

# \$35,000 paid up in child support case

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Carver County has received \$35,000 in child support arrears in a felony “Failure to Pay Child Support” case.

In June 2009, Troy Gabriel Melton, 41, of Brooklyn Center, was convicted of felony criminal non-support for failure to pay his child support obligation, according to a Carver County Attorney’s Office press release.

Melton was placed on a two-year probation, conditioned upon him making his full monthly child support payments. Since being placed on probation, the defendant failed to make any payments as ordered, the release stated.

The Carver County Attorney’s Office initiated probation violation proceedings in December 2009, and a warrant was issued for Melton’s arrest.

Melton was subsequently arrested in February 2011. Based upon Melton’s failure to make any payments toward his obligation, the Attorney’s Office sought to execute the previously stayed prison sentence of one year and one day.

At the contested hearing held on April 28, before the Judge Richard Perkins, the defendant presented Carver County with a \$35,000 child support check. As a result, Melton was not required to serve this prison sentence, the release stated.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant County Attorney Jennifer Stanfield. According to Metz, “I want to acknowledge the great work and dedication of Ms. Stanfield and Heidi Haefner with Carver County Community Social Services. Without the criminal prosecution and pressure for jail time, it appears unlikely that the defendant would have paid his child support obligation,” stated Carver County Attorney Mark Metz.

“The Carver County Attorney’s Office strongly believes that children should receive financial support from both parents. Those individuals that do not fulfill that obligation should receive consequences for failure to do so. This was a great success for the Child Support Program and for the victim who will now receive the financial support she needs for the minor children,” Metz stated.

According to Stanfield, “Carver County has a strong history of utilizing innovative ways to ensure both parents are financially supporting their children. We make every effort to work with child support obligors to help them get back on track in paying their support obligation. Prior to taking any action that would require jail time, Social Services works hard to achieve compliance through letters, phone calls, and referring obligors to our County Workforce Program,” stated Stanfield. “It is only when these efforts are unsuccessful that we resort to filing civil contempt actions. Only after civil contempt actions are unsuccessful does the County Attorney’s Office consider filing criminal charges like we did in this case.”

Carver County’s efforts in collecting support for children have proven very successful. For the year 2010, the Minnesota Department of Human Services determined that Carver County collected \$8.2 million in support for children; Carver County had a total of 1,876 open cases which resulted in an average support obligation collected for each of those cases in the amount of \$4,388. This is the highest average for any county in the state of Minnesota.