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DEFENDANT SENTENCED TO PRISON AFTER BEING FOUND GUILTY OF 20 FELONIES AND NINE MISDEMANORS

Santa Cruz County District Attorney Jeffrey S. Rosell announced today that Aaron Kiefer, 38, was sentenced by Judge Timothy Volkmann to four years in state prison after being convicted of 20 felonies and nine misdemeanors. Kiefer's crime spree occurred over a two-year period and involved 11 separate victims within the Santa Cruz community, who suffered both financial and emotional devastation as a result of the crimes.

Kiefer stole over \$15,000 from at least six separate victims after defrauding them as part of a rental scam. Many of the victims were left with no place to live and no financial ability to rent another property after being defrauded of thousands of dollars. Kiefer also defrauded the County of Santa Cruz by falsifying information on applications for welfare and food stamps, resulting in his obtaining over \$7,000 in benefits to which he was not entitled. Kiefer's victims also included women he dated. He threatened two ex-girlfriends with physical harm and tried to have their children taken from them. He distributed nude photographs and videos of the victims, some of which were taken without consent while the victims were unconscious, to various people and on social media.

Assistant District Attorney Michael Mahan stated, "Thanks to the hard work of law enforcement, the district attorney's office investigators, and the bravery of the victims, we ensured that Mr. Kiefer was held to answer for his crimes."

Several of the victims spoke at the sentencing hearing, describing their ongoing fear of Kiefer seeking revenge against them. Assistant District Attorney Ilia McKinney, who also prosecuted the case, stated, "The sheer number of people whom Mr. Kiefer victimized in our community over such a short period of time is astounding. I'm proud of the victims who came forward despite their fear that the defendant would continue to retaliate against them."

Rosell commented on the sentence, "We are thankful to all the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's deputies and detectives who worked hard to put this case together, which involved so many different crimes and so many different victims from our community. In the end, justice was served to Mr. Kiefer. Although we cannot undo the damage that someone does, we can do our best to hold people accountable when they hurt other members of our community and work to ensure that it doesn't happen to anyone else."