

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

SEASIDE MAN PLEADS NO CONTEST TO TWO ROBBERIES WITH A SEMI-AUTOMATIC HANDGUN

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Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that James William Morgan, age 63, a resident of Seaside, pled no contest to two counts of robbery, using a semi-automatic handgun. Morgan also admitted a prior “strike” conviction for robbery committed in April 1990.

On March 4, 2017, at approximately 6pm, Morgan, wearing dark sunglasses and a hoodie, visited the Dollar Store located at 1816 Fremont Boulevard in the City of Seaside. He approached the female store employee, and exposed a semi-automatic firearm. He then “racked” the slide on the firearm and demanded money from the cash register. Another female employee approached the cash register, at which point Morgan pointed the weapon at the second employee and threatened to “blast all of them” if they did not open the drawer. Both victims were extremely fearful and shaken from this encounter, to the point where they had trouble accessing the cash in the register. After one of the victims was able to open the register, Morgan retrieved approximately \$300 and fled from the business.

The next day on March 5, 2017, Morgan robbed the Walgreens store located at 1055 Fremont Boulevard in the City of Seaside. He walked into the store at approximately 1:30pm wearing a bright blue beanie, and dark sunglasses and approached the female employee at the cash register. He then pulled out a semi-automatic handgun and demanded the cash in the register telling the employee, “hurry up, I don’t want to shoot you.” Fearing for her life, the victim removed \$1100 from the cash register, which were mostly in twenty dollar denominations. Morgan stuffed the money in his jacket pocket and left the store.

Later that day, Morgan visited the Marina Club Casino and was seen on video exchanging a stack of \$20 bills for \$100 denominations. None of the victims were able to identify him as the suspect due to the fact that Morgan had concealed his face during the commission of the robberies. However, a commander from Seaside Police Department recognized Morgan from video still-shots taken from the surveillance system in Walgreens. The commander’s identification was based on the commander’s previous extensive dealings with Morgan and his family.

Sentencing is scheduled for September 18, 2018 before Judge Carrie M. Panetta. Morgan is facing 20 years in state prison and stands convicted of two violent strike offenses.