

Hollywood Man Granted Rehabilitation Over A Year Into 8 Year Sentence

by Catherine Wilson, Staff Writer August 6, 2020

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Leonardtwn, MD- Brandon Gohl, 37, of Hollywood, MD was granted his request for drug treatment after serving a little over a year of his 8-year prison sentence for drug possession with intent to distribute heroin and child endangerment.

Last January police found Gohl and another man passed out in a car along with Gohl's 2-year old son, who was also found passed out in the car. After searching the vehicle police uncovered 23 heroine capsules, several bags of marijuana, over \$1,000, and a ledger book.

The request for evaluation, which was filed in November of last year was denied by the state before being ordered to do an evaluation in February.

Approximately 90 percent of all of the drug rehabilitation evaluations end with a hearing that supports the program and is ultimately rewarded, according to Deputy State's Attorney for St. Mary's County Jaymi K. Sterling, who has done extensive research on the matter.

For Sterling and the state, the case was never a question of granting rehabilitation but a matter of when to allow the recovery. Sterling would concede for treatment and rehabilitation only after a substantial portion of his sentence was completed; not at this early stage of his sentence and it was granted over the State's objection to the request at this time.

"I'm not disagreeing that [the court] should grant it, I'm just saying [they] should grant it when it's closer to him getting his release date," Sterling said.

In a statement to the court, Gohl expressed deep remorse for his actions while pleading his need for help.

"I need to reprogram my mind to do something other than what it's programmed to do," Gohl said in his defense for treatment.

Gohl's defense was helmed by attorney Kevin McDevitt, who couldn't be reached for comment at this time.

Associate Judge for St. Mary's County Circuit Court David W. Densford oversaw court proceedings and factored Gohl's 20-year struggle with drug abuse and addiction into his decision making.

"People need to avoid you. You're not in with the wrong crowd. You are the wrong crowd," Judge Densford said.

The decision comes nearly a year before Densford is set to retire from the post that he was formally elected to back in late 2012 after beating out Joseph Michael Staltonis in a near split election.

Gohl was joined in court by his mother, fiancé and their three children as well as representatives from the Maryland Department of Health to speak on his behalf at Sterling's insistence.

"I knew upfront that the witnesses for the Maryland Department of Health, as well as his own fiance, would be favorable to him. It was just us doing our due diligence and making sure everyone was subpoenaed," Sterling said about her intention of being open to his recovery.

Fiancé, Lisa Goldsborough offered words of her own to the court in Gohl's favor, appealing to the court to give him a chance to change.

"I know he can be a good man and a good father," Goldsborough said. "We want to be a happy, clean and sober family," she added.

Once signed off by the judge in the coming months, Gohl will complete an in-patient drug rehabilitation program

"I hope that he never has an issue with drugs and he turns everything around," Sterling said. "I genuinely think that this was his rock bottom because so many things could have gone wrong and he's very lucky that no one else was hurt," she added.

Editors Note: *Corrections were made to the in-patient drug program plan.*