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A Jan. 6 rioter pardoned by Trump was convicted of sexually abusing children

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Tom Dreisbach



Andrew Paul Johnson was convicted of multiple state charges of child molestation and exposing himself to children. Johnson was charged in Florida after receiving a full pardon from President Donald Trump for his role in the Jan. 6, 2021 riot at the U.S. Capitol.

Hernando County Sheriff's Office



NPR INVESTIGATION: JANUARY 6, 2021

Trump's airbrushed version of Jan. 6 distorts history. See the evidence for yourself

A Florida handyman who received a pardon from President Trump for storming the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, has been convicted of multiple state charges of child molestation and exposing himself to children, prosecutors told NPR. Andrew Paul Johnson, the pardoned rioter, attempted to bribe one victim with money he claimed he would receive as part of restitution for Jan. 6 defendants, police reported. The conviction is the latest case of a pardoned Capitol rioter committing new crimes after receiving a pardon.

On Tuesday, a jury in Hernando County, Fla., found Andrew Paul Johnson guilty of five charges, including molesting a child under 12 and another under 16, as well as lewd and lascivious exhibition. Johnson was acquitted of one charge of sending sexual material to a child.

William Forgie, the chief assistant state attorney for the fifth judicial circuit in Florida, told NPR in an email that Johnson "faces up to life in prison" when he is sentenced in March. An attorney for Johnson did not respond to a phone message seeking comment.



NPR INVESTIGATION: JANUARY 6, 2021

Criminal records of Jan. 6 rioters pardoned by Trump include rape, domestic violence

A police report from the Hernando County Sheriff's Office filed as part of Johnson's Florida case describes a pattern of abuse — including both physical sexual abuse and exposing his genitalia to children — that took place "over a many-month span." One of Johnson's victims was 11 years old at the time of the abuse.

Johnson also attempted to keep one victim quiet by claiming he would receive \$10 million from the Trump administration as restitution for former Jan. 6 defendants and would share the money with the victim in his will, according to the police report. Convicted rioters and their supporters have advocated for financial reparations since Trump returned to office, though it's unclear if the administration will take that step.

In 2024, Andrew Paul Johnson pleaded guilty to nonviolent charges for entering the U.S. Capitol through a broken window during the Jan. 6 riot and then cursing at police officers trying to clear the area. Prosecutors said Johnson described himself on social media as an "American Terrorist" and "Proud J6er," and that he violated court orders by posing with a gun while his case was ongoing.

Chief Judge James Boasberg sentenced Johnson to one year in prison, in part due to Johnson's lengthy criminal history, including drug possession, driving under the influence and resisting arrest.

INVESTIGATIONS



A Jan. 6 rioter convicted of assaulting police scored a visit to the White House

Trump has described the more than 1,500 people charged for their roles in the Jan. 6 attack as "patriots," and argued that they were treated unfairly by the justice system. "These were peaceful people, these were great people," Trump said in 2021.

Just months after Johnson received his prison sentence, Trump pardoned him along with virtually every other Jan. 6 defendant.

The White House has not answered NPR's questions about whether the administration intends to provide compensation to people charged for their roles in the attack on the U.S. Capitol, though some Trump administration officials have promoted the idea in the past.

Johnson is one of several former Jan. 6 defendants who have faced additional legal trouble after receiving pardons from Trump. New charges filed against former defendants have included possession of child sexual abuse material and breaking and entering.



INVESTIGATIONS

Video shows Department of Justice official urging Jan. 6 rioters to 'kill' cops

Last week, Christopher Moynihan pleaded guilty in New York state court to a misdemeanor charge of harassment after he was accused of threatening to kill Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, the top Democrat in the U.S. House of Representatives. "I cannot allow this terrorist to live," Moynihan allegedly wrote in a text message. "I will kill him for the future."

The White House did not respond to NPR's request for comment.

jan. 6 trump capitol riot