

Where the Problems Begin: Case Scenario 1



Case Scenario #1: Juvenile



Sam is a juvenile probation officer for the ABC Probation Department. He's been in his position for over three years. He's recently been assigned a new probationer, Jenna. She is an attractive 17-year old who is on probation for shoplifting. Upon his first meeting with her, Sam finds her very attractive and interesting. She is very sincere, and tells him that it is nice to finally meet an adult who will listen to her problems.

Jenna began coming in to Sam's office at unscheduled times, because she needed someone to talk to. One of Sam's coworkers made an off the cuff comment about Jenna always stopping by, and joked, "You had better watch out, that cute little redhead will get you in trouble!" Sam didn't want his coworkers to get the idea that there was anything going on between them, so he asked her not to drop in to the office, that he would meet her after hours.

He would frequently bring her lunch and dinner, and they would drive to out of the way locations to eat and talk in his car, so they wouldn't be seen. During one of their covert meetings, she opened up about how bad her home life was, and how safe she felt with Sam. Sam gave Jenna a supportive hug, and before he knew what was happening, Jenna kissed him passionately, and the two ended up having sex in his car. A few days later, Jenna told Sam that her mother had kicked her out of the house for coming home late. Sam said she could stay at his house for a few days until she got things straightened out, as long as she did not tell anyone.

One night, when police pulled over Sam's county car, a female, Jenna, was driving the car. She was intoxicated. She explained that she was on the way to the store to get snacks for the party going on at her apartment. She said she had left in a hurry and can't remember where the apartment is because she just moved in with her boyfriend, a local probation officer.

Where the Problems Begin: Case Scenario 1 continued



1. What was Sam's first mistake, and why was it a mistake?

2. At what point could/should a fellow officer have stepped in?

3. What is the political fallout for Sam's department as a result of this relationship?

4. What is the liability for the staff members who did not report the behavior?
