

NEWS RELEASE

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4 of 7 convicted by Misdemeanor Appeals Team are impaired drivers

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Misdemeanor Appeals Team convicted seven defendants, including four impaired drivers, during a recent trial session in Superior Court. These defendants were either found guilty by a jury, pled guilty or remanded their cases to District Court for sentencing. The proceedings were held February 13-17, 2017, before The Honorable Jeffrey P. Hunt, Superior Court Judge.

The Misdemeanor Appeals Team prosecutes cases in which the defendant was convicted in District Court and then appealed his or her conviction to Superior Court for a jury trial, as allowed under North Carolina law.

Prosecutors also made arguments in a case appealed by the State after a District Court Judge previously ruled in favor of the defendant on a matter of law. That State's appeal was granted, and the matter was remanded for further proceedings in District Court.

Aaron Bloom, 33, was tried for driving while impaired. A jury found Bloom *guilty* as charged. Bloom was sentenced to 30 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 12 months of unsupervised probation. As conditions of his probation, Bloom must perform 24 hours of community service and pay a \$100 fine.

Note: Misdemeanors and infractions are originally prosecuted in district court in North Carolina. In criminal district court, a judge determines guilt, not a jury; this is commonly referred to as a "bench trial." However, defendants have a right to appeal a conviction from the district court to the superior court for a trial de novo. The new trial in superior court must be a jury trial, not a bench trial. In a de novo trial, the jury cannot be informed that a district court judge previously found the defendant guilty; further, a record of any evidence, including testimony, from district court may not be introduced. While the DA's Office prosecutes nearly 225,000 misdemeanors and infractions each year in district court in Mecklenburg County, each defendant is entitled to exercise his/her right to appeal to the superior court. When a misdemeanor or infraction occupies the limited time available in our superior courtrooms, it the intent of the DA's Office to keep the public informed of the results through news releases like this one. Due to the volume of misdemeanors and infractions prosecuted in district court each day, reports like this are not possible for all of those cases.

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