

Upper Marlboro, MD
District Court Trial Session
May 6, 2022

We heard twenty-one cases today but no trials. Two loved ones requested jury trials, which would happen later. Each had a private attorney, and each had arresting officers that we have flagged. One of those, Officer William Bankhead, is a Graham Report officer.

The following cases stood out.

Mr. E has been held since February 7. At his bond hearing on February 8, he was given the "Pretrial option." That is to say, the Office of Pretrial Services (OPS), an administrative agency in the Department of Corrections, was given permission to release him **or not** as they might choose, with no deadline for a decision), but he is still in jail. He asked for a continuance today, and it was granted. So his status is still HWOB with the Pretrial option. His next hearing date is June 28.

[At the time of this report, Courtwatch PG was working on a large [statistical study](#) based on our own research, which showed that when OPS is given such an option and they do decide to release the person, the average time the loved one had to wait in jail before OPS decided was 48 days. That is, if the system decides you should not be jailed before trial, you can spend 48 days or more waiting for that decision.]

The other case that stood out involved Mr. F. He has no fixed address and was charged with violating orders to stay away from two shopping centers in Oxon Hill. He is currently incarcerated, and he has previously been in Mental Health Court. He said that he was not on any medications in the jail now. The arresting officer, Officer Phillips, 3062, said that "I've been dealing with him for fifteen years. Every ninety days I've arrested him for fifteen years now. As soon as he gets out, he'll be back." Judge Varner-Lewis spent some time telling Mr. F what would happen to him if he went to the shopping centers when he was released and he told her that "I'm no threat to anyone," and various other things. They were completely talking past each other. This case proved once again that the criminal injustice system of police and courts does not know how to deal with cases involving mental health and generally makes matters worse.