

## Hughes appeals prison sentence; case expected to be heard next year

Contributed by Elizabeth Larson  
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LAKE COUNTY &dash; A San Francisco man sentenced last month to prison in connection with a 2005 break-in is appealing his sentence.

Renato Hughes, 24, was sentenced on Sept. 8 by Judge Arthur Mann to eight years in state prison on charges including burglary and assault with a firearm related to a Dec. 7, 2005 incident at a Clearlake Park home.

With time served and a 15-percent time credit, Hughes was expected to serve just over four years of the sentence.

At the time of the sentence, Hughes' defense attorneys, Stuart Hanlon and Sara Rief, indicated an appeal would be filed.

Hanlon and Rief were right. On Sept. 10, an appeal with filed with the Lake County Superior Court and forwarded to the Court of Appeals, said Sean Keane of the San Francisco-based First District Appellate Project, which represents prisoners in appellate cases.

Although Hughes previously had private representation, Keane said the court has ruled Hughes is indigent, which qualifies him for the First District Appellate Project's services.

An attorney has not yet been assigned to Hughes' case, Keane said.

Court records show that the court recorder has to get the trial transcript to the appellate court by Oct. 30.

Keane said the matter itself likely will be dealt with through an exchange of letter briefs. If the judges and attorneys request it, the case could have oral arguments.

Because of the length of the trial and the massive transcript, Keane said he didn't expect a briefing on the case to be issued until next February.

&ldquo;There's probably not going to be any actual events in the case for a while,&rdquo; he said.

While Hughes was found guilty in August of burglary and assault with a firearm, he was acquitted in of two counts of first-degree homicide by a jury in Martinez, where the trial had been moved due to a change of venue motion.

Because Hughes was alleged to have been taking part in a violent crime that could result in death, he was charged with the deaths of friends Christian Foster and Rashad Williams under the provocative act doctrine.

However, it was homeowner Shannon Edmonds who actually shot the men as they ran from him home. Edmonds was not charged in the case.

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