

State of South Carolina
Solicitor, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit

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Solicitor
W. Walter Wilkins

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

December 13, 2012

Greenville Woman Sentenced on Felony Child Abuse

Thirteenth Circuit Solicitor Walt Wilkins states that JESSICA ANN BLACKHAM, age 26, pled guilty on 12-12-12 to Infliction of Great Bodily Injury Upon A Child, commonly referred to as Felony Child Abuse and was sentenced to Five (5) years suspended upon the service of One (1) year under the Home Incarceration Program and Three (3) years probation with random alcohol and drug testing and mental health counseling by the Honorable Edward Miller. JESSICA ANN BLACKHAM will begin her probationary sentence after she has served her one (1) year of Home Incarceration.

Evidence presented at the plea hearing by Assistant Solicitor Betty Strom established that on February 4, 2011, JESSICA ANN BLACKHAM was attending the circus with family and friends. During the intermission, Ms. Blackham went to the bathroom and remained there throughout the remainder of the circus performance. At the end of the evening, at approximately 10:00 p.m. Ms. Blackham left the Bilo center with her friends having just delivered a 6.5 pound baby in the toilet. Custodial workers for the Bilo center found the newborn at approximately 11:30 p.m. and immediately called 911. Upon arrival at the hospital, the infant's temperature was recorded to be 29.6 degrees Celsius. Normal temperature of a newborn is 36 degrees Celsius. The child was diagnosed with hyperthermia, which has the potential of a great risk of death for the child. The child was treated at the Greenville Memorial Hospital and survived. Although the potential long term affects of the hyperthermia is unknown at this point, presently the child is doing well. The day after the baby was found, this defendant was seen at the Greenville Memorial Hospital for complaints of excessive bleeding

and officers with the Greenville City Police Department were able to obtain a DNA sample from the defendant. That sample was compared to a DNA sample obtained from the child and the analysis of the DNA evidence confirmed that the defendant was in fact the mother of the child.