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NEWS RELEASE

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Virginia Man Sentenced for 1980s Sexual Abuse of St. Mary's County Child

LEONARDTOWN, MD (December 30, 2025) – State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced today that Cecil John Dunlap, 79, of Chesapeake, Virginia was sentenced to prison for sexually assaulting a 7-year-old-child in 1981 and 1982.

During this timeframe, Dunlap's wife was a prominent schoolteacher serving the Tall Timbers/Valley Lee area in St. Mary's County, Maryland and privately tutored children at her home. It was during a tutoring session that Dunlap abused the 7-year-old-victim who had accompanied her brother to his tutoring session at Dunlap's home, located on what is now known as Blake Creek Road. Dunlap and his wife were also close neighbors of the victim and her family.

"The Defendant served in the military and frequently relocated throughout the country for his military service. He was previously convicted of sexually assaulting two children in Virginia in the 2010s," said State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling. "For over 40 years the Defendant lived without consequence for the crimes he committed against a 7-year-old-child in St. Mary's County. Thanks to the bravery of this victim, the Defendant was subsequently located, prosecuted, and brought to justice."

The Maryland State Sentencing Guideline Range for this case recommended a sentence between 18 and 20 years in prison. The State sought the maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. The Court imposed a sentence of 20 years in prison, with 15 years of active incarceration.

Dunlap was placed on lifetime supervision for sexual offenders and ordered to register as a sexual offender for *LIFE*.

Senior Assistant State's Attorney Alena Moiser prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of St. Mary's County, Maryland.

Detective Allison Mattera of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office was the lead investigator.

The Honorable Joseph Stanalonis presided over the case.

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