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A man serving a 35 year prison sentence in Big Muddy prison for a Class X felony child molestation conviction is free and out on bond. This occurred on 7/10/20.

In April of 2018, 28 year old Centralia man Jerad Peoples was found guilty of a Class X felony child molestation charge. Judge Mark Stedlin handed down a 35 year sentence demanding 85% be served plus 3 years supervised release after the prison sentence.

This case was tried in the courts for almost 3 years.

When asked at the end of the trial if Mr. Peoples had anything to say to the family of the victim, he declined.

After sentencing, the family of the minor victim gave victim impact statements.

Due to his attorney filing for an appeal, Jerad Peoples walked out of Big Muddy Prison on bond this Friday. It appears it was due to the alleged absence of testimonial evidence during the trial and an issue with the absence of the defendant at one point. No one has reached out for comment from Mr. Peoples. If they do, I'll update.

His conviction and sentence have been vacated pending a new trial to begin again in the lower courts.

The minor victim's family reached out.

The maternal grandmother reached out to me and wanted desperately to share a statement.

"I want everyone's children to be safe. I don't know what to say about his sentence being vacated. I just know this tore our family apart and I would hate to see this happen to another family."

As it stands, Mr. Peoples is a free man awaiting another trial on class x felony child molestation charges and is innocent until proven guilty.