

# **\* NEWS RELEASE \***

## **SALINAS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO MURDERING THREE AND INJURING FOUR OTHERS**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Giovanni Pacheco, age 24, pled guilty to the murder of three men and the shooting of four others. Pacheco will be sentenced to prison for life without the possibility of parole. He has waived his right to appeal the matter. The case is presided over by Monterey Superior Court Judge Julie R. Culver.

On August 5, 2013, Pacheco and his family were dining at Taco's Choice in Salinas, eating and drinking alcohol. At some point that evening, Pacheco exited the restaurant and engaged in a verbal argument with other patrons outside of the restaurant over two women that were part of Pacheco's party. As the verbal argument became louder, several patrons from Taco's Choice exited the restaurant to see the argument. Suddenly, Pacheco brandished a .45 caliber firearm and shot three men he was arguing with, and four others that were in the crowd. The three men Pacheco murdered were Edgar Salinas, age 28, Victor Ortiz, age 22, and Alejandro Hernandez, age 25. Pacheco was arrested the next day.

Pacheco was charged with special circumstance multiple-murder, making him eligible for the death penalty or prison for life without the possibility of parole. Factors that were considered in determining prison for life without the possibility of parole include Pacheco's age at the time of his crime, his lack of a substantial criminal record, his lower intellectual ability, his intoxication at the time of the murders, the fact the quarrel was sudden as opposed to a planned event, and the opinions shared by the family of the deceased and the surviving victims.

The families of the deceased and the surviving victims were contacted prior to making this determination. The families and survivors were unanimous in their desire to see closure in the case instead of waiting for years of litigation.

The defendant will be sentenced by Judge Culver on April 8, 2016.

The case was investigated by Salinas Police Officers Dale Fors and Rudy Roman, and District Attorney Investigator Martin Sanchez.

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