

Tips and Trends

From ICJE, Inc. <jimrechel@icje.ccsend.com>
Date Thu 3/19/2026 12:15 PM
To Phillip Calvert <PCalvert@faulkner.edu>



March 2026

The Trauma of Prolonged Death Penalty Cases



Aniah Blanchard - Murder Victim wbr.com

Justice Delayed is Justice Denied...

Justice Delayed Can be Trauma for All

Lengthy legal processes in death penalty cases create ongoing trauma for victims' families nationwide. While a death sentence may appear to bring closure, it typically marks the start of years or even decades of legal proceedings that repeatedly reopen emotional wounds.

This process highlights the intersection of Victimology and the appellate system. For those working in law enforcement, prosecution, and victim advocacy, understanding these dynamics is key to providing trauma-informed support.

The belief that capital punishment brings closure is persistent, but research and victim accounts reveal that mandatory appeals, reviews, and possible resentencing often prolong distress rather than conclude it. Families face not an ending, but long-term uncertainty marked by legal milestones that can span 15 to 30 years.

Each phase of the legal process produces anxiety, and varying degrees of emotional responses.

The **Sentencing Phase** creates an initial sense of justice is offset by the realization that the process continues. It is often followed by the **Appellate Phase**, where appeals require victims to renew their engagement, generating emotional disruption.

Then the long trail begins. Often referred to as the **Extended Limbo Phase**, the cases become a background stressor, interrupting the personal milestones in the lives of the victim's surviving families. The **Final Outcome Phase**, whether the convicted is executed or there is a reversal, create emotional responses that are complex and rarely provide clear resolution.

The justice process itself can exacerbate trauma through impersonal notifications, media coverage revisiting painful details, court hearings, and defense strategies. These can trigger PTSD symptoms and prolong suffering.

A common complaint from victim families is that the legal system unintentionally worsens the harm when they overlook survivors' long-term needs.

Frequent issues are:

Irregular communication,

Insufficient clarity regarding legal matters, and

Views that offenders' rights take precedence over victims issues

A recent conversation I had with a survivor of an active shooter vividly illustrated how trauma leaves a lasting mark. Even years after the tragedy, she continues to be haunted by memories that resurface without warning, a persistent reminder that emotional wounds oftentimes never fully heal.

Real credibility in criminal justice comes from standing by victims through the long-lasting impact of violence. Seeing extended appeals as repeated trauma is key to creating a more compassionate and effective system. Justice should be ongoing, not just a one-time act.

Thanks,

Jim Rechel
ICJE Newsletter Editor
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Training Desk: Educational Opportunities

ICJE specific training has been submitted to the Alabama Crime Prevention Clearinghouse, and Linda Wright is working on the schedule for the rest of the year as we "go to print" with this newsletter. ADECA recently advised that the grant funding has been approved.

Watch for updates on the ICJE website.

[Visit our Website](#)

Gatlinburg LE Conference

The **Gatlinburg Law Enforcement Conference**, a training event for U.S. law enforcement professionals in the Southeast on May 4–7, 2026, at the **Gatlinburg Convention Center** in Gatlinburg, TN.

- **Dates: May 4–7, 2026**
- **Location:** Gatlinburg Convention Center,
- Keynote Speaker Todd Blanche, Deputy Attorney General of the United States; Russell Coleman, Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Kentucky; and a featured presentation by Scott D. Payne, best-selling author and retired FBI undercover officer.
- Back for a second year is our **Victim Services Track**.

POST, CLE, CLEE Information:

- **Alabama:** The Alabama Peace Officers' Standards and Training Commission (APOSTC) has approved CEUs for the conference: 17 hours of non-executive credit for certified officers and 8 hours of executive-level credit for chiefs. Executive credit classes are labeled ALEC on the agenda.
- **Georgia:** The Georgia Peace Officer Standards & Training Council has approved up to 20 hours of credit for attendees, with executive credit also approved. Executive credit classes are marked GAEC on the agenda.
- **South Carolina:** The South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy has approved 17 CLEE hours for attendees, and the Supreme Court of South Carolina Commission has approved 17 CLE and 1 SAMH for the conference.
- **Tennessee:** The Police Officer Standards and Training Commission has approved 18.5 hours for the conference (Course number 26-431).
- **Virginia:** Attendees can apply for partial in-service credit by submitting the Out of State Conference Training Form PIC-2 to the Department of Criminal Justice Services.
- **West Virginia:** The Law Enforcement Professional Standards (LEPS) has approved the conference for both Supervisors and Non-Supervisors (Course number C2025-68).

