

State of Minnesota
County of Blue Earth

District Court
5th Judicial District

Prosecutor File No. 0070112508
Court File No. 07-CR-26-280

State of Minnesota,

Plaintiff,

COMPLAINT

Summons

vs.

DENISE ARDELL SCHERER DOB: 09/10/1983

821 E Main Street
Mankato, MN 56001-4560

Defendant.

The Complainant submits this complaint to the Court and states that there is probable cause to believe Defendant committed the following offense(s):

COUNT I

Charge: Malicious Punishment of a Child

Minnesota Statute: 609.377.1, with reference to: 609.377.2

Maximum Sentence: 364 days or \$3,000 fine, or both

Offense Level: Gross Misdemeanor

Offense Date (on or about): 12/16/2025

Control #(ICR#): 25035877

Charge Description: On or about December 16, 2025, in the County of Blue Earth, Minnesota, Denise Ardell Scherer did, as a parent, legal guardian, or caretaker, by an intentional act or a series of intentional acts with respect to a child, evidence unreasonable force or cruel discipline that is excessive under the circumstances.

COUNT II

Charge: Domestic Assault-GM-Subsequent Violation

Minnesota Statute: 609.2242.2

Maximum Sentence: 364 days or \$3,000 fine, or both

Offense Level: Gross Misdemeanor

Offense Date (on or about): 12/16/2025

Control #(ICR#): 25035877

Charge Description: On or about December 16, 2025, in the County of Blue Earth, Minnesota, Denise Ardell Scherer, did, against a family or household member, as defined in M.S.A. 518B.01 Subd. 2, intentionally inflict or attempted to inflict bodily harm upon another and has a previous qualified domestic violence-related offense conviction or an adjudication of delinquency within ten years.

STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

In the morning on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, Witness 1 contacted police to report suspected child abuse to Witness 1's son, Victim 1. Witness 1 later spoke with Officer Walker from the Mankato Department of Public Safety and stated the following: Witness 1 shares custody of Victim 1 with Denise Ardell Scherer (DOB: 09/10/1983). Victim 1 had been in Scherer's care since approximately 4:30 p.m. on Friday, December 12, 2025. A few hours after Victim 1 arrived to school at about 8:00 a.m. on December 17, 2025, Witness 2, Victim 1's teacher, contacted Witness 1 and advised that Victim 1 had a bruise on Victim 1's face.

Officer McClinton spoke with Witness 2 who described Victim 1 as a smart kid and very "matter of fact." Witness 2 had been Victim 1's teacher for a few months. Witness 2 told Officer McClinton that Witness 2 observed an injury on Victim 1's face the morning of December 17, 2025, and when Witness 2 asked Victim 1 what happened, Victim 1 said Victim 1 was being naughty in the bathtub and Scherer slapped Victim 1. Witness 2 said other teachers spoke with Victim 1, and Victim 1 provided the same story to those teachers.

Witness 1 reported swelling to the back of Victim 1's head from striking the wall near the bathtub. Officer Walker observed possible swelling and a red mark near the top of Victim 1's left ear. Walker also noted light bruising around Victim 1's left eye, mostly in the corner and at the bottom.

Witness 3 is a daycare worker who noticed a bruise on Victim 1's cheek bone late in the morning on December 17, 2025. According to Witness 3, Victim 1 told Witness 3 that Victim 1's mommy is sometimes naughty and hit Victim 1.

The following day, Detective Sergeant Knutson and Child Protection Worker Wright spoke with Victim 1. Knutson noted there was a bruise on Victim 1's cheek. Victim 1 told Wright Victim 1 "got hitted" when Victim 1 was in the bathtub at Scherer's home. Victim 1 used Victim 1's left hand to show Wright how Victim 1 was hit on the left side of Victim 1's face.

