



NEWS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jury Recommends Life Imprisonment for Man Convicted of Statutory Rape

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Patterson announces that Ronnie Dale Perkins, 34, of Springfield, Missouri was convicted by a Greene County Jury of statutory rape in the first degree on July 21, 2020. The jury deliberated for just six minutes before rendering its guilty verdict.

According to the victim, in March of 2017, Perkins asked the 12 year old victim to sit on his bed as he watched her play games on her phone. Perkins then pushed her back on the bed, removed her clothes and raped her. Perkins admitted to having sex with the victim and told police that he knew she was “young” but didn’t know she was just 12.

The victim’s mom became suspicious when her daughter was constantly texting late at night and she then found text messages between Perkins and her daughter indicating a sexual relationship. The mom immediately contacted law enforcement.

The majority of child sexual abuse incidents are never disclosed and even fewer are reported. There are many reasons children often do not disclose sexual abuse, including threats of harm, fear of not being believed, shame or guilt, and fear of being removed from the home. If you suspect a child needs help, make a report. The Children Division’s Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-800-392-3738.

The defendant opted for jury sentencing and the same jury who found the defendant guilty recommended a sentence of life imprisonment for the defendant. In addition to the evidence presented in the guilt phase of the trial, the jury was also able to consider Perkins’ prior convictions for harassment in the second degree, violation of

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an order of protection and domestic assault in the fourth degree as well as the significant impact the rape has had on the victim. The jury deliberated for multiple hours before unanimously agreeing on this sentence recommendation. The jury trial was presided over by The Honorable David Jones. Judge Jones set a sentencing hearing for October 26, 2020.

This is the second criminal jury trial that has occurred since the beginning of the pandemic. The Court worked closely with the Springfield-Greene County Health Department to put into place increased safety measures throughout the trial due to COVID-19. Some of these measures included temperature checks upon entering the courthouse, face covering requirements for all individuals, and revamped juror check-in procedures to allow for physical distancing throughout the process. During the trial, the courtroom layout was redesigned to provide physical distancing between the jurors, parties and court staff.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Sarah Donelan and Nathan Chapman. It was investigated by the Springfield Police Department and Detective Chelsea Taylor was the lead investigator assigned to the case.

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