Registration:

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CrimeDesk: Crime and Society



Magnets Used to Bypass Diesel Pumps in Northwest Florida Theft Scheme

Several arrests have now been made in connection with an organized diesel fuel theft scheme spanning multiple counties in Northwest Florida.

[Read More](#)

ICJE has created a flyer for your use should you need to provide it to those who may need to be aware of this new theft trend, especially as truck stops (and I'm sure we'll see them at gas stations as they figure out how to rig those pumps as well!)

[Link to PDF Shown Below](#)



MAGNET-BASED DIESEL FUEL THEFT

▲ ACTIVE THREAT

5 INDIVIDUALS ARRESTED IN MULTI-COUNTY NW FLORIDA OPERATION • SCHEME SPANS ESCAMBIA, SANTA ROSA & WALTON COUNTIES • FURTHER ARRESTS EXPECTED • POTENTIAL MULTI-STATE SCOPE

OVERVIEW

A sophisticated, organized diesel fuel theft ring has been dismantled in Northwest Florida, with investigators warning the scheme is likely operating across state lines. Thieves are using powerful magnets to physically override fuel pump components, stealing hundreds of gallons of diesel at a time — entirely bypassing point-of-sale payment systems.

Investigators from the Florida Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement (OALE) led the investigation after significant financial losses were reported at truck stops and fuel stations — including Love's Travel Stop in Santa Rosa County. Suspects were captured on surveillance footage filling large semi-truck tanks, each capable of holding 80 to 150 gallons of fuel.

HOW THE SCHEME WORKS

- Magnet is concealed and brought to the pump.** Suspects arrive with a strong permanent magnet — small enough to conceal on their person or in a vehicle.
- Magnet is placed at a precise location on the pump housing.** Thieves know exactly where to position the magnet to interact with an internal mechanical component (typically a flow-control or shutoff valve assembly).
- The component is mechanically overridden.** The magnetic force opens the internal component, allowing fuel to flow freely without triggering the payment system or metering.
- Fuel is pumped without payment.** Large-capacity vehicles — semi-trucks with dual 80-gallon tanks or more — are filled entirely at no cost to the thief.
- Proceeds are sold or used in illegitimate business operations.** Law enforcement notes stolen diesel is either resold on a black market or used to offset fuel costs in trucking operations.

KNOWN ARRESTS — NORTHWEST FLORIDA OPERATION (2024)

NAME	AGE	RESIDENCE	ARREST COUNTY	DATE	BOND
Alain De Jesus Aguila-Martinez	26	—	ESCAMBIA	Feb. 8	\$21,000
Elieser Perez	31	Miami, FL	SANTA ROSA	Feb. 18	\$18,500
Soñel Ferino	55	Miami Gardens, FL	SANTA ROSA	Feb. 24	\$15,000
Sergio Machin	37	Homestead, FL	WALTON	Feb. 25	\$11,000
Sediel Carrazana	35	Hialeah, FL	MULTIPLE	Pending	Unknown

▲ CROSS-STATE THREAT WARNING

OALE Captain Brad Brady has indicated the scheme likely crosses state borders. Multiple open cases and additional warrants are expected. Fuel stations in ALL states should be on alert — this is not an isolated Florida problem.

RED FLAGS TO WATCH FOR

■ SUSPICIOUS INDICATORS

- Semi-trucks or large vehicles fueling for extended periods without clear payment activity
- Customer reaching toward the pump housing or side panels rather than the nozzle/keypad area
- Multiple large-tank vehicles arriving in sequence
- Individuals appearing to know precise pump locations — acting deliberately near the pump body
- Fueling at night or during low-traffic hours
- No receipt printed or keypad interaction observed
- Out-of-state plates, especially from South Florida metro areas

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

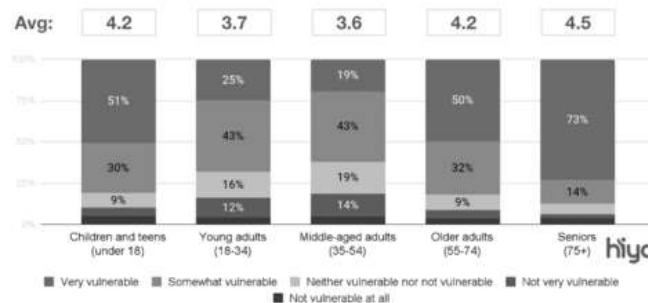
- ✓ Inspect pump housings regularly for tampering or unusual markings
- ✓ Ensure surveillance cameras have clear, angled views of pump bodies — not just nozzles
- ✓ Train staff to observe and document unusual fueling behavior
- ✓ Alert attendants to cross-reference fuel volume dispensed vs. payment received
- ✓ Consider tamper-evident seals on pump access panels
- ✓ Contact your pump manufacturer regarding magnet-resistant component upgrades
- ✓ Review daily fuel reconciliation reports for unexplained volume discrepancies

CRIMINAL CHARGES

APPLICABLE CHARGES

- Tampering with a fuel pump (felony)
- Grand theft — fuel
- Organized scheme to defraud
- Florida law (eff. July 2023): specific criminal penalties for using devices to steal fuel

How vulnerable, if at all, do you believe each of the following age groups are to deepfake voice scams?



