



# Office of the District Attorney Stanislaus County

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

Date: March 7, 2024  
Re: Jaime Estrada  
Murderer Denied Parole

### **For More Information Contact:**

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Jeff Laugero announced today that Jaime Estrada, 45 years old, of Colima, Mexico was found unsuitable for parole at a March 1, 2024, hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings at California State Prison - Corcoran. Deputy District Attorney Victoria Vasquez appeared at the hearing and argued for continued confinement. The Board of Parole Hearings denied Inmate Estrada parole for three years.

Estrada was convicted in 1995 of Murder and two counts of carjacking, all with the use of a firearm. He was sentenced to 50 years to life. In one of the carjackings, Estrada carjacked the victim right after the victim dropped his wife off at a religious bookstore. Estrada was also convicted in separate cases of escape with violence and two cases of battery causing serious bodily injury. Estrada became eligible for parole due to the enactment of the Youthful Offender statute.

Estrada's conviction and sentence by the Honorable David G. Vander Wall was upheld on appeal on November 7, 1997, however, Estrada's matter was returned for sentencing corrections, which lessened Estrada's sentence to 45 years to life plus 8 months. When returned to the Stanislaus County Jail for resentencing, Estrada participated in an escape attempt with others that seriously injured a Stanislaus County Sheriff's deputy.

In 2018, the Board denied Estrada release on parole finding that he lacked the necessary insight into his crimes and that he clearly had problems with people in positions of authority. The prosecutor at the hearing, Chief Deputy District Attorney Houston, also argued Estrada minimized his role in the murder as Estrada claimed self-defense and that he also minimized his attack on another inmate in 2016.

In 2023, Estrada filed a petition for resentencing based on the new changes to the felony murder law following passage of Senate Bills 1437 and 775. On May 18, 2023, the Honorable Dawna Reeves denied Estrada relief finding Estrada "was ...prosecuted as the actual killer and convicted of second-degree murder based on his own malice."

While in prison, Estrada has violated the rules over 20 times, one violation occurring shortly after his last parole hearing in 2018. Estrada's violations have included attempted murder, multiple acts of fighting, possession of weapons, possession of drugs, and participation in a riot. In discussing other offenses which he committed in prison for which he was not caught, Estrada admitted to obtaining multiple tattoos including the letters "BB" (Border Brothers) on his forehead in 1999. Estrada also filled in the numbers "187" (code section for murder) on his hand as the initial tattoo was fading. Estrada admitted to using a cell phone in prison up until 2016. (*Estrada has never received a violation for use or possession of a cell phone while in prison.*)

Estrada has attended many rehabilitative programs in prison. One such program has been aimed at his substance abuse, however, in the last year, Estrada used controlled substances at least 15 times. The Board recognized Estrada did not have a specific drug of choice as he had used various substances to include heroin, methamphetamine, marijuana, and morphine.

At this hearing, Estrada said he was guilty of the murder but that the victim had been pointing the gun at others. However, the prosecutor quoted the Appellate Court which explicitly found that Estrada was the aggressor, and the victim was trying to leave the area when Estrada attacked him. Estrada said he wanted to make the victim pay for pulling a gun and that Estrada shot to kill when he fired three times at the victim.

During the hearing, the Board found that not only did Estrada qualify for consideration as a youthful offender, but he also was considered under the elder offender law (which authorizes parole for inmates who reach the age of 50 and have served at least 20 years in prison regardless of the inmate's initial sentence). Giving great weight to each of these, the Board denied Estrada release on parole stating Estrada was the person keeping himself in prison as he has completed the programs but continues to act impulsively. While the risk assessment prepared by the prison psychologist identified Estrada as a high risk for violence should he be released, the Board believed Estrada was presently only a moderate risk for violence. However, the Board recognized if Estrada continues to use drugs in prison, he will continue to do so in the community.

This was Estrada's second parole suitability hearing and he may petition the Board for an earlier hearing date if there is a change in circumstances.

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