

Man goes to jail for sexual offences that led to suicide

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A 67-year-old man convicted of the 2021 sexual assault and sexual touching of a girl under 16 was sentenced Dec. 5 by a judge in Fort St. John to four-and-a-half years in jail.

"This type of sexualized violence committed against a vulnerable girl in her own home is absolutely intolerable," said BC Supreme Court Justice Michael Brundrett.

The sentencing decision was, coincidentally, published on Dec. 23, the fourth anniversary of the victim's suicide.

The Crown asked for a five-year

sentence. Brundrett emphatically rejected the defence's proposal of two years less a day, with two years probation, or two-to-three years jail. He called it too low for the serious crime which had such a profound effect on the victim.

"The offences took an incredible mental, emotional, and physical toll on her, to the point where she felt overwhelming trauma and ultimately committed suicide," Brundrett said.

A publication ban protects the identities of the victim and witnesses. Brundrett referred to the guilty man as Mr. H and said he violated a position of trust as the girl's great uncle.

The girl lived with her grandmother,

who is Mr. H's sister, since shortly after her birth, because her mother was unable to care for her.

On the night of the crime, Oct. 6, 2021, Mr. H bought alcohol for the girl. She became drunk and fell asleep in the basement.

He proceeded to exploit the girl, a member of the same First Nation.

Brundrett acknowledged Mr. H's aboriginal heritage. He grew up as a child of an alcoholic, did not complete elementary school, committed crimes and became an addict.

His record does not include related convictions and he was deemed a low risk of reoffending, but he showed no remorse.

"I expect that his rehabilitation may be challenging given that he continues to deny the offence," the judge said.

Brundrett gave Mr. H credit for two days time served, banned him from possessing firearms for 10 years and added him to the national sex offender registry for a term of 20 years.

The sexual assault charge was stayed in favour of the more-serious sexual interference offence due to a court rule against double convictions for the same incident.

Help is available anytime at 988, the national suicide crisis helpline, or crisis-centre.ca, the Crisis Prevention, Intervention and Information Centre for Northern BC.

Man sentenced to time served for breaching sentence

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A man sentenced to 20 months of home confinement for sexual assault last June pleaded guilty Dec. 29 in Prince George Provincial Court to breaching his conditional sentence order twice.

A publication ban covers the name of the guilty man and his victim.

