

# Stephen Yaxley-Lennon committed to prison for contempt of court

Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, AKA Tommy Robinson, has today been sentenced to 6 months in prison for committing contempt of court by filming outside Leeds Crown Court during a trial. He was committed to prison for a further 3 months for a previous contempt.

In May 2018, Yaxley-Lennon live-streamed a video outside Leeds Crown Court that contained information in breach of reporting restrictions. He also approached defendants and told his followers to “harass them”.

On 5 July, the High Court found Yaxley-Lennon to be in contempt of court, because:

- His online publication of details about the criminal case involved a breach of a reporting restriction order imposed under s4(2) of the Contempt of Court Act 1981.
- The content of what he published online gave rise to a substantial risk that the course of justice in the criminal case would be seriously impeded, thereby amounting to a breach of the rule of contempt law known as “the strict liability rule”.
- By aggressively confronting and filming some of the defendants in that case as they arrived at court, he interfered with the course of justice.

The court concluded that his conduct in each of these respects amounted to a serious interference with the administration of justice.

Speaking after the sentencing, the Attorney General said:

Today’s sentencing of Yaxley-Lennon serves to illustrate how seriously the courts will take matters of contempt.

Posting material online that breaches reporting restrictions or risks prejudicing legal proceedings has consequences, and I would urge everyone to think carefully about whether their social media posts could amount to contempt of court.

## **Note to editors**

The Attorney General was granted permission to bring proceedings on the basis of:

1. Publishing information that was subject to a restriction prohibiting any reporting of the trial until a later, related trial had concluded
2. Publishing a video encouraging his followers to harass the defendants, creating a substantial risk that their rights would be seriously impeded
3. Illegally photographing and intimidating defendants as they entered court