

Doctor Gets 2 Years For Girlfriend's Overdose Death

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FRANKLIN, Tenn. - A former plastic surgeon convicted in his girlfriend's death was sentenced to two years in prison and a \$3,000 fine.

A judge let Christ Koulis stay out of jail while his case is presented to the state's Court of Appeals.



Christ Koulis

If his appeal is denied and Koulis goes to prison in Tennessee for two years, he'll be eligible for parole after serving 30 percent of the time or just over seven months.

This summer, a jury convicted Koulis of criminally negligent homicide in the overdose death of Lesa Buchanan.

The judge's decision was the maximum allowed for the crime.



David Raybin

"You know we're very sorry that his girlfriend passed away, but this was an accidental death on her part and he wasn't responsible legally," said David Raybin, Koulis' attorney.

During the hearing in Franklin, Buchanan's family spoke up and so did Koulis.



Lesa Buchanan

Koulis hoped a judge would grant him probation. Buchanan's family members asked for the maximum penalty of two years.

"From the beginning of this nightmare my heart has simply cried out, 'No one else Lord, please no one else,'" said Tara Bentley, Buchanan's sister. "No other family should have to go through the suffering that we've had to go through.

Buchanan's 17-year-old daughter Jessica Buchanan also testified but off camera.

"I want him to know I'm the stronger person and his lies aren't going to bring like my family and I down," Jessica said after the hearing.

Koulis argued for probation, telling the judge he's done everything the court has asked like getting treatments for drug addiction.

"I know the hurt felt by her family for her loss, because I feel that, too," he said. "No words of mine can lessen their pain and I'm truly sorry for any action of mine that may have contributed to that."

Circuit Court Judge Jeff Bivins was not impressed. As he made his decision, Bivins called Koulis' trial testimony lacking in credibility and sentenced him to the maximum.

The prosecutor called it a case of justice delayed. "It's kind of a hollow feeling," Bentley said. "I think we knew it would be. We're so grateful the judge went on the record and said Christ is not credible."

"I just want it to be over really, and the appeal is going to take another year they told us, so it's already four years of my life," Jessica said. "I just want it to be over."



Jessica Buchanan

Koulis' appeal is expected to take about a year.

He has more legal trouble awaiting him in Kentucky. Koulis is on probation up there for giving Buchanan drugs.

The conviction in Middle Tennessee is a probation violation in Kentucky, and Koulis could get up to five years in prison there. The district attorney Boone



County said that's exactly what her office will be pushing for.

Tara Bentley (left)