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Columbus City Attorney Secures Conviction in High Profile Ethnic Intimidation Case

Defendant pleaded guilty to first degree misdemeanor in case arising from last year's viral video of contractor using racial slurs

COLUMBUS, OH—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein announced today that defendant Jeffrey Whitman, who was captured on [video](#) using racial slurs against the victim whom he followed home and intimidated during a road rage incident last year, has pleaded guilty to one count of [ethnic intimidation](#) in court this morning. The judge gave Whitman a six-month suspended sentence and placed him on probation for one year. Whitman also was fined \$500 and required to pay court costs.

“The type of behavior captured on video last year has no place in our society,” said City Attorney Zach Klein. “We made it clear in court today how seriously we took this case and how serious the offense was. Even months later, the victim was too shaken up to address the court, and, instead, asked our prosecutor to read his victim’s statement to the judge. We hope this conviction sends a message that the City of Columbus does not tolerate any form of racial intimidation.”

Ethnic intimidation is a criminal offense under Columbus City Code [Section 2331.08](#), which states in part:

No person shall violate Sections 2303.13, 2303.22, 2307.06, 2309.06, 2309.07, 2311.21, 2313.02, 2313.03, 2313.04, 2317.03, 2317.11, 2317.12, 2323.30, or 2329.01, of the Columbus City Codes, by reason of or where one of the motives, reasons or purposes for the commission of the offense is the victim's race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, familial status or military status.

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