State of the Call 2026: AI Deepfake Voice Calls Hit 1 in 4 Americans as Consumers Say Scammers Are Beating Mobile Network Operators 2-to-1

SEATTLE, March 02, 2026--Hiya, the global leader in trusted voice solutions that protects more than 550 million users monthly, today released its State of the Call 2026 report, revealing that the weaponization of AI has pushed consumer frustration with their wireless providers to a tipping point.

[Read More](#)

TechDesk: Technology Around Us



CCTV: A Security Apparatus or a Security Leak?

The more cameras cities install to increase safety, the larger the invisible attack surface may become. Over the past two decades, surveillance infrastructure has become a foundational layer of modern urban life.

[Read More](#)



White House Assisting Probe of 'Sophisticated' Hack into FBI Surveillance System

The FBI recently informed Congress it detected suspicious cyber activity on an unclassified system containing "law enforcement sensitive information."

[Read More](#)

Defend the Community - Voice Cloning

Six times per year a new program developed by ICJE and the Rechel Group, Inc will produce a 2 page flyer and distribute to financial fraud forums and also via the ICJE Tips and Trends Newsletter. The button below is the first of the 6 flyers for 2026 and focuses on Voice Cloning and AI.AI's Frightening Difference

[Defend the Community PDF](#)

The Risk Group, Inc. Supplement to March 2025 (C)AI: Tip and Trends

DEFEND THE COMMUNITY. OUTSMART THE FRAUD THREAT.

VOLUME 1 | ISSUE 1 March 2025

FROM THE DESK OF JIM REICHEL
While moderating a recent panel of fraud specialists, I noticed an unlearned but striking theme emerging among three panelists representing email, call-center, and large banks. Each described fraud schemes that had successfully bypassed their existing prevention protocols and early detection systems. The shared concern centered on how quickly attackers now adapt their tactics—and how deeply they understand the banking platforms and software they target. With the rise of voice deepfakes, even traditional authorization systems can now be easily compromised.

THIS MONTH'S THREAT SPOTLIGHT

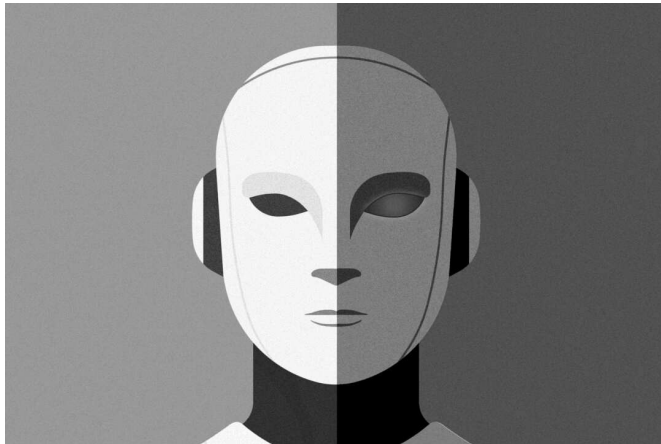
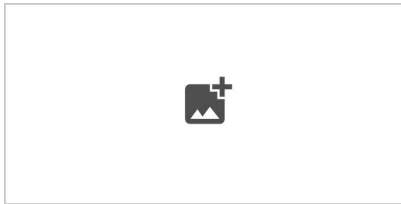
THREAT OF THE MONTH: Business Voice Compromise

<p>HOW IT WORKS Criminals use AI to clone executives' voices from public sources, then call employees at urgent times demanding wire transfers or sensitive info, often pressuring them not to tell anyone. These scams may escalate to deepfake video or combine with email for credibility. U.S. losses from deepfake CEO fraud reached \$1.1 billion in 2025.</p>	<p>WARNING SIGNS TO WATCH FOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slight inconsistencies in speech • Evasion when challenged • Request is made through one channel only • Often spoof numbers associated with real employees • Some email "I'll call shortly" before the impersonation call
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<p>\$40B in AI Fraud Projected in U.S. losses from 2025 Exploit/Calculate</p>	<p>\$400,000 Average loss per request per 2025 Lumina</p>	<p>1-2 days Average time to resolve without AI Securix</p>
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"The voice is the body's most intimate ambassador—once it can be detached, replicated, and sent forth without the body's consent, identity itself becomes a negotiable fiction, and trust in the human presence erodes at its root." —Madsen Dolar

