



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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Press Release

South Shore Plaza Shooter Sentenced to Prison

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The Quincy man who sparked panic by firing multiple shots in the crowded South Shore Plaza in February 2017 has been sentenced to 5 to 6 years in State Prison for his actions that night, according to Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey.

Michael Spence, age 26, pled guilty to the indictments against him on September 10, 2019 before Superior Court Judge Robert C. Cosgrove, who set Tuesday Sept. 17 as the sentencing date.

This morning, Spence and his attorneys moved to withdraw that plea and go to trial on the charges. Assistant District Attorney Carolyn Hely opposed that request and Judge Cosgrove denied it.

Spence was sentenced to 5 to 6 years in State Prison on his indictment for Armed Assault to Murder. Judge Cosgrove sentenced him to a subsequent 3 years of probation supervision for the other indictments: Carrying a loaded firearm without a license, attempted assault and battery with a firearm, second offense carrying a firearm without a license, and affray.*

Braintree police began being flooded with 911 calls at 6:54 p.m. on Feb. 3, 2017 reporting shots fired inside the Macy's department store at the plaza. Responding police saw a chaotic scene of hundreds of shoppers fleeing the area. Dispatchers continued to receive 911 contact from people fleeing, hiding in stairwells, or looking for friends and family from whom they had become separated.

Someone waiting in line at the Cheesecake Factory restaurant was looking out the window of that establishment at the crush of people fleeing the building and saw a man strolling calmly amid the panic who then tossed an object behind a bush. That witness directed police to the area, where they found a loaded Lorcin .32 caliber firearm. He described the man who had thrown the gun and described his clothing; detectives reviewed surveillance footage, including cameras at plaza exits. Images that matched that description were circulated to law enforcement and Boston Police identified the photo as resembling Michael Spence.

At the time of the South Shore Plaza shooting, the defendant was on probation out of Suffolk Superior Court for carrying a firearm without a license. One condition of that probation was that his location be monitored by GPS/electronic monitoring. Probation records showed that Spence had traveled to the South Shore Plaza on the evening of Feb. 3, 2017 and was present at the mall during the shooting.

He was led from the courtroom to begin his committed sentence shortly before 11 a.m.

**An indictment for carrying a loaded firearm was dismissed at the Commonwealth's motion for procedural reasons.*