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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**TATTOO ARTIST PLEADS GUILTY TO SEXUAL BATTERY,
SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS IN PRISON**

State Attorney Melissa Nelson announces that James Ranieri has pleaded guilty to five counts of Sexual Battery. Per the plea agreement, Ranieri was sentenced by the Honorable Anthony Salem to 10 years in Florida State Prison followed by 15 years of Sexual Offender Probation. Ranieri also has been classified as a Sexual Predator.

Ranieri committed multiple offenses against several victims between 2015-18. Each of the victims had stories with similar themes. Ranieri would often meet victims through social media and dating apps to talk before the two would meet in person. Those meetings would often take place at Riverside businesses, Ranieri's tattoo studio, or at his Riverside apartment. In each of the cases, Ranieri would build a level of trust with his victims before isolating them, forcibly holding them down against their will, and raping them. The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office began an investigation into Ranieri following several victims coming forward in mid-2021 to describe and report Ranieri's crimes. He was arrested in Volusia County shortly thereafter.

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorney Anna Hixon.