

Leavenworth man found guilty of aggravated kidnapping of teen

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LEAVENWORTH, Kan. --- A 38-year-old Leavenworth man has been found guilty of Aggravated Kidnapping after grabbing a 16-year-old girl in downtown Leavenworth.

On Wednesday, August 14, 2024, Lajuan Sammie Louis Lowery grabbed the teen in the area of 10th Street between Pottawatomie and Osage Streets. The victim was walking along 10th Street on her way to her mother's home around 7:00 p.m. when Lowery grabbed her from behind and dragged her into an alley. He placed a hand over her mouth and threw her to the ground during the struggle.

The teen fought back, elbowing Lowery, yelling for help, and screaming that she was pregnant. Lowery ultimately fled the scene.

Leavenworth police canvassed the surrounding neighborhood and gathered surveillance footage. One RING video, obtained from a nearby residence, captured a violent struggle showing Lowery dragging the victim across an alley behind a yard and later running from the area.

On Friday, August 16, the Leavenworth Police Department posted still images from the surveillance footage on Facebook, identifying the suspect as being wanted for kidnapping. Shortly afterward, a citizen contacted the police, reporting that she had seen the man inside a local store - rubbing individual ice cream packs on his body.

By August 19, detectives had secured additional video footage, including one clip showing the altercation and another showing Lowery running into a residence on Pottawatomie Street. These videos, along with surveillance video from the local stores, ultimately led investigators to identify and apprehend Lowery.

On April 8, 2025, a jury found Lowery guilty of Aggravated Kidnapping. He was acquitted of a separate charge of Aggravated Sexual Battery.

Leavenworth County Attorney Todd Thompson praised the bravery of the survivor, stating, "The courage displayed by the survivor of this incident is inspiring. It's unfortunate that an innocent girl can be targeted in such a violent way while she's simply walking down the street. The victim's strength and the determination of citizens and law enforcement to bring this defendant to justice is to be respected."