



Muskingum County Prosecutor's Office

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Man sentenced to prison for kidnapping baby in attempt to infect her with herpes

A Chandlersville man was sentenced to seven to 10-and-a-half years in prison Monday for holding an infant down and putting the fluid from a herpes lesion into her mouth.

Alanzo Palmer Jr., 22, previously pleaded guilty to one second-degree felony count kidnapping in the matter.

Palmer restrained the infant and squirted his own herpes discharge in her mouth with the intent to infect her with the disease.

"It's unimaginable the idea of deliberately trying to infect an infant child with a lifetime, incurable disease," Assistant Prosecutor John Litle said at sentencing.

When questioned by the baby's mother, Palmer stated he wanted the baby to have "something that she'll be stuck with for the rest of her life."

Thankfully, after a series of later tests, the baby did not test positive for the disease.

Due to that fact, additional charges of felonious assault for inflicting serious physical harm and child endangering by torture and abuse with serious physical harm had to be dropped since the elements of those crimes were not met when the baby tested negative for herpes.

Palmer was still guilty of kidnapping, however. Kidnapping is one of the crimes under Ohio law that applies to a much broader set of circumstances than its name implies.

While there may not have been serious physical harm, the facts still demonstrated that Palmer restrained the liberty of the baby while he was squirting the herpes fluids into her mouth. In doing so, he attempted to terrorize her and created a risk of serious physical harm. Those facts establish the crime of kidnapping under Ohio law. Furthermore, when kidnapping occurs and the person kidnapped is ultimately unharmed, the crime is a felony of the second degree.

While the Prosecutor's Office wishes a more severe punishment was legally possible, there is relief knowing the child-victim is free of a lifelong disease. Further, Palmer has been convicted of the maximum offense under the law related to his conduct. Finally, this office is thankful the child's mother promptly and immediately reported the abuse and enabled law enforcement, children's services and medical personnel to act as soon as possible to safeguard the child.

"While seven years is one less than the maximum term, I think the judge achieved justice here by incapacitating a man for monstrous conduct while allowing for some mercy due to the defendant sparing the victim's family the trauma of a trial," Mr. Litle said.

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