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Man, 21, admits leaving bullet at clinic after girlfriend's abortion

By Julie Manganis Staff Writer Apr 18, 2018



BEVERLY — A New Hampshire man will spend a year on probation after pleading guilty Wednesday to leaving a 9 mm bullet at a Beverly medical office where his girlfriend had just terminated a pregnancy.

When Beverly police spoke to 21-year-old Joshua Paiva following the Feb. 14 incident, he told them, "I left the bullet there because they killed my baby."

The gesture alarmed staff at Health Quarters, a reproductive health care facility, police said.

The bullet was found the facility's lobby, in the tray under a window where patients and staff pass documents back and forth, prosecutor Erin Bellavia said during a hearing in Salem District Court.

The facility's staff called police and reviewed security images, Bellavia said. They found Paiva on video, first with his girlfriend and a second woman, and then alone, walking back into the lobby, putting something on the tray and then leaving.

Beverly police contacted Paiva in Manchester, New Hampshire, and asked him why he'd left the bullet. That's when he made the statement.

He was arrested in New Hampshire and waived rendition last month.

Paiva's attorney, Patrick Conway, reached an agreement with prosecutors Wednesday under which Paiva would plead guilty to illegally possessing ammunition without a firearms identification card and be placed on a year of probation, with conditions that include mental health counseling and no possession of any weapons.

A charge of threatening to commit a crime was dropped.

Judge Randy Chapman accepted the agreement during Wednesday's hearing.

Gabrielle Ross, the executive director of Health Quarters, said the office has "very, very strict and comprehensive security protocols" in place to protect employees and patients. She said this was the first time something like this had happened there.

"We are very grateful to the community, the Beverly Police department, the attorney general's office, and our board of directors, among others, for ensuring the safety of our staff and patients in their pursuit of reproductive health care," Ross said in a statement.

Conway said his client had no history of protesting or making threats toward abortion clinics but on that day was upset about his girlfriend's choice, even as he accompanied her to the facility inside the Cummings Center.

"He was sad," Conway said. Paiva had only just learned he was going to be a father when his girlfriend told him of her decision. "He still wanted to be there for his girlfriend," said the lawyer.

"By his own admission, he should have done some things differently," Conway said.

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