

**District Attorney's
Office**

State of North Carolina
26th Prosecutorial District
Mecklenburg County

**Spencer B. Merriweather
III**
District Attorney

www.charmeckda.com

NEWS RELEASE

March 6, 2026

Rapist sentenced to life in prison

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Yesterday, James Ingersoll was sentenced to life in prison after a Mecklenburg County jury convicted him of the 1994 rape of a Charlotte woman. The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Felony Special Victims Team tried the case. The proceedings, which began on February 23, 2026, and concluded with yesterday's sentencing, were held in courtroom 5110, before the Honorable Craig R. Collins, Superior Court Judge.

James Ingersoll, 53, was tried for 1) first-degree rape and 2) first-degree burglary. The jury found him *guilty as charged*. During sentencing, the State argued that an aggravating factor existed because the defendant had a prior conviction for a criminal offense punishable by more than 60 days confinement. Judge Collins agreed and found the existence of that aggravating factor. Based on that finding and the sentencing laws that were in place at the time of the offenses, Judge Collins sentenced Ingersoll to life in prison with the possibility of parole for the rape charge and an additional 25 years in prison for the burglary charge. That sentence will run consecutive to the life sentence. If he is released from prison, Ingersoll will be required to register as a sex offender for a period of 30 years.

On June 17, 1994, Ingersoll, a stranger to the victim, broke and entered the victim's home through an unlocked back door around 1:00 a.m. The victim was asleep in her bed when the attack began. The victim tried to fight off Ingersoll until he put a weapon to her neck. Following the attack, afraid her assailant was still inside her home, the victim jumped out of her bedroom window and ran across the street to a friend's house where police were contacted. The victim was transported to the hospital where a sexual assault kit was collected, and serological testing confirmed the presence of semen on the victim's body and clothing. Police were not able to identify the suspect at the time of the initial investigation in 1994.

In 2018, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department's Cold Case Unit sent items from the victim's sexual assault kit to an outside laboratory where a male DNA profile was developed. In 2022, this DNA profile was sent to another lab for forensic investigative genetic genealogy (FIGG) testing. Based on these lab results and other investigative leads, police identified Ingersoll as the suspect, and subsequent DNA analysis confirmed his identity as the attacker. The FIGG analysis that helped solve this case was paid for by a grant CMPD received from the National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI). Through the grant, the District Attorney's Office has worked in collaboration with CMPD to review cold case sexual assault and rape investigations.

Nearly 32 years later, the survivor, now in her 70s, bravely testified against her attacker. Other witnesses, including police officers and medical personnel who were involved in the initial investigation, also took the stand. The District Attorney's Office is grateful for its partnership with local law enforcement and with the community, which, along with one survivor's enduring courage, made this outcome possible.

Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit www.charmeckda.com. For updates and other information, follow @CharMeckDA on [Facebook](#), [X](#), & [Instagram](#).

// End //

