



COUNTY OF FRESNO

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Fresno Judge Sentences Driver in Multiple Major Injury DUI Collision to Work Program

Superior Court Judge James Kelley sentenced a Clovis woman to three years of probation and 45 days on the Adult Offender Work Program for injuring a mother and two children in a late 2018 DUI crash. Melissa Alexander, 42, was convicted of driving under the influence causing injury and admitted to enhancements for causing great bodily injury to two other individuals, and additional injuries to a third. She faced a maximum punishment on those charges of ten years in state prison.

The charges stem from a collision at the intersection of North Greenwood and Ashlan Avenues on November 25, 2018. In that collision, Ms. Alexander drove through a stop sign and collided with another vehicle. The other vehicle contained a mother and her two children, ages 10 and 6. Following the investigation by the California Highway Patrol, Ms. Alexander was found to be over the legal limit of alcohol.

As a result of the collision, the victims suffered extensive injuries. The mother suffered a fractured hip, broken ribs, a broken wrist, and was unable to walk for months following the collision. Her ten-year-old son suffered a broken clavicle, a punctured lung and torn abdominal muscles and was likewise physically limited for months. The six-year-old daughter suffered facial lacerations and contusions from which she has physically recovered from.

On September 22, 2021, Judge Kelley indicated that if Ms. Alexander were to plead to the charges against her, she would receive a grant of probation. Ms. Alexander accepted that offer from the court and pled no contest to the above charges.

At the sentencing hearing on November 10, 2021, the Fresno County Probation Department prepared a report with a recommendation that the Defendant serve 180 days at the Fresno County Jail if she were to be granted probation. Under the indicated sentence from Judge Kelley, Ms. Alexander could serve up to 365 days at the jail.

Instead, Judge Kelley imposed one quarter of the amount of time recommended by the Probation Department, and sentenced Ms. Alexander to 45 days on the Adult Offender Work Program and a three-year probation term. Ms. Alexander was also awarded four days of custody credits for the five hours that she spent in custody at the Fresno County Jail immediately following the collision.

According to the prosecutor, Deputy District Attorney Steven Ueltzen, "The effects on the victims in this case are tragic. It may well be that they will experience a life-long physical and emotional impact from Ms.

Alexander's choices. With this sentence, Ms. Alexander will spend no additional time in custody at the jail despite Probation's recommendation of six months. In fact, Ms. Alexander will serve fewer days on the work program than the victim spent unable to walk because of Ms. Alexander's choice to drive impaired."

The case was prosecuted by the Alcohol and Drug Impaired Driver Vertical Prosecution Program. Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The Media may email FCDAMedia@fresnocountyca.gov with questions.

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