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Parole Granted for Woman Serving Life Sentence for Murder of San Diego Attorney

Brae Hansen Was Convicted of First-Degree Murder for Her Role in Plot to Kill Her Stepfather for Financial Gain

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) announced today that a woman serving a 25-years-to-life sentence for the murder of her stepfather, longtime San Diego attorney Timothy McNeil, has been granted parole following a hearing before the California Board of Parole Hearings.

Brae Hansen, now 37 years old, was convicted in April 2009 by a San Diego County jury of first-degree murder for her role in a plot to kill McNeil for financial gain. Hansen was convicted along with her 19-year-old sister and co-defendant, Aerith Asora, who was prosecuted under a former legal name at the time.

Hansen's initial parole hearing was held on January 7, 2025, and parole was denied for three years. Her petition to advance her next parole hearing was subsequently granted by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, resulting in the August 21, 2026 hearing. San Diego County District Attorney Summer Stephan opposed Hansen's release and urged the Board to honor the lengthy sentence imposed by the court.

"This was a callous, premeditated murder motivated by greed that took the life of Timothy McNeil and forever changed the lives of his loved ones," DA Stephan said. "The DA's Lifer Team and Deputy DA Dino Paraskevopoulos presented the compelling factors that showed that this particular killer and case does not fit the goals of California's youth offender parole due to its sophisticated nature and callous depravity that ended a man's life. We are deeply disappointed by the Board of Parole Hearings' decision to grant Brae Hansen parole. Our office stood with Mr. McNeil's family and opposed Hansen's release, and we will continue to support them as they face the painful consequences of this decision."

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McNeil was a longtime San Diego attorney who became a member of the State Bar of California in 1969. He worked for more than six years for the San Diego County District Attorney's Office before moving into private practice.

According to evidence presented at trial, Hansen and Asora plotted to kill McNeil for financial gain. Asora purchased black clothing at a Goodwill store before traveling from Phoenix to San Diego. The day after McNeil's birthday, he arrived home with plans to take Hansen out to dinner. Asora was already inside the home with Hansen.

Asora then put on a mask, armed herself with a firearm and staged a robbery. She directed Hansen to zip-tie McNeil's hands before Hansen was also restrained. McNeil managed to free himself and struggled for his life. Asora then shot McNeil four times, including twice in the head at close range.

Hansen, who was 17 years old at the time of the murder, was convicted of first-degree murder on April 15, 2009, and sentenced to life without parole. A few years later, life sentences were ruled unconstitutional for minors and in 2015 she was resentenced to 25 years to life in state prison.

Under California's youth offender parole laws, people sentenced to 15 years or more for crimes committed before their 26th birthdays may be eligible for an earlier parole hearing, subject to statutory requirements and exceptions.

Deputy District Attorney Dino Paraskevopoulos from the DA's Lifer Hearing Unit represented the office at the parole hearing opposing Hansen's release and presented our position to the Board of Parole Hearings. The DA's Lifer Hearing Unit, under the leadership of Deputy District Attorney John Cross, has two main goals: to ensure that dangerous prisoners with life sentences are not released carelessly or improvidently, and to ensure that crime victims and their families are given an opportunity to participate in the parole hearing process and have their voices heard. When a defendant is given a life sentence, the Lifer Hearing Unit processes the case to ensure that it is ready for future parole suitability hearings. This involves preserving victims' statements and documenting the gravity of the crimes to ensure the offenders serve sentences proportional to their crimes.

In 2025, there were 571 lifer parole hearings scheduled in San Diego County. Of those, 49 inmates received parole grants from the California Board of Parole Hearings. The remainder of the hearings –522– resulted in denials, postponements, or stipulations to a denial of parole.

In addition, the Lifer Hearing Unit tracks court activity on lifer cases and assists the Attorney General's Office in opposing writs of habeas corpus seeking release. The Lifer Hearing Unit has submitted amicus briefs on behalf of the California District Attorneys Association on important cases and actively works on legislation concerning the parole hearing process. The Lifer Hearing Unit is the statewide leader in lifer matters and San Diego County serves as the training office for other prosecutors who seek to understand the complex laws governing parole hearings.

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About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office

The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.