



# JUDICIAL SIMULATION CRIMINAL PROCEDURE – RULE 500

## CASE STUDY #2 – THE BAR FIGHT

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### CASE FILE

- DATE / TIME OF INCIDENT:**  
May 10, 2025  
Approximately 12:15 AM
- LOCATION:**  
Corner Tap Bar & Grill  
123 Main Street  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
- INCIDENT:**  
Fight between two males  
inside the bar.

### INCIDENT SUMMARY

- Multiple callers report two males fighting near the bar.
- Officers arrive and find one male (Ryan) on the ground holding his face. Blood is visible.
- Witnesses report the other male (Tyler) punched Ryan multiple times.
- Officers separate the parties.
- Both parties state they want to press charges.

### CHARGES FILED

**Simple Assault**  
18 Pa.C.S. § 2701

**Harassment**  
18 Pa.C.S. § 2709

### DEFENDANT

Tyler James  
DOB: 05/14/2002  
22 years old  
456 Cedar Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17102

### PARTICIPANTS

**Defendant:**  
Tyler James

**Victim:**  
Ryan Miller

**Arresting Officers:**  
Officer Daniel Roberts  
Officer Sarah Patel

**Witnesses:**  
Two bar patrons  
(Witness #1 and Witness #2)

### DOCUMENTS RECEIVED BY THE MDJ

- Criminal Complaint (Pa.R.Crim.P. 503)**  
Filed by Officer Daniel Roberts charging Tyler James with Simple Assault and Harassment.
- Affidavit of Probable Cause (Pa.R.Crim.P. 504)**  
Completed by Officer Daniel Roberts in support of the charges.
- Defendant Information Sheet**  
Includes demographic information and current address.
- Criminal History / CLEAN Response**  
Response from Pennsylvania State Police.
- Citation / Summons**  
Issued to the defendant.
- Victim Information**  
Name and contact information for the victim.

### GOVERNING AUTHORITY

#### Pa.R.Crim.P. 540 Preliminary Arraignment

- (A) Preliminary arraignment.  
The preliminary arraignment is the first proceeding held before the magisterial district judge after a criminal charge has been filed. The purpose is to:
- inform the defendant of the charges;
  - advise the defendant of the defendant's rights; and
  - determine release conditions, including bail, if appropriate.
- (B) Time.  
The preliminary arraignment shall be held without unnecessary delay. The defendant shall be afforded a prompt preliminary arraignment.
- (C) Waiver.  
The defendant may waive the preliminary arraignment. The waiver shall be in writing and signed by the defendant.

### IMPORTANT

You are the Magisterial District Judge (MDJ).

The defendant is in custody and will be brought before you shortly for a preliminary arraignment.





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RECORD BEFORE THE MDJ

The following documents were presented to you as the Magisterial District Judge (MDJ).

EXHIBIT A – CRIMINAL COMPLAINT (Pa.R.Crim.P. 503)

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COUNTY OF DAUPHIN

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

Docket No. \_\_\_\_\_

Defendant:

Tyler James
456 Cedar Street
Harrisburg, PA 17102
DOB: 05/14/2002

Charges:

18 Pa.C.S. § 2701
(Simple Assault)
18 Pa.C.S. § 2709
(Harassment)

Incident Date/Time:

May 10, 2025 at approximately 12:15 AM

Incident Location:

Corner Tap Bar & Grill
123 Main Street, Harrisburg, PA

I, Daniel Roberts, a public servant as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. § 4901, believe that the above defendant committed the offenses set forth below on the date and at the location listed.

Daniel Roberts

Officer Daniel Roberts
Badge #2471
Harrisburg City Police Department

May 10, 2025

Date

EXHIBIT B – AFFIDAVIT OF PROBABLE CAUSE (Pa.R.Crim.P. 504)

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COUNTY OF DAUPHIN

AFFIDAVIT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

Docket No. \_\_\_\_\_

I, Officer Daniel Roberts, being duly sworn, depose and state as follows:

- 1. I am a Police Officer with the Harrisburg City Police Department and have been for eight (8) years.
2. On May 10, 2025 at approximately 12:15 AM, I was dispatched to the Corner Tap Bar & Grill, 123 Main Street, Harrisburg, PA, for a report of a fight in progress.
3. Upon arrival, I observed two males separated by bar staff.
4. Witness #1 stated that she saw Tyler shove Ryan. Ryan pushed Tyler back and Tyler punched Ryan in the face with a closed fist.
5. Witness #2 stated she only saw Tyler punch Ryan. She did not see what happened before.
6. Ryan had a cut above his left eye and redness on his cheek.
7. Both Ryan and Tyler stated they wanted to press charges.
8. Tyler admitted he punched Ryan.

I believe there is probable cause to believe that Tyler James committed the offense(s) of Simple Assault and Harassment.

