

New Decision Made In Keaun Cook's Case

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
April 12 2021 10:55 AM



EDWARDSVILLE - On February 10, 2021, the People of the State of Illinois as well as counsel for Defendant Keaun Cook stipulated to reports regarding his mental health that were prepared by the court psychologist as well as treatment professionals with the Illinois Department of Human Services.

The Court found based upon those reports as well as a stipulated factual basis regarding the offense of Falsely Making a Terrorist Threat (Class 1 Felony) that there was sufficient evidence to convict the defendant at trial but that his mental health status left him unable to appreciate the criminality of his conduct.

As such, the Court found him Not Guilty By Reason of Insanity. Based on that finding he was remanded to the custody of the Department of Human Services for treatment in a secure setting. The criminal Court retains supervisory authority over the defendant's case to grant him privileges up to and including release depending on his progress in treatment. The Court will retain jurisdiction over the case until a set "thiem" date based upon the class of the offense. In Cook's case, that date is March 1, 2024. At that time the criminal court will no longer have jurisdiction over the case.

The People of the State of Illinois had multiple conversations with the counsel for the defendant, the family of the defendant and treatment professions resulting in this outcome.

Keaun's grandmother, Debra Thomas, has long been an advocate for her grandson. She praised Madison County State's Attorney Thomas Haine and staff and other advocates for Keaun, Joshua Young and Rev. Danny Holliday, for getting everyone on the same page in the case and coming up with the February ruling. She said she would be "forever thankful" to those who helped resolve the situation.

Keaun is presently incarcerated in Chester and his grandmother is concerned that he will be there for another two years. She said since the case has been resolved, she would like to see him come home and she be allowed to take care of him and get him the help he needs.

"I feel he needs to be released from Chester," she said. "I don't understand why he can't come home now and I take care of him and get him the help he needs here."