



# BCPO News

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## **Homeless Man Charged with Sexually Assaulting Two Women at Knifepoint**

*Assaults occurred July 24 in Willingboro, July 25 in Mount Holly*

Burlington County Prosecutor Scott Coffina, Mount Holly Township Police Chief Richard Spitler and Willingboro Township Public Safety Director Kinamo Lomon announced that a 28-year-old homeless man has been charged with sexually assaulting two women after threatening to harm them with a knife if they resisted.

Shawn Midgette, who is known to stay in the Willingboro area, was taken into custody yesterday at approximately 4 p.m. by Willingboro police at the McDonald's restaurant on Beverly Rancocas Road. The knife believed to be used during the assaults was found on his person.

The investigation began July 24 after an elderly woman was sexually assaulted in her vehicle by a man who asked for a ride as she exited a pharmacy in the 100 block of Springside Road in Westampton. The assailant forced her to drive to the Garfield East section of Willingboro, where he assaulted her and took cash from her purse before fleeing on foot.

Midgette was immediately identified as a suspect, and patrol units in Willingboro, Mount Holly and Westampton began an active search for him. An alert was issued to law enforcement agencies in Burlington and neighboring counties, and investigators began checking area homeless shelters to determine where he had been staying.

On July 25, Mount Holly police were contacted by a homeless woman who said she was threatened with a knife and sexually assaulted in Monroe Park at approximately 10:30 p.m. The victim was acquainted with Midgette.

Midgette was charged last night with two counts of Aggravated Sexual Assault (First Degree), Robbery (First Degree), two counts of Possession of a Weapon for an Unlawful Purpose (Third Degree), two counts of Unlawful Possession of a Weapon (Fourth Degree), and two counts of Certain Persons Not to Possess Firearms (Fourth Degree).

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He was lodged in the Burlington County Jail in Mount Holly and will face a detention hearing in the near future. The case will then be prepared for presentation to a Burlington County Grand Jury for possible indictment.

Midgette will be prosecuted by Assistant Prosecutor Stephen Eife, supervisor of the BCPO Major Crimes Unit – Special Victims Section.

The investigation was conducted by the Willingboro Township Police Department, the Mount Holly Township Police Department and the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office, with assistance from the Westampton Township Police Department.

The lead investigators are Willingboro Detective Elijah Hart, Mount Holly Detective Nicholas Dell-Priscoli and BCPO Detective Tony Luyber.

*All persons are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*

**END**