

# THE IRISH TIMES

## Woman given suspended sentence for making false rape claim

Kerry Holt (26) made allegation about man who lived in same homeless facility in Tralee  
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Anne Lucey



A woman has received a suspended 2½ year prison sentence for falsely accusing another resident of a homeless facility in Co Kerry of raping her. File photograph: Matt Kavanagh/The Irish Times.

A woman has received a suspended 2½ year prison sentence for falsely accusing another resident of a homeless facility in Co Kerry of raping her.

Judge Thomas E O'Donnell told the Circuit Criminal Court in Tralee that what Kerry Holt (26) had done was “a very serious matter”. However, he decided to suspend the sentence on foot of a very positive probation report and the defendant not since coming to the attention of gardaí.

Holt, of The White House B&B, Tralee, pleaded guilty in February to knowingly making a false report or statement contrary to Section 12 of the Criminal Law Act 1976.

She and her then boyfriend were residing at the Arlington Lodge homeless facility when on October 24th, 2016, Holt accused a man of raping her. She made a complaint in writing against the named individual and gave an account of being forced to have sex against her will.

However, Holt's boyfriend did not believe her and later went to gardaí to express his doubts. Within days Holt admitted it was a false allegation.

### Embarrassed

The court heard the falsely accused man, referred to in court as ‘Mr X’, was deeply upset and embarrassed as the rumour spread and insisted at all times that what had occurred was consensual.

“An allegation of rape is a very serious allegation,” Judge O'Donnell said, adding that Holt had “wasted the time of gardaí and other services”.

Holt had been homeless at the time and the probation report detailed a number of mental health issues and “a very difficult family dynamic”, Judge O’Donnell said.

Holt’s barrister, Katie O’Connell, had previously told the court that two years on from the incident her client was now in a stable relationship and expecting a child.

Judge O’Donnell said Holt’s circumstances appeared to have stabilised. He said the “appropriate tariff” was 2½ years but he was prepared to suspend the jail sentence for the same period on condition that she be of good behaviour and remain under the supervision of the Probation Service.

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/courts/circuit-court/woman-given-suspended-sentence-for-making-false-rape-claim-1.3704619>