



## Justice Center for the Protection of People With Special Needs

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### **Former Therapeutic Aide Indicted on Rape and Sexual Abuse Charges** *Case Investigated and Prosecuted by the Justice Center*

Albany, NY – NYS Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs Special Prosecutor Patricia E. Gunning announced the arrest and indictment of a Castleton man, who is accused of committing rape and sexual abuse against an individual in his care at Northeast Parent and Child Society (Northeast).

Jarrett L. Coleman of Castleton (DOB 08/14/68) has been charged with:

- One count of Rape in the Third Degree, a class E felony;
- Two counts of Criminal Sex Act in the Third Degree, a class E felony;
- Two counts of Sex Abuse in the Second Degree, a class A misdemeanor;
- One count of Sexual Misconduct, a class A misdemeanor; and
- One count of Unlawfully Dealing with a Child in the First Degree, a class A misdemeanor.

Coleman, a former therapeutic aide at Northeast, signed the victim out. He then allegedly stopped at a liquor store where he purchased alcohol and gave it to the victim and took the victim to an Albany area hotel where the rape and illegal sex acts occurred. Northeast is licensed by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS).

“This defendant allegedly plied his victim with alcohol and sexually assaulted her,” said Special Prosecutor Gunning. “Workers like this defendant will understand that if they break the law and victimize the very people who depend on them for care, they will be prosecuted and held accountable for their crimes.”

Coleman, who was terminated from his position by Northeast, was arraigned before the Hon. Peter Lynch of Albany County Court and remanded to Albany County Jail, with a return date of March 9. The Justice Center led the investigation with the assistance of the Schenectady Police Department and the Albany Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Justice Center Assistant Special Prosecutor Rachel Dunn.

The Justice Center and its statewide hotline and incident reporting system began operations on June 30, 2013. It is staffed 24-hours a day, seven days a week by trained professionals who receive reports of allegations of abuse and neglect of people with special needs. Once a report is received by its Vulnerable Persons’ Central Register (VPCR) Hotline, it is logged and assessed. Serious cases of abuse or neglect are assigned to the Justice Center’s investigation team or, when appropriate, to a local law enforcement agency for follow-up.

The Justice Center also maintains a statewide registry of all persons who have been found to be responsible for serious or repeated acts of abuse and neglect. Once placed on the registry, known as the “Staff Exclusion List” or SEL, they are prohibited by law from ever working again with people with disabilities or special needs. Through the services provided by the Justice Center’s Individual and Family Support Unit – victims, their families, personal representatives and guardians receive guidance and information about the reporting and investigation process and support during criminal cases and court proceedings.

OCFS is one of six state agencies under the jurisdiction of the Justice Center. The Justice Center also oversees certain facilities or programs that are operated, licensed or certified by the Office of Mental Health (OMH), the Office of Persons With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), the Department of Health (DOH), the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) and the State Education Department (SED).

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*Editor’s note: In compliance with Disciplinary Rule 7-107A of the Code of Professional Responsibility, you are advised that a charge is an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.*



*Jarrett L. Coleman*