

New Bedford Child Rapist Who Fled the State for 17 Years Sentenced to a Decade in Prison

A 61-year-old man who had been living on the lam in South Carolina for 17 years before being apprehended was convicted late last month of child rape and other related charges, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

John Rodrigues of Anderson, SC, pleaded guilty in Fall River superior Court on March 23 to indictments charging him with two counts of rape of a child with force, three counts of indecent assault and battery on a person under 14 and one count of attempted indecent assault and battery on a person under 14.

Most of the rapes and molestation occurred in New Bedford on various dates from 1995 through 1997. In August 2002, the defendant attempted to molest his young neighbor, but the victim stopped him and told her mother. This disclosure led two other young girls to also come forward to report their prior victimization. The defendant, however, fled the state immediately after the August 2000 incident.

Charges issued against the defendant in 2002 and several attempts were made to locate him over the years. In 2017, he was finally tracked down to Anderson, SC and was apprehended without incident.

Between 1995 and 1997, this defendant sexually assaulted two pre-teen girls in New Bedford on multiple occasions. These two victims, who are now 27 and 34 years old, both submitted written victim impact statements to the court during the

defendant's sentencing hearing on March 23. They both described how the crimes perpetrated against them had long-lasting effects on their lives.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Matthew Friedel and Judge Sharon Donatelle sentenced the defendant to serve 10 years in state prison, to be followed by five years of supervised probation.

"The defendant took advantage of his position of trust and committed numerous acts of sexual abuse against his young nieces and a third victim. After getting caught, he fled to South Carolina where he was apprehended 17 years later," District Attorney Quinn said. "I commend the victims for coming forward and for their perseverance in trying to move on with their lives despite the terrible trauma caused by the defendant. I hope they can find some sense of peace."