



COUNTY OF FRESNO

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District Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 13, 2020

Joseph Matthew Ward Sentenced to Life in Prison for the Sexual Assault, Robbery and Kidnapping of 24-year-old Woman

Today, November 13, 2020, Joseph Matthew Ward was sentenced to 281 years to life in prison for the June 22, 2018 sexual assault, burglary, robbery and kidnapping of a 24-year-old Fresno woman and for endangering a child in her care.

Ward's sentence was handed down approximately two years and five months after he forced the victim, and the one-year-old child in her care, into her home at knife point. Once in the home, Ward sexually assaulted the victim and ransacked the residence. Ward then took the victim's laptop computer and forced the victim to go with him in her vehicle to an ATM where he demanded she withdraw money. After withdrawing money, the victim was able to escape from Ward. He then fled the location and abandoned the victim's vehicle near a house belonging to one of his family members.

The case proceeded to trial and Ward was convicted by a Fresno County jury on August 29, 2019.

The Fresno County District Attorney's Office would like to thank Fresno Police Department Detectives Jennifer Federico, Pete Ressler, Theodore Garcia and David Wilkin and all the other members of the Fresno Police Department that worked diligently on the case.

This matter was prosecuted by Senior Deputy District Attorney Rick Thomas. Mr. Thomas was assisted by members of the Fresno County District Attorney's Bureau of Investigations, specifically Commander Lisa Biggs and her entire investigative team on the Sexual Assault Unit.

The Media may email FCDAMedia@fresnocountyca.gov with any questions.

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