



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

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**PRESS RELEASE**

7/15/21

**CONVICTED SEX OFFENDER SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON FOR  
HARASSING TEENS**

Today at the South County Justice Center in Porterville, the Court sentenced convicted sex offender Ronald Thomas, age 63, to 50 years-to-life in prison for harassing teens at a local park. On May 21, 2021, a jury convicted Thomas of one count of annoying or molesting a child with a prior sex crime conviction, and failure to file a change of address as a sex offender.

In early 2019, Thomas, an area transient, would frequently park his van at Veterans Park in Porterville and sit in the passenger's seat with binoculars. Two female victims, ages 13 and 15, would go to the park to skateboard after school. On several occasions, Thomas would whistle and "cat call" the girls, calling them "pretty" and "hot." On February 19, 2019, the victims called the police.

Thomas is a convicted sex offender. In 2018, he was released from prison in Arkansas after serving 22 years for sex crimes against four victims ages 5, 6, 11, and 12. The three crimes included rape, sexual abuse, and sexual solicitation of a child. The crimes constitute as "strikes" under California's Three Strikes Law. The California crimes occurred less than a year from when he was released from prison.

"When you see what has come out of Sacramento and the impact on California, it's easy to understand why faith in our system of justice is shaken," said Tulare County District Attorney Tim Ward. "This is a case that helps restore confidence that the system does indeed work. From the bravery of the victims, to police investigation, to prosecution, to the judge's sentencing decision, the system worked on behalf of real justice."

The case was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Kelly Habroun of the Crimes against Children Division and was investigated by the Porterville Police Department.

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