

September 3, 2021

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL: CONVICTED SEX OFFENDER RULED SEXUALLY VIOLENT

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced that a Cook County jury has found that a registered sex offender is a Sexually Violent Person (SVP).

Following the verdict, Cook County Circuit Court Judge Steven Watkins ordered Michael Sewell, 68, to remain in the custody of the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) for treatment. Sewell will be returned to the IDHS SVP Treatment and Detention Facility in Rushville, Illinois.

"This offender's history of repeated violent attacks on women in their homes underscores the significant risk he poses to the community," Raoul said. "I appreciate the judge's decision, which will help protect women from a dangerous predator."

In December 1974, Sewell raped a woman after knocking on the door of her house. He escaped from the Cook County jail while awaiting trial and raped three more women during the summer of 1975. In May 1976, a jury found him guilty of rape, deviate sexual assault, burglary and attempted robbery for the December 1974 rape. In June 1976, he pleaded guilty to three counts of rape and one count of burglary for the 1975 attacks. He was sentenced to prison and was released on parole in February 1984. Two years later, in February 1986, he broke into a house and attacked a woman, causing lacerations to her face and lips, two black eyes, permanent scars to the inside of her mouth, and permanent nerve damage. In October 1986, he was found guilty of residential burglary, aggravated battery/great bodily harm and home invasion, and was sentenced to 40 years in prison.

Under the Sexually Violent Persons Commitment Act, Raoul's office prosecutes cases seeking to commit offenders to the custody of IDHS. To be committed under the act, a person must have been convicted of a sexually violent offense and suffer from a mental disorder. Prosecutors must also prove that the offender is dangerous because the mental disorder makes him substantially probable to commit future acts of sexual violence. Once committed to IDHS, offenders are re-evaluated on an annual basis to determine if they continue to meet the criteria for commitment as a sexually violent person.

Assistant Attorneys General Donita Farr and Kelly Warnick-Brown handled the case for Raoul's Sexually Violent Persons Bureau.