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FIELDS PLEADS GUILTY TO SECOND-DEGREE MURDER, OTHER CRIMES

State Attorney Melissa Nelson announces that Roderick Fields pleaded guilty in open court to Second-Degree Murder with a Weapon, Arson, Burglary, and Grand Theft Auto. Per the negotiated plea, Fields will serve 40 years in Florida State Prison. The Honorable Jeb Branham will formally sentence Fields at a future hearing.

On Aug. 30, 2022, officers with Jacksonville Sheriff's Office responded to a home on E. 24th St. to a report of a deceased person on site. The home was vacant and undergoing renovations and the victim was identified as an employee of the contractor who was working on the residence. The victim's employer last heard from him Aug. 27. Inside, police found the victim tied up with an extension cord and a bag around his head. They also found evidence of arson and a hammer with blood on it. The victim's death was later ruled homicide by blunt force trauma and asphyxiation.

The victim's belongings, including his car, were missing. The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Real Time Crime Camera crime analysis unit and Homicide Team 6 worked around the clock to track the missing vehicle and were successfully able to apprehend Fields in the vehicle within 24 hours of receiving the dispatch.

When apprehended, Fields had the victim's car, the keys to the vacant home, and apparent blood on his shoes. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement Biology Lab tested several items for DNA, including the shoes and the hammer. The blood found on Fields' shoes was a match for the victim's DNA and the DNA on the hammer matched Fields. Fields' DNA was also found throughout the home, although Fields had no involvement in the renovations.

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