

Cat killing leads to jail sentence for Leavenworth man

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PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – June 18, 2025

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LEAVENWORTH, Kan. --- A 39-year-old Leavenworth man was sentenced today to 12 months in jail after being convicted of animal cruelty for killing his cat.

The charge stemmed from a December 2023 incident in which Craig A. Hendricks admitted to killing his cat on December 12. During the investigation, Hendricks told an animal control officer that he killed his cat by placing the cat's head in a doorway and deliberately slamming the door shut, claiming he did this because the cat was trying to kill him.

The deceased cat was later recovered after Hendricks handed the officer a box he had stored in his freezer — inside that box was the cat.

This case was delayed after concerns were raised about Hendricks' mental competency to stand trial. In criminal proceedings, competency refers to a defendant's mental fitness to participate in legal proceedings. A person is considered competent if they can understand the nature and purpose of the court proceedings and can assist in their own defense.

Hendricks pled no contest to the charge of animal cruelty on May 9, 2025.

Leavenworth County Attorney Todd Thompson said, “Animal cruelty is a serious crime, and our office is committed to ensuring those who harm animals are held responsible. Protecting the vulnerable is what we do - justice can require that we speak for those who cannot speak for themselves.”