

The Six Known Criminal Cases Affected by the Informants Controversy (as of June 2017)

Assembled by Voice of OC

In addition to the Scott Dekraai mass shooting case, six other defendants have had murder or other serious convictions overturned or dismissed because of the jailhouse informant scandal. The controversy was uncovered by Dekraai's public defender, Scott Sanders.

Isaac John Palacios

<http://voiceofoc.org/2014/09/da-lapses-result-in-release-of-murderer/>

Judge Patrick Donahue dismissed one murder charge with penalty enhancements against Isaac John Palacios, who, in the second murder case, agreed to a guilty plea deal that granted him probation, an extremely rare penalty for such a serious charge.

Joseph Martin Govey

<http://voiceofoc.org/2014/09/more-murder-charges-dropped-in-wake-of-da-informants-case/>

Prosecutors, to avoid an evidentiary hearing, dismiss charges of attempted murder and solicitation of murder against Govey, a white supremacist gang member.

Leonel Santiago Vega

<http://voiceofoc.org/2015/02/das-misconduct-leads-to-reduced-sentence-for-convicted-murderer/>

Vega, who was once in prison for life without parole, received a plea deal to free him after 15 years in prison, although he could be released earlier on good behavior. Testimony during the Dekraai hearing showed hundreds of pages of informant notes were withheld from Vega's defense attorney, along with secret tapes and a leniency deal granted to Oscar Moriel, the informant testifying against him.

Eric Vasquez Ortiz

<http://voiceofoc.org/2015/11/another-murder-conviction-overturned-in-wake-of-jailhouse-informant-scandal/>

Judge Richard M. King reversed a 2014 conviction of Ortiz, who has maintained his innocence, for a cold case murder. King ruled that Ortiz's

constitutional rights were violated by the illegal use of a jailhouse informant. Four Sheriffs' deputies took the fifth and declined to testify at an evidentiary hearing for his case.

Bryant Islas

<http://www.ocregister.com/2015/03/20/gang-member-once-facing-life-will-instead-go-free-as-jailhouse-informant-battles-derail-another-case/>
<http://www.ocweekly.com/news/bryant-phillip-islas-gang-banger-on-parole-walks-away-from-prison-rehab-and-tries-to-kill-a-guy-6453009>

Islas, who was once facing a life sentence, received a plea deal after Sanders proved an informant bragged to Santa Ana police that he was going to get a confession from Islas for an attempted murder. Even though the statements were never used against Islas, they still violated his right to remain silent after he retained a lawyer.

Henry Rodriguez

<http://voiceofoc.org/2016/02/goethals-issues-another-rebuke-to-rackauckas-in-informants-saga/>

Goethals throws out the life sentence and murder conviction of Henry Rodriguez for the 1998 double murder of Jeanette Espeleta and her unborn child. Rodriguez wins a new trial. The DA is appealing the ruling. Rodriguez's defense attorney, James M. Crawford, showed newly discovered evidence of multiple violations of rights in the use of Michael James Garrity, a seasoned jailhouse informant whose misdeeds were hidden when he testified in 2006 about Rodriguez's involvement in the murder.