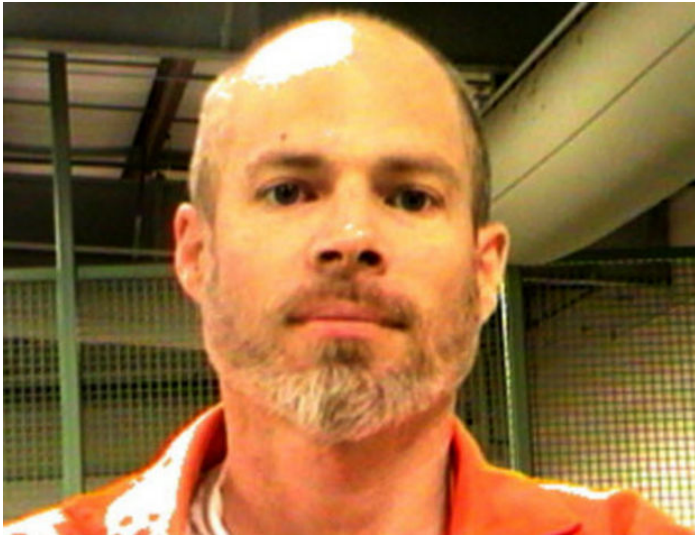


## NOPD officer convicted of raping young girl in 2003, faces mandatory life sentence

By Ken Daley, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune | Follow on Twitter on August 20, 2015 at 8:06 PM, updated August 20, 2015 at 10:03 PM

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Thomassie.michael.cop.jpg

NOPD officer Michael Thomassie, 41, faces a mandatory life sentence after being convicted Thursday (Aug. 20, 2015) of the aggravated rape of a 7-year-old girl in 2003. *(Courtesy of Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office)*

An Orleans Parish jury on Thursday convicted New Orleans police officer Michael Thomassie of the aggravated rape of a 7-year-old girl in 2003.

Thomassie, 41, faces a mandatory life sentence after the jury returned its verdict to the courtroom of Judge Tracey Flemings-Davillier after deliberating for just over two hours.

The victim, who is now 19, testified on Wednesday that the police officer she considered her stepfather raped her vaginally and orally in two rooms of their Algiers home in October 2003 when she was in second grade. The girl's mother was Thomassie's girlfriend, but refused to report the crime to authorities for more than a decade.

Thomassie elected not to testify in his own defense in the two-day trial.

The NOPD on Thursday night placed Thomassie on emergency suspension without pay, and said the Public Integrity Bureau would begin the civil service termination process immediately.

"I am disgusted by the unspeakable actions of this officer, and based on this conviction, I am taking immediate steps to remove him from within our ranks," NOPD Superintendent Michael Harrison said. "There is no place in this department for officers who choose to commit acts of violence. My thoughts and prayers are with the victim, her family and the family of Officer Thomassie during this tragic situation."

Thomassie, a 13-year-veteran of the NOPD, was placed on administrative reassignment in July 2014 when the Public Integrity Bureau and Child Abuse Unit launched a joint investigation into the rape allegations.