


Federal assault charges placed against woman who spit at mail carrier

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BUFFALO — “We have your backs.”

That’s the message from the U.S. Attorney’s Office in Buffalo after the arrest Monday of a woman for spitting on a U.S. Postal Service carrier in March.

Melissa C. Daniels-Johnson, 39, of Buffalo was charged with assault of a federal employee and threatening to assault a federal employee, charges that carry a maximum penalty of eight years in prison.

The charges are much more severe than those placed against a Stafford man last week for spitting on a public health official and nurse.

“Any individual who threatens or attempts to use the COVID-19 virus as a weapon as alleged here deserves — and should expect — a strong dose of justice,” stated U.S. Attorney James P. Kennedy. “For a person to spit on a public servant is beyond vile and disgusting — it is criminal. No matter who they are or what they do, the brave men and women who continue to serve others during this pandemic deserve our respect, admiration, and protection. Whether doctors, nurses, police officers, grocery clerks, letter carriers, transit workers, or anyone else providing an essential service, my message to you is simple, you have our thanks, and we have your backs.”

Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul E. Bonanno, who is handling the case, said the incident happened about 7 p.m. March 19.

Postal Inspectors and Cheektowaga police officers were called to the Cheektowaga Branch Post Office on Galleria Drive for a report that a mail carrier had been threatened and spit upon, while collecting mail from blue collection boxes.

The letter carrier told investigators that a woman drove into the postal parking lot through the exit driveway, and drove against one-way traffic. He told Daniels-Johnson that she entered the lot the wrong way.

In response, she allegedly started screaming profanities at him, and threatened to cough on him to give him the Coronavirus.

The manager of the Cheektowaga Branch Post Office tried to calm Daniels-Johnson and de-escalate the situation, but she remained very aggressive and abusive. As the defendant began to pull away, she pulled near the mailboxes, where the letter carrier was working, and pointed a cellphone at him and said, “This is the (expletive) right here, so you know what he looks like.”

The letter carrier said the defendant told him that she was sending her husband to “(expletive) him up,” and told him that he was not going to “know what hit” him. The letter carrier said that he heard the male on the other end of the call tell Daniels-Johnson, “I don’t think you should be saying things like this to a mail man.”

The letter carrier said Daniels-Johnson replied with more derogatory remarks and expletives, adding that the letter carrier “ain’t gonna do (expletive),” and then spit at him. The letter carrier used a mail bucket to shield his face, but the spit got all over his shorts and on his right leg. The woman sped away.

The letter carrier went inside and removed his clothing. He was very concerned because of the defendant's comment about Coronavirus.

It was the second known case of someone being arrested in Western New York for making such a threat and spitting on a public servant.

Jordin M. Schultz, 22, of Stafford was charged with misdemeanor counts of reckless endangerment and menacing for allegedly threatening and spitting at a public health official and nurse on April 2 at his house.