



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
JACKSON COUNTY, OREGON

BETH HECKERT
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
CRIMINAL DIVISION

March 4, 2022
4:30p.m.

MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release

The Jackson County District Attorney's Office announced earlier this morning Cherie Lerae Chase was arraigned on a District Attorney's Information charging her with the crime of Criminal Negligent Homicide. The charge stems from actions she took contributing to the death of her mother, Christine Lerae Powell, on or about March 19, 2021.

Ms. Chase appeared with her attorney Donald Scales and waived presentment of this charge to a grand jury, and agreed to proceed on the Information filed with the court by the District Attorney's Office. Ms. Chase then entered a plea of guilty to the charge of Criminal Negligent Homicide pursuant to a highly negotiated settlement. Judge Laura Cromwell took the plea and sentenced Ms. Chase pursuant to the terms of the plea negotiation of the parties. The court also accepted the stipulation of the parties that a sentence of supervised probation on this felony conviction, rather than a prison sentence, would best serve community safety interests and the interests of justice.

The homicide was brought to the attention of law enforcement on November 13, 2021, through a disclosure by a family member who was present at the time of death. An investigation was then started by the Jackson County Sheriff's Office. The defendant was contacted by the investigating detectives and was very cooperative with investigators; admitting to her role in her mother's death. The evidence in this case showed the defendant had been caring for the victim (her mother) for some time and the victim was on hospice care. The victim had been coughing up blood and was actively in a great deal of pain when the defendant caused the suffocation and death of the victim.

This case was heavily negotiated by the parties prior to today's plea. All of the known adult members of the victim's family who could be reached by the DA's office were consulted by the assigned Deputy District Attorney prior to these charges being filed and prior to reaching the final negotiated resolution on this case.

The case against Ms. Chase was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Benjamin Lull.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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