



718.286.6000
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2026

CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315
QDACommunications@queensda.org

FLUSHING MAN SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS TO LIFE IN PRISON FOR KILLING BAR PATRON

Defendant Stabbed to Death 45-year-old Victim, a Stranger

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Jason Schuler was sentenced to 25 years to life in prison for the stabbing death of Elliott Christopher Ortiz, a stranger the defendant encountered at a Flushing bar in September 2023. He attacked Ortiz with a large kitchen knife while both were on the bar's patio.

District Attorney Katz said: "This defendant roamed the streets of Queens while drunk and armed with a kitchen knife before he mercilessly attacked and killed Elliott Christopher Ortiz without provocation. This type of senseless violence will always be met with swift and decisive action by my office. I thank members of my Homicide Bureau for prosecuting this case and securing a murder conviction. The court has now sentenced the defendant to 25 years to life in prison. We hope this sentence provides a measure of solace to the victim's loved ones as they continue to grieve."

Schuler, 41, of Flushing, was convicted in February by a jury of murder in the second degree and criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth degree.

Trial openings began February 19 and closing arguments took place on February 27. The jury deliberated for approximately two hours before reaching a verdict the same day. Queens Supreme Court Justice Kenneth Holder sentenced Schuler on March 18 to 25 years to life in prison.

DA Katz said that, according to the charges and trial testimony, on September 24, 2023, at approximately 7:30 p.m., Schuler, who possessed a kitchen knife concealed in his pants, purchased alcohol at a Flushing liquor store while appearing intoxicated. He returned to the same store about an hour later and bought a second bottle of alcohol.

At approximately 9:15 p.m., Schuler was drinking with a companion on Main Street in Flushing and then walked toward Kelly's Pub on 41st Avenue and went inside.

Ortiz and a friend arrived at the bar around 9:25 p.m. that evening.

Approximately 10 minutes later, a bar employee observed Schuler drinking from his own liquor bottle and asked the man to leave. The defendant then went to the pub's rear patio at the same time that Ortiz and his friend went to the patio.

Schuler, without provocation, removed the kitchen knife from his pants and stabbed Ortiz in the face, just below his temple, causing a 7.5-inch-deep wound and severing his carotid artery. In the ensuing struggle, Ortiz's friend stabbed Schuler and disarmed him.

Immediately following the attack, Schuler fled the bar and met his companion around the corner on Main Street. As patrol officers approached Schuler, he was observed asking his companion to take a photo of him while he posed covered in Ortiz's blood.

The victim remained at Kelly's pub awaiting medical attention before being transported to a local hospital where he died from the stab wound to his head and neck.

Assistant District Attorneys Ryan Nicolosi and Angelica Judge of the District Attorney's Homicide Bureau prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys John Kosinski, Bureau Chief, and Karen Ross and Jonathan Selkove, Deputy Chiefs, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Shawn Clark.

#

Note to Editors: Archived press releases are available at www.queensda.org.

