

# Derry man pleads guilty to charge he failed to get help for injured cat

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**BRENTWOOD** — A Derry man pleaded guilty Tuesday to an animal cruelty charge after admitting that he failed to get help for an injured cat.

As part of a plea deal, Patrick Hueber, 36, was given a 1-year deferred jail sentence, must perform 40 hours of community service and pay \$1,200 in restitution to Feline Friends, which handled the treatment of the cat after Derry police found it with a fractured jaw.

Hueber appeared in Rockingham County Superior Court for a plea and sentencing hearing that came three months after he was indicted on a felony animal cruelty charge alleging that he beat the cat outside an apartment complex on Franklin Street in Derry on April 24, 2018.

The felony charge was reduced to a misdemeanor after witness accounts raised questions about whether Hueber was responsible for causing the injury.

Assistant County Attorney Megan MacKenzie said several people reported seeing Hueber picking the cat up outside the complex and then hearing it crying.

In a police affidavit, one witness claimed he saw a man drag the cat from underneath a van and then take it to the side of a building where it was beaten. Witnesses reported hearing screeches as if the cat were being tortured.

But MacKenzie said another witness reported seeing someone else with the cat, which was found alive near a stream after police responded to investigate a report of animal cruelty. The cat was unable to move, police said.

MacKenzie said Hueber admitted that he had custody of the cat and knew that it was injured, but that he did not take any life-saving efforts.

Hueber denied that he was the one who injured the cat.

The misdemeanor animal cruelty charge to which he pleaded guilty accused him of negligently depriving a cat in his possession of necessary care.

According to MacKenzie, Hueber has a criminal record that includes convictions for driving while intoxicated, simple assault, receiving stolen property, theft by unauthorized taking, criminal trespass, criminal mischief and resisting arrest.