



Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

ANNE MARIE SCHUBERT
District Attorney

Stephen J. Grippi
Chief Deputy

Michael A. Neves
Assistant District Attorney

CASE OF INTEREST

DATE: February 2, 2015

CASE: Michael Pitt

PROSECUTOR: Deputy District Attorney Denise Halstead, Mental Health Litigation Unit

District Attorney Anne Marie Schubert announced that the Honorable Gerrit Wood denied Michael Pitt's petition for release from Napa State Hospital.

Pitt committed a murder on December 5, 1994. Homeless at the time, Pitt agreed to go to victim Ronnie Neal's apartment. After the two injected methamphetamine, Pitt began hearing voices, took a knife and stabbed Mr. Neal numerous times. After disfiguring Mr. Neal, Pitt left the apartment and was found in a yard, unclothed and eating dog food. He was later arrested for the murder. On August 13, 1996, he was found not guilty by reason of insanity and was committed to Napa State Hospital for 15 years to life.

An individual who has been found not guilty by reason of insanity is committed to a state hospital for the length of time an individual convicted would serve in custody, in this case 15 years to life. After 90 days, a petition can be filed with the Court for release to a community treatment facility, or board and care home. They would be supervised by the state for the period of one year, pending a determination after a jury trial that their sanity has been restored and they are ready for unsupervised release into the community. The petitioner/patient has the burden of proving they are not a danger to the health and safety of others due to any mental defect, disease or disorder while under supervision or treatment in the community.

On February 24, 2014, Pitt filed a petition with the Court for release to Conditional Outpatient Release. The Court heard the testimony of two doctors and a licensed clinical social worker that established Pitt is not attending his substance abuse classes more than 50% of the time; he has used illegal drugs for more than 30 years, and as recently as 2012 in the hospital; and he has continued cravings for illicit drugs and is likely to use them once he is released, causing his psychotic symptoms to relapse.