

Jeffery McDonald's Compassionate Release Plea Rejected

By Administrator

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RALEIGH, N.C. – The United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit issued an order on Thursday, September 16 dismissing an appeal filed by convicted murderer Jeffrey MacDonald. As a result, MacDonald will continue to serve out the three consecutive life sentences he received for murdering his wife and two young daughters at Fort Bragg, North Carolina in 1970. MacDonald has filed numerous unsuccessful challenges to his murder convictions, which have been repeatedly rejected by federal courts at every level. MacDonald's latest appeal stemmed from a motion he filed in November 2020 requesting that the Court grant him "compassionate release" and reduce his life sentences. The United States vigorously opposed the motion in briefing and at a hearing held on March 11, 2021, arguing that MacDonald was not eligible for compassionate release and should not be let out of prison early.

On April 9, 2021, United States District Court Judge Terrence W. Boyle denied MacDonald's motion. MacDonald initially appealed that decision. The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals has now dismissed the appeal upon MacDonald's request and with the United States' consent. As a result, Judge Boyle's order will stand, and MacDonald will remain in prison.

G. Norman Acker, III, Acting U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina, made the announcement after the Court of Appeals issued its order dismissing the appeal. "Jeffrey MacDonald did the unthinkable more than fifty years ago when he murdered his pregnant wife and two daughters in brutal fashion," said Acting U.S. Attorney Acker. "MacDonald's latest effort to get out of prison has failed just like his previous efforts failed. But today, as always, our minds turn to Colette, Kimberly, and little Kristen, and to the family and friends whose lives were devastated by their untimely deaths. Our office has sought justice on their behalf for decades. That work continues today. And that work will continue every day until MacDonald's efforts to escape justice cease for good."

The United States is represented in this matter by Assistant U.S. Attorneys John E. Harris and Bryan M. Stephany.

A copy of this press release is located on our website.

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