

# *Trial of Wisconsin teen for protest shooting delayed by 7 months*

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**Kyle Rittenhouse, charged for a fatal shooting at last year's Black Lives Matter protest, appears for an extradition hearing in court. (Photo: Nam Y Huh/Pool / AP)**

Madison, March 11 (RHC)-- The trial for Kyle Rittenhouse, the 18-year-old man accused of killing two people and wounding a third during a protest against police brutality in Wisconsin, was deferred by seven

months and could be delayed even longer as court cases resulting from the last year's Black Lives Matter protests unfold in the United States.

Rittenhouse's trial was scheduled to begin on March 29, but both sides told Kenosha County Circuit Judge Bruce Schroeder that they needed more time to prepare. The judge set November 1 as the new date to begin the trial, with a May 17 status hearing.

Rittenhouse faces multiple felony counts, including reckless homicide and reckless endangerment. He also faces a misdemeanour count of being a minor in possession of a firearm. Rittenhouse appeared with his lawyer during the court hearing broadcast over Zoom. He spoke only when the judge asked him if he had any problem with the delay, which would push his trial start to more than a year after the shootings.

"No, your honour," Rittenhouse said. He was seated behind his lawyer, wearing a mask. The judge cautioned that the trial could be pushed even further, saying the November date was "not written in stone." Assistant District Attorney Thomas Binger said both sides needed more time, citing a "number of outstanding issues", including DNA testing.

Rittenhouse's lawyer, Mark Richards, agreed to the November trial start. "We're interested in moving this matter forward but whatever the court decides, we'll abide by," he said.

According to prosecutors, Rittenhouse, who is white, travelled to Kenosha from his home in Antioch, Illinois, on August 25 after a local militia posted an online message seeking help protecting businesses from protesters. Kenosha was in the throes of several nights of chaotic protests after a white police officer shot Jacob Blake, who is Black, in the back during a domestic disturbance. The shooting left Blake paralysed from the waist down.

Rittenhouse, who was 17 at the time, opened fire on protesters Joseph Rosenbaum, Anthony Huber and Gaige Grosskreutz with an AR-15-style rifle. Rosenbaum and Huber died, while Grosskreutz survived with wounds. Grosskreutz and his lawyer also attended the hearing but did not speak.

Rittenhouse has argued that he fired in self-defence after the three protesters attacked him. Police let him walk through their lines in the moments following the shootings, even though Rittenhouse still had his rifle slung over his shoulder and protesters were screaming that he had just shot three people.

Conservatives have rallied around him, painting him as a symbol for gun rights. They generated \$2 million for his bail in November. Black Lives Matter supporters have worked to define him as a trigger-happy white supremacist. Richards told Schroeder last month that Rittenhouse has received threats and has moved into an undisclosed safe house.

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