



South Carolina

STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

P.O. Box 21398
Columbia, South Carolina
29221-1398

Henry D. McMaster, Governor

Mark A. Keel, Chief

WWW.SLED.SC.GOV

(803) 737-9000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 9, 2026

Renée Wunderlich
Director of Public Information

SLED CHARGES FORMER PRIVATE SECURITY GUARD WITH SEXUAL BATTERY WITH A STUDENT AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE DELINQUENCY OF A MINOR

The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) charged Austin Taylor Thompson, 29, with Sexual Battery with a Student 16 Years of Age and Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor on Thursday, April 9, 2026. The SLED investigation was requested by the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office.

Details can be found in the attached warrants.

Thompson was booked into the Beaufort County Detention Center.

The case will be prosecuted by the 14th Circuit Solicitor's Office.

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SLED news releases are published on SLED's website: www.sled.sc.gov
For media inquiries, please email SLED's Public Information Office: pio@sled.sc.gov

ARREST WARRANT

2026A0710400148

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

☒ County/ ☐ Municipality of

Beaufort

THE STATE

202507309

against

Austin Taylor Thompson

Address:

Hardeeville, SC 29927-

Phone:

SSN:

Sex: M Race: U Height: 6 2 Weight: 155

DL State: SC DL #:

DOB: 1996 Agency ORI #: SCLED0000

Prosecuting Agency: State Law Enforcement Division

Prosecuting Officer: Peter T Rudofski - S01425

Offense: Sex / Sexual battery with a student 16 or 17 years of age, no aggravated force or coercion

Offense Code: 3463

Code/Ordinance Sec: 16-03-0755(B)

This warrant is CERTIFIED FOR SERVICE in the

☐ County/ ☐ Municipality of

The accused is to be arrested and brought before me to be dealt with according to the law.

(L.S.)

Signature of Judge

Date:

RETURN

A copy of this arrest warrant was delivered to

defendant

on

Austin Thompson

April 9, 2026 @ 0602

Signature of Constable/Law Enforcement Officer

RETURN WARRANT TO:

Beaufort County General Sessions
PO Box 1128
102 Ribaut Road, Rm. 208
Beaufort, SC 299011128

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ORIGINAL

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

☒ County/ ☐ Municipality of

Beaufort

Personally appeared before me the affiant Peter T Rudofski

who

being duly sworn deposes and says that defendant Austin Taylor Thompson

did within this county and state on or about 10/4/2025

violate the criminal laws of the

State of South Carolina (or ordinance of ☒ County/ ☐ Municipality of Beaufort)

in the following particulars:

DESCRIPTION OF OFFENSE: Sex / Sexual battery with a student 16 or 17 years of age, no aggravated force or coercion

I further state that there is probable cause to believe that the defendant named above did commit the crime set forth and that probable cause is based on the following facts:

That on October 4, 2025, through October 23, 2025, in the County of Beaufort, Austin Thompson did commit the crime of Sexual Battery with a Student. The defendant, who was employed as a private security officer with Coastal Security Services contracted to provide indoor security for May River High School in Bluffton, SC, did have sexual intercourse with a sixteen (16) year old student of May River High School. The defendant had sexual intercourse with the victim three times after school hours and not on school grounds. The defendant had the knowledge that the victim, with whom he was engaging in sexual intercourse, was a student at May River High School, where the defendant was a security guard and a person of authority over the victim.

Signature of Affiant

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

☒ County/ ☐ Municipality of

Beaufort

Affiant's Address P. O. Box 21398

Columbia, SC 29221-

Affiant's Telephone

ARREST WARRANT

TO ANY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THIS STATE OR MUNICIPALITY OR ANY CONSTABLE OF THIS COUNTY:

It appearing from the above affidavit that there are reasonable grounds to believe that

on or about 10/4/2025

defendant Austin Taylor Thompson

did violate the criminal laws of the State of South Carolina (or ordinance of

☒ County/ ☐ Municipality of Beaufort

) as set forth below:

DESCRIPTION OF OFFENSE: Sex / Sexual battery with a student 16 or 17 years of age, no aggravated force or coercion

Having found probable cause and the above affiant having sworn before me, you are empowered and directed to arrest the said defendant and bring him or her before me forthwith to be dealt with according to law. A copy of this Arrest Warrant shall be delivered to the defendant at the time of its execution, or as soon thereafter as is practicable

Sworn to and subscribed before me

on 4/7/2026

Signature of Issuing Judge

LaShonda Green Scott

Judge Code: 7331

ORIGINAL

(L.S.)

