

Ex-prosecutor indicted for allegedly shielding men in Ahmaud Arbery case

- Jackie Johnson accused of protecting ex-employee suspect
- Arbery was killed after being pursued by a white father and son



Jackie Johnson campaigns for re-election as district attorney in November 2020. She blamed the controversy over Ahmaud Arbery's killing for her defeat.

Guardian staff and agencies

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A former Georgia prosecutor involved in the case of Ahmaud Arbery's killing has been indicted on charges of misconduct for allegedly using her position to shield the men who chased and shot Arbery as he went for a run in February 2020.

Jackie Johnson, a former district attorney on the Brunswick judicial circuit, was indicted by a grand jury on Thursday on charges of violating her oath of office and hindering a law enforcement officer.

Arbery was killed when a white father and son, Greg and Travis McMichael, armed themselves and pursued the 25-year-old black man in a pickup truck after spotting him running in their neighborhood outside the coastal city of Brunswick.

A neighbor, William "Roddie" Bryan joined the chase and took cellphone video of Travis McMichael shooting Arbery at close range with a shotgun. The McMichaels said they believed Arbery was a burglar and that he was shot after attacking Travis McMichael with his fists.

Police did not charge any of them immediately following the shooting, and the McMichaels and Bryan remained free for more than two months until the [Georgia](#) bureau of investigation took over the case. All three were charged with murder in May 2020 and face trial this fall.

Greg McMichael had worked as an investigator in Johnson's office and left her a cellphone message following the shooting.

The indictment says Johnson showed "favor and affection" toward Greg McMichael in the investigation and interfered with police officers at the scene by "directing that Travis McMichael should not be placed under arrest".

Johnson has insisted she did nothing wrong, saying she immediately recused herself from the case because Greg McMichael was a former employee. She recommended an outside prosecutor who was appointed to the case and concluded no charges were warranted. That prosecutor, George Barnhill, later stepped aside after Arbery's family noted he had a son working for Johnson as an assistant prosecutor.

Johnson lost re-election last year, and blamed the controversy over Arbery's death for her defeat. She did not immediately return a phone message seeking comment Thursday.