



OFFICE OF THE  
**STATE'S ATTORNEY**  
CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**November 14, 2023**

**NEWARK WOMAN SENTENCED TO 35 YEARS FOR SECOND DEGREE  
MURDER AND ATTEMPTED SECOND DEGREE MURDER**

**ELKTON**-Thursday November 9, 2023, Rajah Smith, 33, of Newark, DE was sentenced in the Circuit Court for Cecil County to 35 years for 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Murder and Attempted 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Murder. Smith had previously entered a guilty plea to those counts on September 1, 2023.

On March 11, 2023, officers of the Elkton Police Department responded to Locust Lane in Elkton, Maryland, in reference to a stabbing. On arrival, officers made contact with the victims, Smith's father and sister, and immediately rendered first aid while EMS was on route. Both victims, having suffered severe injuries, were transported to the hospital.

Investigators soon learned that Smith went to her father's residence and began a verbal altercation that ultimately culminated in Smith stabbing her father multiple times. When her sister attempted to intervene, Smith stabbed her multiple times as well. Smith was eventually restrained by her grandmother, who intervened and pinned Smith to the ground, until law enforcement arrived on scene. Smith's father suffered knife wounds to his neck and throat and, despite medical attention, succumbed to his wounds on March 14, 2023. Smith's sister, however, luckily survived her injuries, having suffered stab wounds to her chest, right shoulder, and left flank. In the course of their investigation, it was also learned that Smith's 11-year-old son was present at the time of

the brutal attack. In a *Mirandized* interview with Smith, conducted by Detective Ed Donnelly of the Elkton Police Department who took over the investigation, Smith revealed that she went to her father's residence with the intent of "making sure her father was no longer a threat."

The Maryland Sentencing Guidelines for the crimes committed are 12 years to 20 years for Second Degree Murder and 4 years to 9 years for Attempted Second Degree Murder. The State, represented by Assistant State's Attorneys Gavin M. Patashnick and Zachary M. Payne, recommended a sentence of 35 years active incarceration, with an additional 10 years suspended followed by 5 years of supervised probation upon release. Cecil County Circuit Court Judge Brenda A. Sexton imposed a sentence of 35 years of active incarceration for the count of Murder in the Second Degree, and 30 years, suspend all but 20 years to serve concurrently, followed by a period of 5 years of supervised probation.

State's Attorney James A. Dellmyer says of this sentence "The tragic irony of this case is that Ms. Smith, in believing that she was mitigating a threat, actually caused lifelong pain and suffering to her family; her child included. Our deepest condolences go out to the surviving family members, and it is our sincere hope that this sentence provides some measure of closure and justice. I also would like to extend my gratitude to Assistant State's Attorneys Gavin M. Patashnick and Zachary M. Payne as well as to the men and women of the Elkton Police Department for their diligence and dedication to not only this case, but in receiving justice for the victims and their families."