



**OFFICE OF THE  
NEWTON COUNTY  
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY  
WILLIAM P. LYNCH**

101 S. WOOD ST, SUITE 401

NEOSHO, MISSOURI 64850

417-451-8244

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, June 28, 2023

## **Jury Convicts Newton County Man of Child Sex Crimes**

NEOSHO, Mo. – A rural Newton County man was found guilty by a Newton County jury after a three-day trial on one count of Statutory Rape in the First Degree and two counts of Statutory Sodomy in the First Degree. Sentencing will be held on August 28, 2023.

Johnathan Lee Cavitte, 31, was found guilty after less than two hours of deliberation before the jury rendered their verdict to Judge John LePage of the 40<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit on Wednesday, June 28, 2023.

In 2018, a 4-year-old victim disclosed that she had been sexually abused at a house near Granby in July of that year. A caretaker for the child had noticed bruising around the girls' arms that was consistent with abuse the victim recalled. At trial, the defendant presented evidence of his location on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018 via his Google Maps account, but did not account for the other days when he had contact with the victim.

“These cases are incredibly difficult and presenting a now-8-year-old victim of sexual assault to a jury is a gut-wrenching experience,” said Newton County Prosecuting Attorney William Lynch. “I’m very proud of our team as well as this little girl and her family for the countless hours of work and preparation they put forward in securing this conviction. I’m particularly proud of Assistant Prosecutor JD Hatcher, on winning what will be his final jury trial with our office before he moves on to bigger opportunities.”

“We’re thankful to the jury and their service this week,” said Assistant Prosecutor JD Hatcher. “The courage that our victim showed in facing her abuser is inspiring and pleasant reminder of why we do what we do in the Newton County Prosecutor’s Office.”

This case was investigated by Detective Brad Black by the Newton County Sheriff’s Office and prosecuted by JD Hatcher and William Lynch. This is the second child sex case won at jury trial by the Newton County Prosecutor’s office in the past three months.