

MLA JULIE GREEN – YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE – IN THE MEDIA

'Missing' NWT woman had been sentenced to jail in January

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Link: <https://cabinradio.ca/36001/news/missing-yk-woman-in-edmonton-had-been-sentenced-to-jail-in-january/>

In jailing a pregnant woman for six months in January after she dealt drugs to undercover police, a judge determined she needed counselling for drug abuse and pre-natal or post-natal trauma.

Instead, the NWT resident – who gave birth in March – is now in an unknown location after her youngest required surgery in Alberta. Her partner felt she had “vanished without a trace.”

It is unclear if authorities in the NWT are now allowing the woman to remain in Alberta, or how the programming the court mandated is being provided.

RCMP in Yellowknife said no warrant related to the woman had been issued. An RCMP spokesperson added by email the woman was “under the supervision of the GNWT Department of Corrections at the time of her alleged abscondment.”

The Department of Justice, which runs corrections in the NWT, said it could not comment for reasons related to privacy.

After the woman was reported missing, a spokesperson for the Edmonton Police Service said officers had located and been in contact with her. Police in the city said she had demonstrated she is safe was not under duress. They subsequently closed their file.

The woman could not be reached for this report.

Normally, inmates in the territory can be eligible for release after serving two thirds of their sentence.

The woman was to have 18 months' probation following the end of her six-month sentence.

A territorial court judge said she must “participate actively in a treatment program” including counselling as directed by a probation officer.

That condition was expected to include programs related to alcohol and drug abuse, violence and trauma, parenting, and pre-natal or post-natal issues.

James O'Connor contributed reporting.

Editor's note: May 1, 2020 – 18:26 MT. This article examines how authorities are ensuring the welfare of a woman jailed in January and said by an NWT court to require significant counselling and other help, but who has since left for Alberta in circumstances that cannot immediately be fully determined. An earlier version included identifying details that aren't essential to that focus. This version removes some information accordingly.