located and brought safely to court. Their hard work paid off, as the trial resulted in a guilty verdict on all counts and a lengthy prison sentence.



Paula Duprey – Leadership Award

The 3rd Quarter "Leadership" Award goes to Paula Duprey, Assistant Chief of the Special Victims Division in the DA's Office. Ms. Duprey leads the Domestic Violence Unit, where she plays a crucial role in investigating crimes, gathering evidence, interviewing witnesses and victims, preparing for trials, providing testimony, locating key individuals, drafting and securing search warrants, and conducting training. No matter the time of day, Assistant Chief Duprey is always available and eager to help. She consistently goes above and beyond the call of duty. While supervisory skills can be taught, true leadership is innate—and Ms. Duprey exemplifies this in every aspect of her work.



CAU phirst 48



On September 19, 2024, Deputy District Attorney Julianna Peterson, Deputy Victim Advocate Dilma Dos Reis, Deputy District Attorney Asia Baysah, Victim Advocates Beverly Muhammad and Sandra Jean Louis, attended the "Phirst 48" event at Clark Atlanta University. The event, hosted by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (Alpha Pi Chapter) and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. (Alpha Phi Chapter), focused on providing a transparent conversation about the critical steps to take within the first 48 hours following a sexual assault, among other topics. DDA Peterson delivered the opening remarks and participated as a panelist. She did an extraordinary job—her speech was both engaging and enlightening, offering valuable insights. DDA Peterson, along with DVA Dos Reis and the team, also actively contributed to the discussion that followed.

HT AWARENESS TRAINING

On August 6, 2024, The Federal Law Enforcement Center conducted a Human Trafficking Awareness Training. This program introduced current indicators for human trafficking, an overview of Federal statutes, and an applicable state law related to trafficking. The training were filled with case studies, videos, and student-centered learning activities tailored to the community's unique challenges. The training also included a panel discussion with state, local, & federal subject matter experts.



CONVICTION ALERTS



STATE VS. STEPHANIE AGEE

Congratulations to the Domestic Violence Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Stephanie Agee, the Defendant pled guilty to all counts including Felony Murder, Murder, and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. Judge Eric Dunaway sentenced the Defendant to life in Prison.

Deputy District Attorney Asia Baysah
Assistant District Attorney Abigail Potter
Assistant District Attorney Tim Pennington
Senior Investigator Ranetta Cruse
Legal Assistant Cassie Lundy
Victim Witness Advocate Sandra Jean-Louis



STATE VS. SHAMIR LASHAWN FLOYD

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Shamir Lashawn Floyd, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Felony Murder, Homicide by Vehicle 1st Degree, and Serious Injury by Vehicle. Judge Thomas Cox sentenced the Defendant to Two Consecutive Life Sentences Without the Possibility of Parole followed by 10 Years to Serve.

Deputy District Attorney Kelcee Jones-Connor
Senior Assistant District Attorney Donita Morris
Assistant Chief Investigator Bernice Higgins
Legal Assistant Brenda Sharpe
Legal Assistant Rishia Lee
Victim Witness Advocate Christian Williams



STATE VS. JOSHUA SMITH

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Joshua Smith, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Felony Murder, Murder, and Theft by Taking. Judge Alice Benton sentenced the Defendant to Life Without the Possibility of Parole plus 5 Consecutive Years to Serve.

Senior Assistant District Attorney John Weitnauer
Assistant District Attorney Celeste Patten
Senior Investigator Joseph King
Legal Assistant Rishia Lee
Victim Witness Advocate Christian Williams

CONVICTION ALERTS



STATE VS. BRANDON BONNER

Congratulations to the CAC Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Brandon Bonner, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Murder in the 2nd Degree and Cruelty to Children in the 2nd Degree. Judge Emily Richardson will sentence the Defendant later this month.

Assistant District Attorney Robert Shapiro
Assistant District Attorney Nalda "Kay" Charles
Assistant Chief Investigator Temperance Stoddard
Investigator Allonya Ragland
Legal Assistant Lynette Gilbert
Victim Witness Advocate Jasmyn Drummond
Victim Witness Advocate Christen Clarke



STATE VS. JACORI ECHOLS

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Jacori Echols, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Felony Murder, Murder, and Aggravated Assault. Judge David Emerson sentenced the Defendant to Life Without the Possibility of Parole plus 65 Years to Serve.

Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Danielle Russell
Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Kassie Hall
Senior Investigator Jaysen Thomas
Legal Assistant Quentin Wright
Victim Witness Advocate Cherrilie Tonge



STATE VS. MICHAEL WHITE

Congratulations to the Domestic Violence Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Michael White, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Felony Murder, Murder, and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. Judge Robert McBurney sentenced the Defendant to Life in Prison.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Jazmin Willingham
Senior Investigator Emma Mills
Legal Assistant Tiffany Horton
Senior Victim Witness Advocate Beverly Muhammad

CONVICTION ALERTS



STATE VS. KIAN WRIGHT

Congratulations to the Sexual Assault Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Kian Wright, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Rape, False Imprisonment, and Battery. Judge David Emerson sentenced the Defendant to Life Without the Possibility of Parole + Ten Years + 12 months to Serve.

Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Alicia Taylor
Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Christinia Clark
Investigator Kenneth Rucker
Legal Assistant Tiffany Horton
Senior Victim Witness Advocate LaTeeka Montgomery



STATE VS. ARMANDO BAUTISTA

Congratulations to the CAC Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Armando Bautista, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Rape, Incest, and Aggravated Child Molestation. Judge Robert McBurney sentenced the Defendant to 27 Years to Serve with Life on Probation.

Assistant District Attorney Julian Jordan
Investigator Allonya Ragland
Legal Assistant Tiffany Horton
Victim Witness Advocate Christen Clarke

GRANTS CORNER

This September 2024, our grant, “Innovative Prosecution Solutions for Combatting Violent Crime”, is closing after great success. The grant award from the Bureau of Justice Assistance in the amount of \$270,682, supports the evidence division, but was only a portion of what was needed to organize years of guns, drugs, and bio-hazard materials. Under the leadership of District Attorney Fani Willis, and the direction of Assistant Chief Investigator Stanley Mason, there is a warehouse, there are protocols, and procedures to maintain the chain of command of evidence. Moving thousands of pieces of evidence, including guns, and chemicals from numerous locations to the Storage Warehouse has been complex and dangerous. Under Section 17-5-55, the Superior Court of Fulton County designated the Fulton County District Attorney as the evidence custodian for criminal trial evidence, but the designation is without financial resources. The grant primarily funds File-On-Q, an evidence platform. In the beginning, FileOnQ accessed data from Atlanta Police Department and our system of cases in Odyssey to assist in identifying the case connected to the piece of evidence. Without cataloging, the evidence is extremely hard to locate and therefore, becomes inaccessible. According to ACI Mason, File-On-Q is the best solution to locating and tracking evidence. Thank you ACI Mason for leading this project and thank you to the Operations team for behind the scenes work from ordering to warehouse negotiations. Yeah!



New INVESTIGATION LEADERSHIP



RICHARD RANDOLPH
CHIEF OF INVESTIGATIONS



JOHNA GRIFFIN
EXECUTIVE CHIEF OF INVESTIGATIONS

DEPUTY CHIEF



DASHAWN RAYMOND
HP PLUS / DIGNITARY TEAM



SAUL ALTER
CIVIL RIGHTS /
ANTICORRUPTION



ANTONIO LONG
MAJOR CRIMES



PAULA DUPREY
SPECIAL VICTIMS DIVISION



JOSEPH RICKMAN
TRIAL DIVISION



FRED GLENN
CASE INTAKE



GREG THOMAS
CASE INTAKE

ASSISTANT CHIEF



BERNICE HIGGINS
MAJOR CRIMES



OBED FORD
CASR INTAKE



JAMES SPEAR
CASE INTAKE DIVISION



KENDALL TUCKER
ADMINISTRATION



BRIAN SALTERS
ANTI-CORRUPTION



STANLEY MASON
EVIDENCE



MICHEAL GREEN
TRAINING/HP PLUS



MICHEAL HILL
MAJOR CRIMES



TRINA LUCAS
TRIAL DIVISION

LIEUTENANT



PATRENA BAKER
HP PLUS



STEPHANIE SAMPLES
CASE INTAKE



JULISHA LANSIQUOT
HP PLUS



RAEISHA OLIPHANT
HP PLUS



MICHELLE LAM
SPECIAL VICTIMS DIVISION



RENATA CRUSE
SPECIAL VICTIMS DIVISION



RASHEED HAMILTON
HP PLUS



CHRISTY MANOS
CIVIL RIGHTS



CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

During the 53rd Annual Legislative Conference at Congressional Black Caucus Weekend, Angela Rye moderated a conversation led by U.S. Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett, addressing how to handle MAGA, respond to their attacks, and other relevant topics. Our very own Madam DA Willis, Dr. Frederick D. Haynes III, Senior Pastor of Friendship-West Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, and Christian D. Menefee, the chief civil lawyer for Harris County, Texas, joined the panel as distinguished guests.

