



## OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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Colorado's 4th Judicial District - Serving El Paso & Teller Counties

### **El Paso County District Judge rejects terms of plea agreement in case against Jon Hallford**

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COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – Today, 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court Judge Eric Bentley rejected the terms of a plea agreement entered by Jon Hallford in November of 2024. The charges in this case stem from an October 2023 investigation into the conditions at the Return to Nature Funeral Home in Penrose, Colorado. During the investigation, authorities discovered 189 bodies inside the facility in various states of decomposition. Two additional bodies were found to have been improperly buried.

As a result of this case, the Colorado Legislature passed SB24-173, and it was signed into law by Governor Polis on May 24, 2024. The new law requires people engaged in funeral home operations to be licensed by the Department of Regulatory Agencies. That takes effect January 1, 2027.

The case is now scheduled for a Status Conference on September 12, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in Division 8. At that hearing, the defendant will advise the judge of his intentions in light of the court's ruling to reject the plea. The defendant will have several options, including setting the case for trial on all 286 charges. The charges in the case include Abuse of a Corpse, Money Laundering, Theft, and Forgery.

This defendant, like all defendants, is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. This case is pending and there will be no further comment at this time.

*Note to Media: All updates will only come from Communications when available.*



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