

Sentence Review Division  
301 S. Park Ave., Suite 328  
P.O. Box 203005  
Helena, MT 59620-3005  
Phone: (406) 841-2976  
Email: [srdapplication@mt.gov](mailto:srdapplication@mt.gov)

**FILED**  
**2/25/2026**  
SENTENCE REVIEW DIVISION  
OF THE SUPREME COURT  
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

SENTENCE REVIEW DIVISION OF THE SUPREME COURT OF MONTANA

STATE OF MONTANA, ) Cause No. DC-5-2024-0000020  
)  
Plaintiff, )  
-vs- ) Carbon County District Court  
)  
BRANDON LEE HEAD CARRIER, ) Montana Twenty-Second Judicial District  
)  
) **DECISION**  
Defendant. )

On June 11, 2025, the Defendant was sentenced to forty (40) years to the Department of Corrections, with no time suspended for the offense of Count I: Mitigated Deliberate Homicide, a Felony, in violation of §45-5-103(1), MCA. The Defendant was given credit for four hundred and thirty-four (434) days' time served. The Defendant shall register as a violent offender. The Defendant shall not knowingly have any contact, oral, written, electronic, or through a third party, with J.H.C.'s family (the victim(s) and/or the victim's immediate family) unless such contact was voluntarily initiated by the victim(s) through the Department of Corrections.

On February 5, 2026, the Defendant's Application for review of that sentence came on for hearing by Zoom videoconference before the Sentence Review Division of the Montana Supreme Court (hereafter "the Division"). The Defendant appeared from the Montana State Prison and was represented by Sarah Kottke, Defense Counsel. The State was represented by Alex Nixon. The Defendant did not give a statement.

Before hearing the Application, the Defendant was advised that the Division has the authority not only to reduce the sentence or affirm it but also increase it. The Defendant was further advised that there is no appeal from a decision of the Division. The Defendant acknowledged that he understood this and stated that he wished to proceed.

Rule 12, Rules of the Sentence Review Division of the Supreme Court of Montana, provides that, "The sentence imposed by the District Court is presumed correct. The sentence shall

not be reduced or increased unless it is clearly inadequate or clearly excessive." (Section 46-18-904(3), MCA).

The Division finds that the reasons advanced for modification are insufficient to hold that the sentence imposed by the District Court is clearly inadequate or clearly excessive.

Therefore, it is the unanimous decision of the Division that the sentence is AFFIRMED.

DATED this 26th day of February 2026.

SENTENCE REVIEW DIVISION



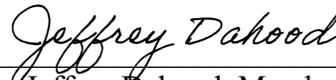
---

Hon. Matthew Cuffe, Chair



---

Hon. Christopher Abbott, Member



---

Hon. Jeffrey Dahood, Member

Copies mailed or emailed this 26th day of February 2026, to:

Clerk of District Court – *via email*  
Brandon Lee Head Carrier #3038724, Defendant  
Hon. Matthew J. Wald – *via email*  
Sarah Kottke, Defense Counsel – *via email*  
Alex R. Nixon, County Attorney – *via email*  
Board of Pardons and Parole – *via email*  
MSP - Records Dept. – *via email*



---

Dia C. Lang, Office Administrator  
Sentence Review Division