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Conrad Murray could face significant prison time

Conrad Murray, who was convicted Monday of involuntary manslaughter in the death of Michael Jackson, could face a substantial prison sentence, legal experts said.

Murray faces a maximum sentence of four years in prison and a minimum sentence of probation.

Immediately after the verdict, Murray handcuffed at the direction of the judge and is to remain in custody pending his Nov. 29 sentencing. The stern approach the judge took in sending Murray to jail rather than releasing him on bail suggested the minimum sentence of probation is unlikely.

Veteran defense attorney Robert A. Schwartz said the judge's decision could portend a stiff sentence behind bars. Schwartz noted that Superior Court Judge Michael Pastor, in explaining his decision, emphasized the gravity of the doctor's crime.

"If he is thinking along the lines of giving Murray probation with no time in custody ... it's less likely he would have remanded him into custody," Schwartz said.

A jury found that Murray acted with criminal negligence and that those actions were a substantial factor in Jackson's 2009 death. The panel rejected the defense assertion that Jackson gave himself a fatal overdose of propofol and therefore bore complete responsibility for his own death.

"This is a crime where the end result was the death of a human being. That factor demands rather dramatically that the public should be protected," Pastor said.

Said defense attorney Mark Geragos: "If I'm a betting man I bet he gets the whole four years.