Daniel Roberts

Officer Daniel Roberts

May 10, 2025

Date

EXHIBIT C – DEFENDANT INFORMATION SHEET

Name: Tyler James, DOB: 05/14/2002, Address: 456 Cedar Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102, Phone: (717) 555-3481, Race: White, Sex: M, Height: 5'10", Weight: 170, Eyes: Brown, Hair: Brown, SSN (last 4): 3245, Occupation: Line Cook, Employer: Downtown Diner, Local Resident: Yes, U.S. Citizen: Yes, Driver's License: Yes - PA, ID Verified: Yes, Prior Magisterial District Court History: None

Information provided by defendant at time of preliminary arraignment.

EXHIBIT D – CRIMINAL HISTORY / CLEAN RESPONSE



PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE
CLEAN RECORD / CRIMINAL HISTORY RESPONSE

Name Searched: Tyler James, DOB: 05/14/2002, Search Date/Time: May 10, 2025 01:35 AM, Requesting Agency: Harrisburg City Police Department, ORI: PA0180100

NO CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD FOUND

This individual has no reportable criminal history record in Pennsylvania based on the above identifiers.

EXHIBIT E – CITATION / SUMMONS

NON-TRAFFIC CITATION, Citation No. CP 1234567-8, Defendant: Tyler James, DOB: 05/14/2002, Address: 456 Cedar Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102, Date/Time of Offense: May 10, 2025, Location of Offense: Corner Tap Bar & Grill, 123 Main Street, Harrisburg, PA, Code: 2701, Description: Simple Assault, Section: 18 Pa.C.S. § 2701, Code: 2709, Description: Harassment, Section: 18 Pa.C.S. § 2709, Issuing Officer: Daniel Roberts, Badge No.: 2471

EXHIBIT F – VICTIM INFORMATION

Victim Name: Ryan Miller, DOB: 08/21/1999, Address: 789 Walnut Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101, Phone: (717) 555-2198, Victim Type: Individual, Injury: Cut above left eye; redness and swelling on cheek, Medical Treatment: Yes, Facility: UPMC ED, Statement Provided: Yes, Wants to Prosecute: Yes, Notes: Victim advised he did not want any medical treatment at the scene but wanted to press charges.



THE RECORD YOU REVIEW IS LIMITED TO THESE DOCUMENTS AND ANY ORAL STATEMENTS MADE AT THE HEARING.

Your decision must be based only on this record.



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### DECISION POINT

Based solely on the record before you, answer the following questions.

- 1** What proceeding is currently taking place?
  - A. Preliminary arraignment
  - B. Preliminary hearing
  - C. Summary trial
  - D. Sentencing hearing

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- 2** Which governing authority applies to this proceeding?
  - A. Pa.R.Crim.P. 490
  - B. Pa.R.Crim.P. 500
  - C. Pa.R.Crim.P. 540
  - D. Pa.R.Crim.P. 600

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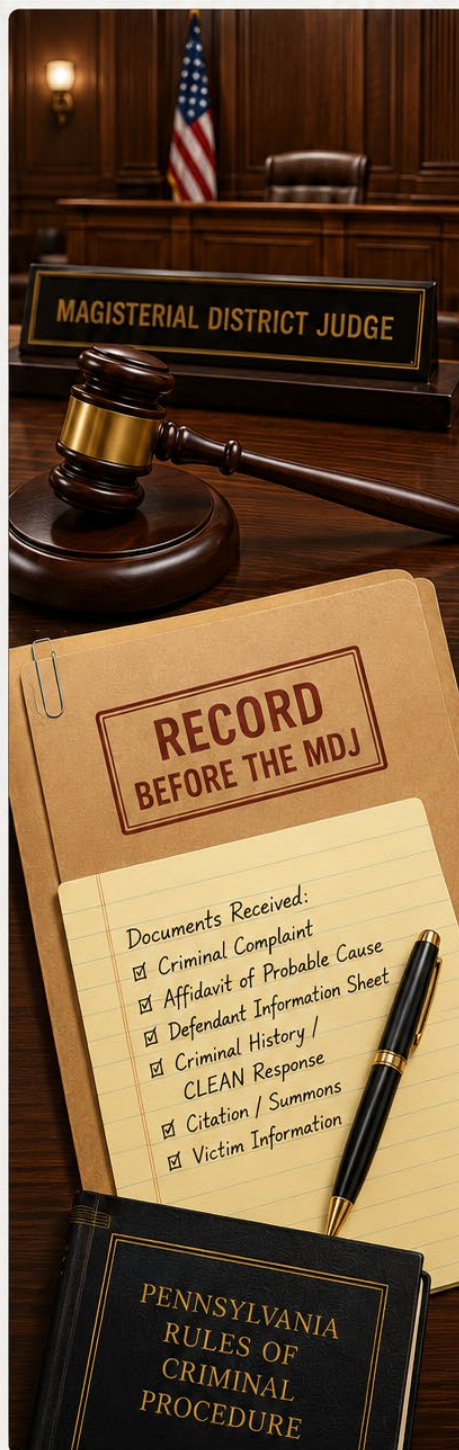
- 3** Based upon the record presented, which statement is MOST accurate?
  - A. The facts presented are sufficient to establish probable cause.
  - B. The facts presented are insufficient to establish probable cause.
  - C. The record is incomplete and additional evidence is required.
  - D. The charge must be dismissed because the complaint is defective.

