



QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD  
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



MELINDA KATZ  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

718.286.6000  
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

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**CONTACT:** PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315  
[QDACommunications@queensda.org](mailto:QDACommunications@queensda.org)

**QUEENS MAN SENTENCED TO 34 YEARS IN PRISON**  
**FOR RAPING TWO GIRLS - AGES 12 AND 16 – IN SEPARATE INCIDENTS**

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Viando Ricketts was sentenced to 34 years in prison on multiple counts of rape of two young girls, ages 12 and 16. The defendant took both girls to a Queens motel and raped them in 2022 in separate incidents.

District Attorney Katz said: “This sexual predator targeted unsuspecting children, brought them to a hotel near his place of employment, and raped them. After the defendant was arrested, he violated an order of protection against one of the girls, and continued to contact her in a bid to have her drop the charges. We thank the brave victims for coming forward. The defendant will now serve 34 years in prison and be required to register as a sex offender upon his release.”

Ricketts, 31, of 200<sup>th</sup> Street, St. Albans, was convicted by a jury on March 13 of four counts of rape in the first degree, four counts of sexual abuse in the first degree, kidnapping in the second degree, four counts of rape in the third degree, assault in the third degree, two counts of criminal contempt in the second degree, two counts of tampering with a witness in the fourth degree and two counts of endangering the welfare of a child before Queens Supreme Court Justice Gia Morris.

Justice Morris sentenced the defendant on Friday to 34 years in prison to be followed by 10 years post release supervision. Ricketts will also be required to register as a sex offender at the time of his release. Specifically, Ricketts was sentenced to 22 years in prison for his actions against the 12-year-old victim and an additionally 12 years in prison to follow for his actions against the 16-year-old victim.

DA Katz said, according to trial testimony, in June 2022, the defendant met the victim, a 16-year-old girl at the time, as they worked in separate stores located next to each other in St. Albans. After providing food for the victim, the defendant took her to the Belmont Motel located on Hempstead Avenue in Queens Village. While at the motel, Ricketts began to remove her clothing and then raped her while she struggled to get away.

Sometime after this incident, Ricketts confessed to the victim and repeatedly apologized for his actions. He continued to meet the teenager for several months during which time he engaged her in additional acts of sexual intercourse multiple times a week inside the victim’s home and inside his barbershop. On October 8, 2022, the defendant and the victim became engaged in a verbal argument which resulted in a physical altercation with Ricketts punching her multiple times in the face.

A year later, after the parties ended the relationship, the defendant drove to the complainant's home and invited her inside his vehicle to talk about their relationship. The two began to argue and the defendant raped the then 17-year-old girl in the car. Several weeks later the victim contacted the police. Although an order of protection was issued, the defendant violated it by calling and texting the victim instructing her to drop the charges.

Additionally, in November 2022, the defendant met a 12-year-old girl who had recently run away from a group home. Inside his barbershop he offered the minor alcohol. He offered to buy the victim food and then took her to the Belmont Motel. While inside the motel, the defendant threw the victim onto the bed, removed her clothing and raped her while she struggled.

Several days later, the victim went to the hospital for an unrelated issue and during the assessment by the doctors she disclosed the rape. The police were immediately notified.

Assistant District Attorney Sean Jaime of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Eric C. Rosenbaum, Bureau Chief, Debra Lynn Pomodore, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, Brian Hughes and Lauren Parsons, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Special Prosecutions Joyce A. Smith.

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