



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA  
COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO

**Release Date:**

**July 01, 2020**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FROM:** Honorable Russell L. Hom  
Presiding Judge

**CONTACT:** Kim Pedersen  
Public Information Officer  
(916) 591-0050

### **High Profile/Death Penalty Case Settles under Plea Agreement**

On June 29, 2020, the Sacramento Superior Court, criminal justice partners and the community witnessed first-hand and participated in a historical plea, lasting over five hours on the record in the 40-year old cold case of Joseph James DeAngelo otherwise referred to as the East Area Rapist, Visalia Ransacker, Original Night Stalker and the Golden State Killer.

The hearing, presided by the Honorable Michael Bowman, was held at the Sacramento State University Ballroom in the Student Union Building to provide sufficient space to accommodate the victims, family members, key investigative staff, elected officials, media and the general public while complying with the COVID-19 safety precautions including temperature/security screening, face coverings and social distancing. In addition to the members of the public who attended the hearing in person, the court and media live streamed the proceedings via YouTube and various media outlets. Since the arrest of Mr. DeAngelo in 2018, this case has drawn International attention.

The defendant pled guilty and admitted to 13 murders, numerous kidnapping allegations, weapons enhancements and over 50 rape incidents that had gone uncharged due to the expiration of the statute of limitations. The plea was entered so the defendant could avoid the death penalty and instead be sentenced to life in prison. The defendant's crime spree ran from at least 1973 to 1986 with attacks on over 100 people in 11 counties in California. The suspect was arrested following a DNA and genealogy services.

The sentencing hearing is scheduled to begin on Monday, August 17, 2020. Victims will be afforded an opportunity to read their victim impact statements at that time. The Sacramento Superior Court will release additional details regarding the sentencing hearing as those details are finalized.