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- 4** If probable cause is established, which action is authorized?
  - A. Commit the defendant for court
  - B. Release the defendant on unsecured bail
  - C. Release the defendant on recognizance
  - D. Hold the defendant for formal arraignment

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- 5** Based upon the documents presented, what is the primary purpose of the proceeding presently before the MDJ?
  - A. To determine guilt or innocence
  - B. To determine whether probable cause exists to hold the defendant for court
  - C. To impose sentence for the charged offenses
  - D. To conduct discovery and pretrial motions



**REVIEW THE RECORD CAREFULLY. APPLY THE LAW. DECIDE THE CASE.**

Your ruling should be based only on the documents presented and any oral statements made at the hearing.



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#### MDJ DECISION & ANALYSIS

After reviewing the documents and any oral statements made at the hearing, the MDJ issues the following ruling.

#### RULING PROBABLE CAUSE ESTABLISHED

The Magisterial District Judge finds that probable cause exists to believe that Tyler James committed the offenses of Simple Assault (18 Pa.C.S. § 2701) and Harassment (18 Pa.C.S. § 2709) on May 10, 2025, in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania. The defendant is committed for trial.

*Magisterial District Judge* \_\_\_\_\_ May 10, 2025  
Magisterial District Judge Date



#### REASONING

- The complaint and affidavit provide sworn statements from a disinterested police officer and two eyewitnesses who observed Tyler James punch the victim multiple times.
- The statements describe specific actions that constitute elements of Simple Assault (attempting to cause or intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury).
- Victim observed injuries (cut above left eye; redness and swelling), which corroborates the account.
- The record is sufficient to establish probable cause at this preliminary stage.
- No conflicting evidence or legal defects require dismissal or further inquiry.
- Under Pa.R.Crim.P. 540(B), the arraignment is conducted without unnecessary delay and the defendant is afforded a prompt preliminary arraignment.

#### APPLICABLE AUTHORITY

##### Pa.R.Crim.P. 540 – Preliminary Arraignment

- (A) Preliminary arraignment. The purpose is to:
- inform the defendant of the charges;
  - advise the defendant of the defendant's rights; and
  - determine release conditions, including bail, if appropriate.
- (B) Time. The preliminary arraignment shall be held without unnecessary delay. The defendant shall be afforded a prompt preliminary arraignment.
- (C) Waiver. The defendant may waive the preliminary arraignment. The waiver shall be in writing and signed by the defendant.

#### KEY FACTORS SUPPORTING PROBABLE CAUSE

- Sworn affidavit from Officer Daniel Roberts (credible source)
- Two eyewitness accounts consistent with each other
- Direct observation of multiple punches by both witnesses
- Visible injury to victim (cut, redness, swelling)
- Defendant's own admission that he punched the victim
- Charges clearly supported by facts presented



#### DECISION POINT ANSWER KEY

QUESTION	CORRECT ANSWER	WHY
1. What proceeding is currently taking place?	A. Preliminary arraignment	The record shows the defendant has been charged and is being brought before the MDJ for the first time on criminal charges.
2. Which governing authority applies to this proceeding?	C. Pa.R.Crim.P. 540	Rule 540 governs preliminary arraignments. The other rules address different stages (arrest, preliminary hearing, summary trial).
3. Which statement is MOST accurate?	A. The facts presented are sufficient to establish probable cause.	Sworn statements from officer and witnesses, plus observed injuries and defendant's admission, are sufficient for probable cause at this stage.
4. If probable cause is established, which action is authorized?	A. Commit the defendant for court	Under Pa.R.Crim.P. 540, if probable cause exists, the MDJ commits the defendant for trial on the charged offenses.
5. What is the primary purpose of the proceeding presently before the MDJ?	B. To determine whether probable cause exists to hold the defendant for court	The MDJ's role at a preliminary arraignment is to inform rights and determine probable cause, not to decide guilt, impose sentence, or conduct discovery.

#### → NEXT STEPS

- Defendant is committed for trial.
- A Preliminary Hearing may be scheduled.
- Defendant has the right to counsel and to remain silent.



#### PRACTICE POINT

At a preliminary arraignment, the MDJ does not weigh credibility or resolve conflicts. The question is only whether probable cause exists.