Scherer told police Victim 1 fell on some ice in the evening on December 16, 2025, while walking with Scherer's mother to Scherer's home and may have sustained an injury at that time. Scherer's mother, Witness 4, denied Victim 1 fell on the ice during that walk. Both Scherer and Witness 4 discussed the challenge of washing Victim 1's hair in the bathtub generally.

Scherer explained the bruise on Victim 1's cheek was from hitting Victim 1's cheek on the bathtub faucet which Scherer said Scherer observed. Scherer said Victim 1 was sitting down by the faucet, Scherer told Victim 1 that Victim 1 needed Victim 1's hair washed, "I tried to move him, and he hit my hand, bounced off and that's where the mark on his cheek is from the faucet." Scherer's home is in Blue Earth County.

Scherer said Scherer did not call the school or daycare about the bruise that formed because Victim 1 frequently has marks on Victim 1's body.

In Court File No. 40-CR-24-497, Scherer was convicted on April 16, 2025, of violating a Domestic Abuse No Contact Order.

SIGNATURES AND APPROVALS

Complainant requests that Defendant, subject to bail or conditions of release, be:
(1) arrested or that other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court; or
(2) detained, if already in custody, pending further proceedings; and that said Defendant otherwise be dealt with according to law.

Complainant declares under penalty of perjury that everything stated in this document is true and correct. Minn. Stat. § 358.116; Minn. R. Crim. P. 2.01, subds. 1, 2.

Complainant

Jesse Gilbertson
Patrol Sergeant
710 S Front St
Mankato, MN 56001-3803
Badge: 3126

Electronically Signed:
01/22/2026 10:49 AM
Blue Earth County, Minnesota

Being authorized to prosecute the offenses charged, I approve this complaint.

Prosecuting Attorney

Christopher K Lowe
Assistant County Attorney
401 Carver Road
PO Box 3129
Mankato, MN 56002
(507) 304-4600

Electronically Signed:
01/22/2026 08:47 AM

FINDING OF PROBABLE CAUSE

From the above sworn facts, and any supporting affidavits or supplemental sworn testimony, I, the Issuing Officer, have determined that probable cause exists to support, subject to bail or conditions of release where applicable, Defendant's arrest or other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court, or Defendant's detention, if already in custody, pending further proceedings. Defendant is therefore charged with the above-stated offense(s).

☒ SUMMONS

THEREFORE YOU, THE DEFENDANT, ARE SUMMONED to appear as directed in the Notice of Hearing before the above-named court to answer this complaint.

IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR in response to this SUMMONS, a WARRANT FOR YOUR ARREST shall be issued.

☐ WARRANT

To the Sheriff of the above-named county; or other person authorized to execute this warrant: I order, in the name of the State of Minnesota, that the Defendant be apprehended and arrested without delay and brought promptly before the court (if in session), and if not, before a Judge or Judicial Officer of such court without unnecessary delay, and in any event not later than 36 hours after the arrest or as soon as such Judge or Judicial Officer is available to be dealt with according to law.

☐ *Execute in MN Only*

☐ *Execute Nationwide*

☐ *Execute in Border States*

☐ ORDER OF DETENTION

Since the Defendant is already in custody, I order, subject to bail or conditions of release, that the Defendant continue to be detained pending further proceedings.

Bail: \$

Conditions of Release:

This complaint, duly subscribed and sworn to or signed under penalty of perjury, is issued by the undersigned Judicial Officer as of the following date: January 22, 2026.

Judicial Officer

Andrea Jo Lieser
District Court Judge

Electronically Signed: 01/22/2026 11:08 AM

Sworn testimony has been given before the Judicial Officer by the following witnesses:

COUNTY OF BLUE EARTH
STATE OF MINNESOTA

State of Minnesota

Plaintiff

vs.

Denise Ardell Scherer

Defendant

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER RETURN OF SERVICE

*I hereby Certify and Return that I have served a copy of this
Summons upon the Defendant herein named.*

Signature of Authorized Service Agent: