



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

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**PRESS RELEASE**

7/24/20

**VISALIA MAN WHO DISMEMBERED ROOMMATE RECOMMENDED  
FOR PLACEMENT IN SKILLED NURSING FACILITY**

Yesterday a California Parole Board recommended convicted murderer Jerry McKiernan, 72, who dismembered his roommate, be placed in an undetermined skilled nursing facility most likely in Tulare County. Prosecutors argued against the move during a video conference with Board members due to COVID-19 precautions. McKiernan is currently serving a life sentence at the California Health Care Facility in Stockton and is not eligible for parole until 2026.

On December 29, 1999, Visalia Police Department dispatch received an anonymous call that alleged McKiernan had stabbed his 54-year-old male roommate to death in their apartment. When officers arrived at the apartment, they found McKiernan lying on the bed in one of the bedrooms. Officers immediately took him into custody and began a search of the residence. In a separate bedroom closet, officers discovered several plastic bags containing various dismembered body parts – a decapitated head, hands, legs below the knee, and torso. A knife and a hacksaw bearing McKiernan's fingerprints were found in the closet with the body parts. The coroner examined the remains and determined the victim was stabbed 42 times. It was estimated the victim was killed five to six days before he was discovered. The anonymous caller was revealed to be a friend of McKiernan who regularly did heroin with him and to whom McKiernan admitted the crime.

In late 2000, McKiernan was found guilty of first-degree murder with the use of a deadly weapon. He was sentenced to 26 years-to-life in prison. McKiernan possesses numerous felony and misdemeanor convictions for possession of a controlled substance dating back to 1974.

Conditions of his release to a facility include GPS monitoring, not leaving the facility without written approval, alcohol and drug testing, medical evaluations, and no weapons.

“I’ve been a prosecutor for a long time, but the crime scene photos prosecutors reviewed in preparing to argue against the defendant’s placement were some of the most horrific I have ever seen,” said District Attorney Tim Ward. “The proper placement for the defendant is behind prison walls and not back in our community or any other community in California.”

*Media inquiries can be directed to the Office of the District Attorney, County of Tulare  
Assistant District Attorney Dave Alavezos (559) 636-5494*