Judge's Address Post Office Box 840

Bluffton, SC 29910-

Judge's Telephone (843)255-5610

Issuing Court:

☒

Magistrate

☐

Municipal

☐

Circuit

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Form Approved by
S.C. Attorney General
April 21, 2003
SCCA 518

ARREST WARRANT

2026A0710400149

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

☒ County/ ☐ Municipality of

Beaufort

THE STATE

202507309

against

Austin Taylor Thompson

Address:

Hardeeville, SC 29927-

Phone: SSN:

Sex: M Race: U Height: 6 2 Weight: 155

DL State: SC DL #:

DOB: 1996 Agency ORI #: SCLED0000

Prosecuting Agency: State Law Enforcement Division

Prosecuting Officer: Peter T Rudofski - S01425

Offense: Minor / Contributing to the delinquency of a minor

Offense Code: 0048

Code/Ordinance Sec: 16-17-0490

This warrant is CERTIFIED FOR SERVICE in the

☐ County/ ☐ Municipality of

The accused is to be arrested and brought before me to be dealt with according to the law.

(L.S.)

Signature of Judge

Date:

RETURN

A copy of this arrest warrant was delivered to

defendant

on

Austin Thompson
April 9, 2026 @ 0602
Kerim Herbst / Herbst
Signature of Constable/Law Enforcement Officer

RETURN WARRANT TO:

Beaufort County General Sessions
PO Box 1128
102 Ribaut Road, Rm. 208
Beaufort, SC 299011128

ORIGINAL

ORIGINAL

ORIGINAL

ORIGINAL

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

☒ County/ ☐ Municipality of

Beaufort

Personally appeared before me the affiant Peter T Rudofski

being duly sworn deposes and says that defendant Austin Taylor Thompson

did within this county and state on or about 10/ 4/2025

violate the criminal laws of the

State of South Carolina (or ordinance of ☒ County/ ☐ Municipality of Beaufort)

in the following particulars:

DESCRIPTION OF OFFENSE: Minor / Contributing to the delinquency of a minor

I further state that there is probable cause to believe that the defendant named above did commit the crime set forth and that probable cause is based on the following facts:

That on October 4, 2025, in the county of Beaufort, Austin Thompson did commit the crime of Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor. The defendant, who was employed as a private security officer with Coastal Security Services contracted to provide indoor security for May River High School in Bluffton, SC, did give his firearm to a sixteen (16) year old student of May River High School afterhours in the presence of other juveniles. The defendant allowed the victim to have access to his handgun in the back seat of the defendant's vehicle. The defendant had the knowledge that the victim was an underage student at May River High School, where the defendant was a security guard and a person of authority over the victim.

Signature of Affiant

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

☒ County/ ☐ Municipality of

Beaufort

Affiant's Address P. O. Box 21398

Columbia, SC 29221-

Affiant's Telephone

ARREST WARRANT

TO ANY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THIS STATE OR MUNICIPALITY OR ANY CONSTABLE OF THIS COUNTY:

It appearing from the above affidavit that there are reasonable grounds to believe that

on or about 10/ 4/2025 defendant Austin Taylor Thompson

did violate the criminal laws of the State of South Carolina (or ordinance of

☒ County/ ☐ Municipality of Beaufort) as set forth below:

DESCRIPTION OF OFFENSE: Minor / Contributing to the delinquency of a minor

Having found probable cause and the above affiant having sworn before me, you are empowered and directed to arrest the said defendant and bring him or her before me forthwith to be dealt with according to law. A copy of this Arrest Warrant shall be delivered to the defendant at the time of its execution, or as soon thereafter as is practicable

Sworn to and subscribed before me

on 4/ 7/2026

Signature of Issuing Judge
LaShonda Green Scott (L.S.)
Judge Code: 7331-7476

Judge's Address Post Office Box 840

Bluffton, SC 29910-

Judge's Telephone (843)255-5610

Issuing Court: ☒ Magistrate ☐ Municipal ☐ Circuit

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AFFIDAVIT

Form Approved by
S.C. Attorney General
April 21, 2003
SCCA 518