

Retired Mo. State Trooper Sentenced In Child Molestation Case
News

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NEOSHO, Mo. — A retired Missouri State Highway Patrol trooper has pleaded guilty to misdemeanor offenses and been assessed probation in a case involving the alleged sexual molestation of one young girl and the assault of another.



James J.D. Hall, 71, of Neosho, was scheduled to go to trial Tuesday in Newton County Circuit Court on charges of first-degree child molestation and misdemeanor assault.

Hall avoided trial by accepting a plea offer Monday from the Missouri attorney general's office, which was prosecuting the case because of the working relationship of the defendant with the Newton County prosecutor's office over the years.

Under terms of the deal, Hall pleaded guilty to the misdemeanor assault and to a misdemeanor offense of child endangerment rather than the felony charge of child molestation.

Henry County Circuit Judge James Kelso Journey, who was appointed to hear the case in lieu of local judges, accepted the plea bargain and assessed Hall one year in jail for the child endangerment and 15 days for the assault. The judge suspended execution of both sentences and placed the defendant on probation for two years.

As a condition of probation, the judge ordered Hall not to have any contact with children other than his grandchildren. He also must receive counseling on appropriate behavior with children.

Hall was accused of molesting an 11-year-old girl, whose parents brought the matter to the attention of the Newton County Sheriff's Department early last year.

According to a probable-cause affidavit, the girl told investigators that he had been improperly touching her for several years. The most recent offense had taken place in February 2012.

The affidavit further alleged that Hall had rubbed the thigh of another 11-year-old girl on more than one occasion. Her allegations formed the basis for the assault charge.