

Madison County jury finds James Lopes “Sexually Dangerous”

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE – A **Madison County jury** Thursday morning rendered a verdict finding **James Lopes** a Sexually Dangerous Person.

With this verdict, he will be committed indefinitely to the **Illinois Department of Corrections** into a facility specifically designed for sex offenders.

Madison County State’s Attorney Tom Gibbons expressed his happiness with the verdict, stating: “I want to thank the members of the jury for their service and the verdict they returned today. I also want to recognize the extraordinary work of the **Madison County Sheriff’s Office** and the **attorneys from our Children’s Justice Division**. Their commitment to justice allowed us to secure this verdict that will ensure the safety of the children of our community by keeping this dangerous predator behind bars indefinitely.”

Opening statements began on Wednesday, Jan. 18, in the case against James M. Lopes (D.O.B. 09/05/1975). Lopes still faces three counts of Grooming (Class 4 Felony) and three counts of Disorderly Conduct (Class C Misdemeanor) based on complaints that he made inappropriate contact with children and their parents in Madison County in April 2016.

The petition to declare Lopes a Sexually Dangerous Person was filed by the Madison County State's Attorney's Office with the Circuit Court on April 27, 2016. Declaring Lopes a Sexually Dangerous Person is a civil action, not a criminal charge, which requires a jury trial. Jurors deliberated for 43 minutes before returning a declaration of Sexually Dangerous. **Assistant State's Attorney's Kathleen Nolan, Chief of the Children's Justice Division, and Alison Foley, of the Children's Justice Division,** presented evidence during the trial to support the state's petition to declare Lopes Sexually Dangerous. Lopes elected to represent himself, refusing the assistance of a court-appointed attorney. Jurors heard testimony from two witnesses of a 2012 incident in Portland, Oregon. In that case, Lopes was charged with Attempted Sex Abuse against an 8-year-old girl. Two independent mental health experts also testified regarding their evaluations completed to determine whether or not Lopes meets the state standards for a declaration of Sexually Dangerous. Their opinions agreed that he is sexually dangerous and that the severity and complexity of his mental health diagnosis makes it unlikely that he could be successfully treated or rehabilitated. Lopes has remained in custody at the Madison County Jail since his arrest by Madison County Sheriff's Deputies in April 2016. Judge Schroeder revoked his bond. The case will be set for final dispositional hearing in approximately one month.