

LOUISIANA COURT OF APPEAL, SECOND CIRCUIT

State of Louisiana v. Anthony J. Hollis

No. 56,710-KA · No. No. 56,710-KA · Decided January 14, 2026

SUMMARY

The Louisiana Second Circuit affirmed Anthony J. Hollis’s conviction for sexual battery and his 90-year sentence under La. R.S. 14:43.1(C)(2). The court rejected challenges to the sufficiency of the evidence, expert testimony concerning the child forensic interview, the responsive verdicts and sentencing factors under Apprendi, and the denial of post-verdict acquittal. The court held that any Apprendi error was harmless and that the remaining assignments of error lacked merit.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Louisiana Court of Appeal, Second Circuit
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Hunter, J.; Stone, J.; Ellender, J.
JURISDICTION	Louisiana Court of Appeal, Second Circuit
DECIDED	January 14, 2026
DOCKET	No. 56,710-KA
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Defendant appealed his jury conviction for sexual battery and his 90-year sentence under La. R.S. 14:43.1(C)(2), following his indictment for first degree rape of a child under 13.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	For sufficiency of the evidence, the court viewed the evidence in the light most favorable to the prosecution and considered whether any rational trier of fact could have found the essential elements beyond a reasonable doubt under Jackson v. Virginia. The court afforded great deference to the jury's credibility determinations and reviewed the unpreserved evidentiary and instructional claims for procedural preservation and harmless error where applicable.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Louisiana Court of Appeal opinion
PARTIES	Anthony J. Hollis v. State of Louisiana

TOPICS

- criminal procedure
- evidence
- standard of review
- harmless error
- appellate procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

criminal law

criminal procedure

evidence

sentencing

appellate practice

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the evidence was sufficient under *Jackson v. Virginia* to support Hollis's sexual-battery conviction.
2. Whether testimony by the forensic interviewer about child-abuse disclosures and interviewing procedures improperly vouched for C.C.'s credibility under *State v. Foret*.
3. Whether the trial court violated *Apprendi* by failing to provide an under-thirteen responsive verdict or otherwise submit the age-related sentencing facts to the jury, and whether any error was harmless.
4. Whether the trial court erred in denying Hollis's post-verdict motion for judgment of acquittal under La. C. Cr. P. art. 821.

HOLDINGS

1. The evidence was sufficient to support Hollis's sexual-battery conviction because, viewing the evidence in the light most favorable to the prosecution, a rational jury could find the essential elements beyond a reasonable doubt.
2. Hollis's challenge to the forensic interviewer's testimony was not reviewable because he made no contemporaneous objection and expressly stated that he had no objection to playing the interview for the jury.
3. The trial court committed an *Apprendi* violation by failing to submit the age-related facts associated with the enhanced sexual-battery penalty to the jury, but the error was harmless beyond a reasonable doubt and did not require vacatur of the sentence.
4. The challenge to the denial of the post-verdict motion for judgment of acquittal lacked merit because it duplicated the sufficiency-of-the-evidence claim already rejected by the court.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"The standard of appellate review for the sufficiency of the evidence to uphold a conviction is whether, viewing the evidence in the light most favorable to the prosecution, any rational trier of fact could have found the essential elements of the crime beyond a reasonable doubt." (p. 3)

"One witness's testimony, if believed by the trier of fact, is sufficient support for a requisite factual conclusion." (p. 8)

*"Although the trial court committed an *Apprendi* violation, we find the error harmless."* (p. 13)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Hollis was accused of sexually abusing C.C., his wife's child, during a period when C.C. was approximately 11 or 12 years old. C.C. later disclosed that Hollis touched his genitals, attempted to touch his rectum, and forced him to perform oral sex; C.C.'s account was presented through his testimony and a recorded forensic interview,

with corroborating testimony concerning disclosure and surrounding circumstances. Hollis admitted kissing C.C. but denied the sexual abuse and argued that the allegations arose from marital conflict. The jury acquitted him of the charged first degree rape and returned the responsive verdict of sexual battery.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

A Caddo Parish grand jury indicted Hollis for first degree rape, and the indictment was later amended while retaining that charge. After a jury trial, the jury returned the responsive verdict of guilty of sexual battery. The trial court imposed a 90-year sentence at hard labor and denied post-verdict and post-sentence motions. The Louisiana Court of Appeal, Second Circuit, affirmed the conviction and sentence.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Jackson v. Virginia, 443 U.S. 307, 99 S. Ct. 2781, 61 L. Ed. 2d 560 (1979)
- State v. Tate, 01-1658 (La. 5/20/03), 851 So. 2d 921
- State v. Ward, 50,872 (La. App. 2 Cir. 11/16/16), 209 So. 3d 228
- State v. Smith, 94-3116 (La. 10/16/95), 661 So. 2d 442
- State v. Allen, 36,180 (La. App. 2 Cir. 9/18/02), 828 So. 2d 622
- State v. Felix, 56,367 (La. App. 2 Cir. 8/27/25), 419 So. 3d 427
- State v. Barakat, 38,419 (La. App. 2 Cir. 6/23/04), 877 So. 2d 223
- State v. Coliston, 56,332 (La. App. 2 Cir. 8/27/25), 420 So. 3d 284
- State v. Naulty, 24-0118 (La. App. 1 Cir. 2/27/25), 406 So. 3d 1231
- State v. Walker, 55,255 (La. App. 2 Cir. 8/9/23), 369 So. 3d 488
- State v. Gullette, 43,032 (La. App. 2 Cir. 2/13/08), 975 So. 2d 753
- State ex rel. P.R.R., Jr., 45,405 (La. App. 2 Cir. 5/19/10), 36 So. 3d 1138
- State v. Foret, 628 So. 2d 1116 (La. 1993)
- State v. Benoit, 17-187 (La. App. 5 Cir. 12/29/17), 237 So. 3d 1214
- State v. Taylor, 04-346 (La. App. 5 Cir. 10/26/04), 887 So. 2d 589
- State v. Tabb, 383 So. 3d 155, 514 (La. App. 2 Cir. 4/10/24), 383 So. 3d 1066
- State v. Sajna, 23-0893 (La. App. 1 Cir. 9/20/24), 405 So. 3d 667
- Apprendi v. New Jersey, 530 U.S. 466, 120 S. Ct. 2348, 147 L. Ed. 2d (U.S. 2000)
- Neder v. United States, 527 U.S. 1, 119 S. Ct. 1827, 144 L. Ed. 2d 35 (1999)
- State v. Gibson, 09-486 (La. App. 5 Cir. 3/9/10), 38 So. 3d 373
- State v. Wagar, 54,941 (La. App. 2 Cir. 3/1/23), 357 So. 3d 984

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