

District Attorney Marc Bennett
18th Judicial District of Kansas



For Immediate Release, September 4, 2024

WICHITA, KAN. – A man who pleaded guilty to a felony charge of mistreating a 90-year-old resident of a Bel Aire nursing home was sentenced Wednesday to a year of probation and ordered not to be employed in any capacity where he would be providing medical care to patients.

Jose Luis Reyes Jr, 31 of Wichita, was a certified nurse aide at Catholic Care Center in Bel Aire when one of the residents, S.C., passed away on Dec. 10, 2022. An autopsy found the primary cause of the woman's death was heart disease. The autopsy also noted that S.C. had suffered other injuries at the time of her death, including broken bones in her legs, bruising under her armpits and a bruise to her head.

Investigators from the Bel Aire Police Department obtained video from the facility showing Reyes had entered S.C.'s room alone shortly before her death. After interviewing witnesses and reviewing medical records, investigators found that Reyes injured S.C. when he attempted to move her from her bed to a wheelchair without assistance from other staff at the nursing home. Evidence showed the woman either fell or was dropped onto the floor of her room on the day she died. Medical records showed the nursing home staff was aware that S.C. required at least two people to move her at all times.

Reyes entered a guilty plea in July of this year to mistreatment of an elder person before District Judge David Kaufman. As part of the plea, Reyes agreed to surrender any Kansas certifications for providing medical care to patients.

If Reyes fails to comply with the probation conditions, he could serve a prison sentence of nine months in the Kansas Department of Corrections.

Kansas law makes it a crime to mistreat an elder person, either by intentionally inflicting injury or knowingly omitting or depriving treatment necessary to maintain the physical health of the elder person. The same law also prohibits the financial exploitation of elder persons through theft, coercion, false representations or overbilling. The definition of an elder person in Kansas is anyone 60 or older.

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