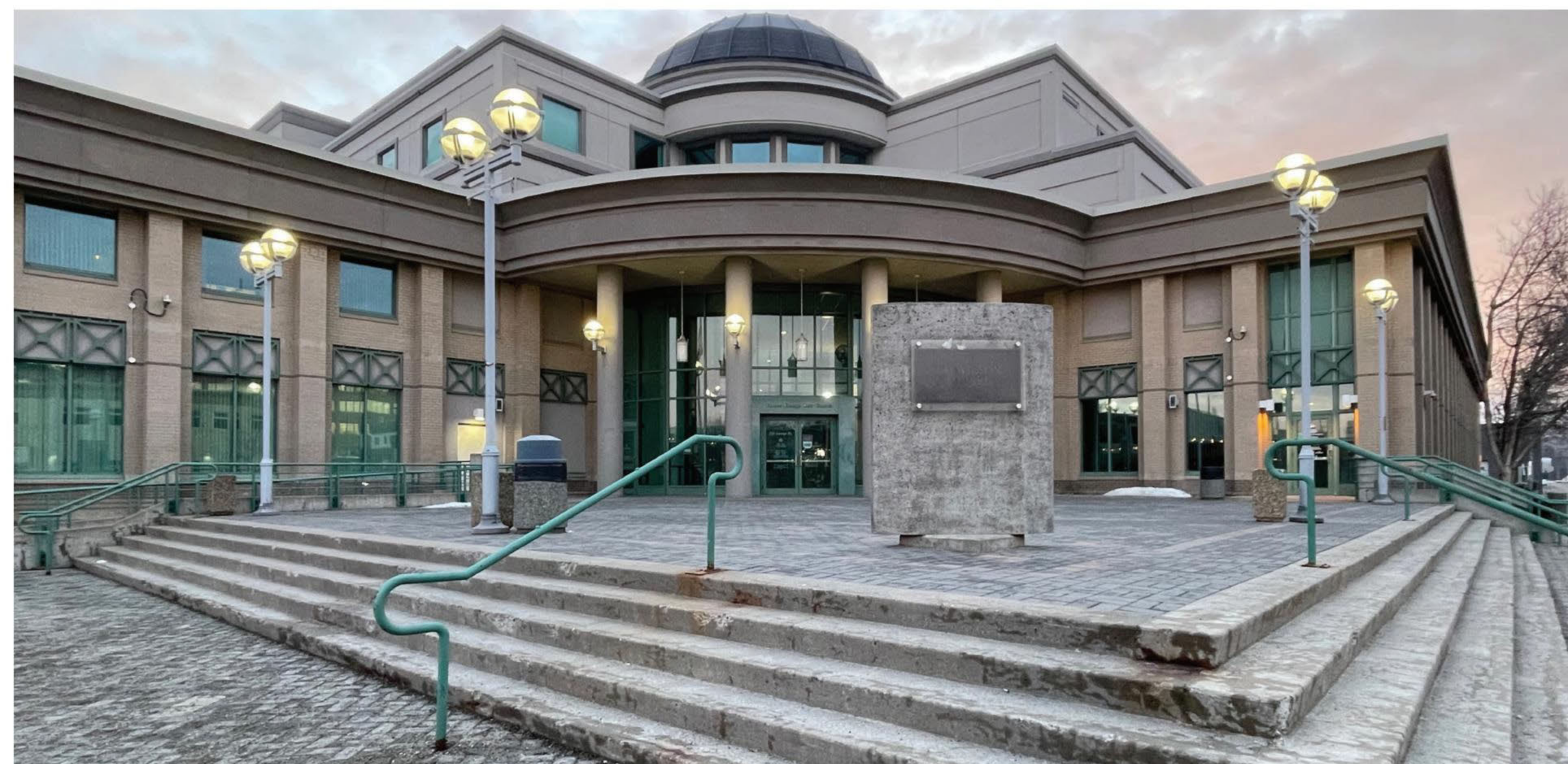
The man originally pleaded guilty on Oct. 24, 2024 to having sex with a woman after she withdrew consent because he was not wearing a condom on the night of Oct. 3, 2021.

During a June 25 sentencing hearing, Judge Judith Doulis required the man to spend 16 months under house arrest, with limited allowance to leave for personal business and urgent medical care, and then four months of a 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew.

Doulis's order included several conditions, two of which the man breached last summer.

He came before Doulis again on Dec. 29 and she agreed to a joint proposal from Crown and defence lawyers for time served.

She said the man's conditional sentence order stopped running between



CITIZEN FILE PHOTO

A man who was found guilty of sexual assault breached his conditional release conditions, a judge has determined.

July 17 and Dec. 29, so he has 552 days — or 18 months and four days — remaining to serve.

On July 9, he failed to report as directed to his conditional sentence officer and was held in custody on July 23 and 24.

He was directed on Aug. 12 to report to intake for a forensic sex offenders

program, a task which could have taken place online. He was arrested for failing to do so and kept in jail again, this time from Sept. 13 to Oct. 8. Court heard that he fell back into the waitlist for the program and has not been enrolled yet.

When she sentenced the man, Doulis described him as a "youthful Indigenous offender with no criminal record" who

has attended a residential treatment facility for alcohol addiction. A report to the court said he had suffered due to his Indigenous heritage, lengthy periods of homelessness and unemployment.

The man apologized to the victim after the incident and admitted it to police. The victim did not provide an impact statement.