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Multiple Crimes in 2025 Lead to Wilmington Man's 10-Year Prison Sentence

A local drug dealer will serve up to 10 years in prison for offenses he committed over a four-month period last year. Tobias Van Cooley, Jr., age 39, entered Alford guilty pleas and guilty pleas on Tuesday to more than a dozen charges, including Common-Law Robbery, Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon, Possession with the Intent to Sell and Deliver Controlled Substances within 1000 feet of a Park, and numerous drug-related crimes.

On March 22, 2025, Cooley and three others attacked and robbed an acquaintance outside of the 7-Eleven store located at 4615 Market Street. Cooley, a convicted felon, brandished a firearm while a woman used a stun gun on the victim as the group beat him and stole his cash. The incident was captured on the store's surveillance system. The victim's 911 call also recorded the crime as it happened. The cases against Cooley's co-defendants, Hannah Long and William Beck, are still pending.

Three months after the 7-Eleven incident, officers responded to Cooley's house on Red Cross Street following an assault in progress. Investigators had previously received information that Cooley was selling drugs out of this residence. On June 3, 2025, officers conducted a search warrant and found a handgun, methamphetamine, fentanyl, cocaine, and drug paraphernalia belonging to Cooley. When Cooley was arrested for these offenses, he was also served with warrants for the 7-Eleven robbery.

After Cooley bonded out of jail, the District Attorney's Office filed a motion to increase his bond due to the nature of the two sets of offenses. That motion was denied. While out on bond, Cooley was arrested again on June 13th and July 29th. In both of those incidents, he was a passenger in vehicles that were stopped by police for traffic offenses. Officers found numerous controlled substances and drug paraphernalia on Cooley and in his property during the stops. He tried to flee on foot on both occasions but was unsuccessful.

As part of a plea agreement, Cooley also pled guilty to aiding and abetting a financial crime that occurred in 2022. Cooley opened a checking account at a local credit in his name that was used by another man, Yuhanna McCallum, knowing that the account would be funded by worthless checks. McCallum was convicted of his role in several financial crimes in 2024 and is currently serving a lengthy prison sentence.



Tobias Van Cooley, Jr.