



FORT LAUDERDALE POLICE DEPARTMENT NEWS RELEASE

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September 4, 2024

JOINT INVESTIGATION LEADS TO ARREST OF ARMED KIDNAPPING/SEXUAL BATTERY SUSPECT

The Fort Lauderdale Police Department (FLPD), in collaboration with the Broward Sheriff's Office, is investigating an armed kidnapping and sexual battery that occurred on Tuesday, September 3rd, shortly after midnight. This incident occurred in the 1400 block of Northwest 7th Street, in the City of Fort Lauderdale.

Preliminary investigation has revealed that the victim, a 15-year-old female, was walking in the area while on the phone with a friend when an unknown male suspect approached her in a vehicle and attempted to engage her in conversation. When the victim ignored him, the suspect displayed a gun and demanded she get into his vehicle. Fearing for her safety, the victim complied. The suspect then drove a short distance before pulling over and demanding sex acts from the victim, which she refused. The suspect then forced himself onto the victim and sexually assaulted her. After the assault, the suspect threatened her not to tell anyone about the incident before allowing her to exit the vehicle. The suspect fled the scene in a westbound direction on Northwest 7th Court.

FLPD Special Victims Unit (SVU) detectives met with the victim later in the day and completed a composite sketch of the suspect as well as photo lineup. The victim was able to identify the suspect in the photo lineup as the person who kidnapped and sexually battered her. This information was shared with FLPD's Rapid Offender Control and Fugitive Units, along with Broward Sheriff's Office's SVU and VIPER Units. Together, the units located the suspect and arrested him.

The suspect has been identified as Rondel Joseph McDonald, B/M, DOB 10/20/1997. McDonald has been charged with armed kidnapping, armed lewd and lascivious conduct, armed sexual battery, armed false imprisonment, lewd and lascivious molestation, using and displaying a firearm during a felony, and sexual performance by a child.

FLPD and BSO SVU detectives additionally noted that the suspect's description and actions were similar to that of the suspect involved in last Thursday's attempted armed kidnappings that occurred in both FLPD's and BSO's jurisdictions. During McDonald's interview, he was questioned about both of those incidents and ultimately confessed to committing them as well. He was additionally charged accordingly for his crimes.

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OR# 24-154317



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Detectives are asking anyone with information about these incidents to contact Detective Sergeant Hector Martinez at 954-828-5510. Information can additionally be provided anonymously by contacting Broward County Crime Stoppers at 954-493-TIPS (8477).



(photo of Rondel McDonald)

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