

## Williamson given life without parole

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Editor

William Robert Williamson Jr., 30, will spend the rest of his life in prison. Williamson was sentenced by Circuit Judge Bill Filmore to life without parole on Wednesday in Geneva for the murder of Matthew Tice.

Sentencing guidelines allowed Filmore to sentence Williamson to 19-85 years in prison, but many prior felony convictions allowed the judge to apply habitual offender status in this case.

Williamson was already in state prison for unlawful distribution of controlled substances. Williamson was sent to prison after the murder of Tice but before he was arrested for the killing.

District Attorney Kirke Adams said that Williamson also faces four counts of failure to comply with community standards from a felony rape conviction. Adams said that Williamson has 10 felony convictions.

"He's capable of damage to the community," Adams said. The district attorney said that Williamson was a frightening figure to many people, including several of the witnesses.

"It took courage for these witnesses to come forward and point their fingers at the defendant," Adams said. "They admitted they were scared, and it took courage for the jury to tell Williamson that he should be held responsible. "The jury and the community said they weren't going to take it anymore.



Williamson

"My office had to ask a lot from local police and the state troopers to find witnesses and assist us in getting ready for this case. I cannot thank them enough."

State police investigators arrested Williamson and charged him with the murder of James Tice on June 4, 2014.

Tice, of Dothan, suffered multiple fatal gunshot wounds

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to his body and was found by authorities in the front yard of a trailer on Cohen Road, a dirt road off Jay Saunders Road in the Malvern community.

The homicide was investigated by deputies with the Geneva County Sheriff's Office, along with investigators with Alabama Bureau Investigation.

Williamson also has two pending felony unlawful possession of controlled substance charges in Geneva County.

According to the Alabama sex offender registry website, Williamson was convicted of a second-degree rape of a 15-year-old girl in Houston County in 2006.

Williamson pleaded guilty earlier this year to a felony drug distribution charge in Houston County.

He also pleaded guilty last year to 34 misdemeanor charges, 17 each of animal cruelty and failure to bury livestock charges in connection to a dead cattle investigation.