

2 COUNTS AGAINST HELP CENTER CHIEF DROPPED

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Citing insufficient evidence, a Fayette District Court judge yesterday dismissed two of five charges of unlawful imprisonment against Possibilities Unlimited director George Ross.

The judge, however, said there was sufficient evidence to submit the other three charges to a jury and he overruled a defense motion to dismiss them.

The two charges that were dismissed were filed by clients under 18 years of age.

Ross, a psychologist who founded the Lexington drug rehabilitation center in September 1983 is on trial in district court, accused of holding young people in the drug program against their will or their parents' will. The charges stem from criminal complaints filed in late May by five former enrollees in the program who contend that Ross used physical and psychological restraint to keep them in the program.

Possibilities Unlimited is a semi-residential drug rehabilitation program and counseling center for people 12 to 25 years of age.

Meanwhile, the prosecution, after four days of testimony, wrapped up its case yesterday and defense attorneys Larry Roberts and Roger Cowden began their presentation. Two defense witnesses testified before Judge John Adams recessed court for the day. Testimony will resume at 8:30 this morning.

Roberts, who has subpoenaed about 40 witnesses, predicted it would be Thursday before he finishes presenting his case.

Shortly after prosecutors Phil Moloney and Jack Giles rested their case about 3:45 p.m., Roberts moved for a directed verdict of acquittal on each of the five counts against Ross. Then, taking the complaints one by one, Roberts argued that there had been no proof that Ross had restrained the clients from leaving the program.

The five complainants, whose ages range from 15 years to 23 years, testified that Ross had used threats to keep them from leaving the center at 2628 Wilhite Drive.

In dismissing the two charges, Adams said the ages of the complainants played a critical role.

The three counts that were not dismissed were brought by people over 18, who, Adams said, had all the freedoms of an adult and neither Ross nor their parents could keep them in the program if they wanted to leave.

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