



## Cape May County Prosecutor's Office

4 Moore Road, DN-110  
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210-1601  
Telephone: (609) 465-1135  
Fax: (609) 465-1347  
Website: [www.cmcpros.net](http://www.cmcpros.net)

# NEWS

Contact: Robert L. Taylor  
*County Prosecutor*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 17, 2007**

**Cape May Court House, New Jersey** – County Prosecutor Robert Taylor announced today the return of an indictment against Jesse Elwood Watkins for the murder of Craig Lee White. The indictment alleges Watkins purposely or knowingly caused the death of Craig White in February 1990.

Craig White, then 18 years old, was reported missing from Whitesboro, New Jersey in February 1990 and was last seen with his cousin, Jesse Watkins. The disappearance prompted an extensive investigation conducted by members of the Middle Township Police Department, Cape May County Prosecutor's Office, and New Jersey State Police, which periodically followed leads from Connecticut to Florida, as far West as California and recently culminated when new information was received by law enforcement authorities implicating Watkins in the murder of White. White's body has not been located.

Jesse Watkins, 45 years old, was recently released on bail after being extradited from Florida on outstanding weapons charges originating from an incident in Middle Township, New Jersey.

Prosecutor Taylor said, "A recent break in the long standing investigation gave us additional evidence, which allowed us to present this case to the Cape May County Grand Jury. I want to commend the Detectives in our Major Crime Unit and the Middle Township Police Department for their persistent efforts to bring this case to this point."

The applicable penalties for murder pursuant to the 1990 sentencing laws include a State Prison term of between thirty years and life with thirty years of parole ineligibility.

An arrest warrant will be issued for the arrest of Jesse Elwood Watkins and bail has been set this afternoon by the Honorable Raymond Batten, J.S.C. at \$500,000. Watkins is described as an Indian male, 6'4", 300 pounds, black hair, and brown eyes. Watkins' last known local address is the 100 block of West Dunbar Street, Whitesboro, New Jersey, however, is known to frequent Vero Beach, Florida and Hartford, Connecticut and should be considered armed and dangerous. Anyone with information about the murder of Craig White or whereabouts of Watkins should contact the Major Crime Unit of the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office at 609-465-1135 or the Middle Township Police Department at 609-465-8700.