

Defendant Sentenced for Charges Stemming from Human Trafficking, Pimping/Pandering



Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

Semper Justitia

DATE: June 9, 2022

CASE: Johnnie Cokley (Case #20FE006388)

PROSECUTOR: Deputy District Attorney Scott Schweibish, Domestic Violence Unit

The Honorable Ernest Sawtelle sentenced Johnnie Cokley to 55 years and 8 months in prison. On May 11, 2022, a jury convicted Cokley of assault with a deadly weapon, human trafficking, pimping, pandering, kidnapping, two counts of felony evasion and being a felon in possession of ammunition. The jury found true four allegations that Cokley caused great bodily injury. An allegation that Cokley has a prior strike conviction for carjacking was also found true.

On March 22, 2020, a female with a life-threatening stab wound to her stomach appeared at a Sacramento Fire Department firehouse.

The victim was transported to a hospital, where she reported to a sheriff's deputy that Johnnie Cokley had stabbed her. The victim later explained that she had been trafficked by Cokley for almost one year and was trying to get away from him when she was stabbed. An arrest warrant was issued for Cokley. On April 9, 2020, detectives attempted to stop Cokley while he was driving his car. Cokley fled and sped through a residential area until he abandoned his car and fled on foot, evading arrest. Deputies located multiple boxes of firearm ammunition in Cokley's car.

Two days later, Cokley was located again and fled from deputies by car. Cokley drove erratically onto the freeway before leaving that car in a community center parking lot and fleeing on foot. Cokley was found in a nearby apartment complex and taken into custody.

A lengthy investigation uncovered contacts the victim and Cokley had with law enforcement in California and Phoenix, Arizona from June 2019 to March 2020, all related to prostitution. The Phoenix investigation revealed a surveillance video of Cokley beating the victim to the point of unconsciousness at a convenience store and leaving her there. This investigation helped to establish a timeline of the relationship and Cokley was engaging in a continuing course of pimping, pandering and human trafficking over an extended period of time. The victim testified that Cokley stabbed her and that they had a pimp/prostitute relationship. She also testified that Cokley kidnapped her in a shopping center parking lot in an attempt to get her back under his control.

Cokley has prior convictions for vehicle theft, resisting officers, domestic violence and felon in possession of a firearm.