



U.S. Department of Justice

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 16, 2025

**Milwaukee Man Charged in Federal Court for Arson at downtown
MATC campus**

Richard G. Frohling, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Wisconsin, announced that on May 15, 2025, a federal criminal complaint was filed against Jarriel Cotton (age: 40), charging him with arson of a building used in interstate commerce, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 844(i).

According to the criminal complaint, on May 13, 2025, shortly before 7:00 a.m., Cotton intentionally set fire to an upholstered chair on the third floor of the downtown Milwaukee MATC campus building at 700 W. State Street. The incident was captured on video. Cotton made his initial appearance in federal court on May 16, 2025. His next court hearing is May 21, 2025. He remains in federal custody.

Cotton has a prior arson conviction in Milwaukee County Circuit Court from a 2015 incident.

If convicted of the offense alleged in the criminal complaint, he faces a mandatory minimum of five years' (up to life) imprisonment. He may also be fined up to \$250,000.

This case was investigated by the Milwaukee Police Department. It will be prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Abbey M. Marzick.

A criminal complaint is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove his guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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