



250 South Jefferson Street * PO Box 130
Redwood Falls, MN 56283
Ph: (507) 637-4010 * Fax: (507) 637-4012

Office of the County Attorney

Jenna M. Peterson
Redwood County Attorney

Amy M. Busse
Thomas Borgen
Shannon Ness
Assistant County Attorneys

PRESS RELEASE

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JURY FINDS MORTON MAN GUILTY OF CRIMINAL SEXUAL CONDUCT

A Redwood County District Court jury found Patrick Dean Nielsen, 30, of Morton, guilty of two counts of Criminal Sexual Conduct in the Second Degree and two counts of Attempted Criminal Sexual Conduct in the Second Degree, County Attorney Jenna Peterson announced Wednesday.

The jury deliberated for approximately two and a half hours on Thursday, November 10th, before delivering the guilty verdict around 7:40 p.m.

According to the criminal complaints, evidence, and testimony at trial, Nielsen sexually assaulted the eleven year old Victim on two separate occasions; once in the summer of 2020 and again in the fall of 2020. In the summer of 2020, Nielsen and Victim were camping when Nielsen slid his hand under Victim's sweatshirt and began touching her breasts while they shared a bed in a camper. Victim told Nielsen to stop and removed his hand. Nielsen responded by saying, "Oh, I'm sorry". Nielsen then put his hand under Victim's sweatpants and underwear near Victim's upper groin area. Victim again removed Nielsen's hand from inside her clothing and left the bed.

The second assault occurred in November 2020 at the family's residence within the City of Redwood Falls. Nielsen entered Victim's bedroom and stated he wanted to "cuddle". Nielsen then climbed up the ladder to Victim's loft bed and laid next to Victim. While Nielsen was lying next to Victim he again slid his hand under Victim's t-shirt and began touching Victim's breast. Victim removed Nielsen's hand and left the bedroom.

Shannon Ness, Assistant Redwood County Attorney, who prosecuted the case, told the jury in her closing argument, "Victim's reactions to Defendant assaulting her speak for themselves. She was so uncomfortable she left the bed after Defendant assaulted her the first time in the camper. She was so uncomfortable and scared after Defendant assaulted her the second time that she again left her bed. She left the comfort of her own bed, which should be the safest place in the whole world for a little girl, because the man who she called 'dad' sexually assaulted her."

Nielsen will be sentenced February 17th, 2023, at the Redwood County Courthouse.

If you or someone you know have been a victim of sexual assault or domestic violence there are multiple local resources available including: Women's Rural Advocacy Program, New Horizon's Crisis Center, Minnesota Indigenous Women's Society, and Redwood County Attorney Crime Victim Services. For more information on local resources for victims visit our website: <https://redwoodcounty-mn.us/crime-victim-services/> or contact Denise Kerkhoff, Crime Victim Services Coordinator at 507-637-1399.