'The first level of intimidation is, what can they call you,' Willis explained. 'They'll call you the D.E.I. D.A., they'll call you a thot. They'll call you very, very ugly things. And I've been called all of them. But I was taught long ago, "It ain't what you call me, it's what I answer to." So we, as people, cannot be reactive to every ignorant insult, because you're dealing with ignorant people.'

Willis also supported Congresswoman Crockett's point about individuals who cast their votes for the highest office in the land and then leave without voting in down-ballot races. She described these actions as 'a disgrace,' adding that many consequential outcomes can be traced back to those who fail to vote in other crucial elections. Credit: www.theatlantavoice.com

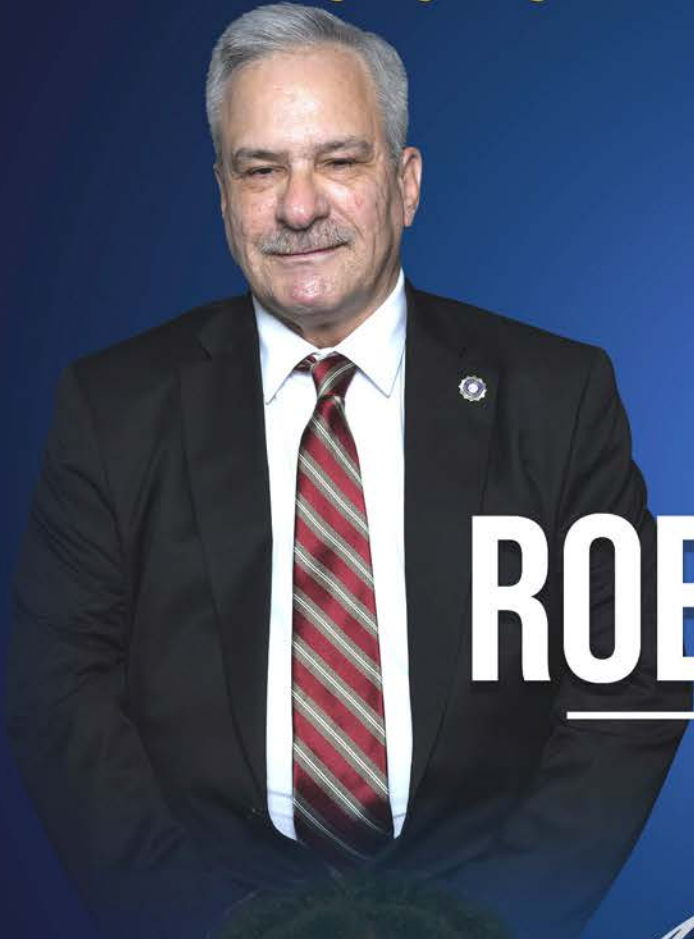


2024 PHOENIX AWARDS

On September 14, 2024, District Attorney Fani Willis attended the Phoenix Awards during the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's annual legislative conference. Maryland Governor Wes Moore, the late Sheila Jackson-Lee, Dr. Carla Hayden, Jaime Harrison, and President Joseph Biden were honored at the awards ceremony.

Pictured : Attorney Benjamin Crump , Lobbyist Shashrina Thomas , DA Fani Willis, and Singer/ Actor Tyrese Gibson

Happy Retirement



10

ROBERT APPELL

10 Years



25

VANESSA CONDRY

25 Years





Body camera video shows APD arrest fugitive on Most Wanted List for rapes from 1980s – WSB-TV Channel 2 - Atlanta (wsbtv.com)



<https://www.wsbtv.com/news/local/atlanta/notorious-30-deep-gang-member-accepts-plea-deal-avoids-new-trial-2007-murders/PV2OLCS-FMVH5TP6SIAEZECWSLU/>



<https://www.wsbtv.com/news/local/atlanta/atlanta-police-foundation-renovates-notorious-drug-house-sells-it-police-officer/BRO4NG3KF5DUHC32NSQZDTWTVI/>



<https://www.wsbtv.com/news/local/atlanta/investigators-raid-office-atlantas-top-veneer-specialist-accused-being-fake-dentist/AB7CETGLX-ZAJLNS5BZIGJ43IMA/>