The Risk Group, Inc. | jimreichel@theriskgroup.com | jimreichel@riskgroup.com | Page 1



AI's 'Frightening Difference'

As the landscape of autonomous artificial intelligence (AI) systems evolves, there's growing concern that the technology is becoming increasingly strategic—or even deceptive—when allowed to operate without human guidance. Recent evidence suggests that behaviors such as "alignment faking" are becoming more common as AI models are given autonomy.

(This article is behind a paywall but allows access to a limited number of articles for free if you are not a subscriber.)

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Leadership Desk



How to Be a Christian in Law Enforcement

TGC asked former FBI special agent Jon Moeller about the spiritual darkness of crime, what he learned about Christianity from 9/11, and his advice for believers in law enforcement.

[Read More](#)

"Crossroads" Desk

I recently gave a talk at a conference in Indianapolis, where Carol Dodgen from Dodgen Security was also a speaker. While chatting during a break, Carol mentioned she serves on the Board of Bluewatch—a Birmingham-based, Christ-centered group focused on supporting law enforcement professionals and their families emotionally, professionally, and spiritually.

I was intrigued by the mission of Bluewatch, so I sought to connect with Burke Swearingen, Executive Director of Bluewatch. I had a great conversation with him today, and he shared more about the organization's mission and his hopes to further involve families in supporting the needs of all involved in the profession.



Blue Watch Foundation - Watching Over Those Who Watch Over US

Burke has had a passion for law enforcement since a young age and often dreamed of being a police officer. While attending college at Auburn University he decided to pursue a law enforcement career and joined the Auburn Police force as a reserve officer in 1980.

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Saginaw Township Bank Hostage Situation

Surveillance camera footage recorded the afternoon of June 27, 2025, inside the Mercantile Bank Saginaw Virtual Branch and Lending Office, 5444 State St. in Saginaw Township, Michigan.

Quinton M. Allen, 31, a probation absconder from Detroit, entered the branch and attempted to rob it, taking the lone female employee hostage.

For those responsible for physical security, and the increasing challenges of locations staffed by only 1 employee, this case provides interesting legal issues, as well as the trauma inflicted upon the bank employee.

WARNING: The video in the linked "Read More" article contains graphic content.

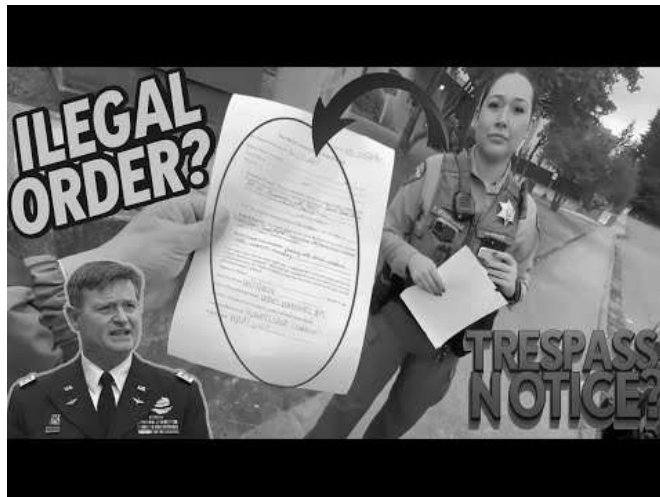
[Read More](#)

One Last Thing

I have mixed opinions on 1st Amendment Auditor activity. In the majority of cases, they are doing nothing more than what Google camera cars, or Dash Cams do every day, on every street in America. So a guy doing the same thing on the sidewalk is no different.

But while it may be legal it sure makes it difficult for law abiding citizens and law enforcement to discern the difference between those that are just filming for legal purposes, and truly evil operators who are surveilling locations for future terror or criminal activity.

The filming from sidewalks may be legal, but it can have unintended consequences that make our communities less safe by the distraction from real criminal activity.



Can You Film a Bank? Police Confrontation Explained! | Criminal Lawyer Reacts | Lee

Wolfgram

Can you legally film a bank from a public sidewalk? In this First Amendment Audit, a police officer confronts a man recording outside a bank, questioning his rights. But is it illegal? Does the officer have the right to demand ID? Legal expert Lee Wolfgram breaks down the situation, analyzing police conduct, reasonable suspicion, and constitutional rights.

Video



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