

# TRAPPED BY THE SYSTEM

A Memoir of Survival and Justice Denied

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## THE STORY

On January 4, 2004, Travis Lee Edwards murdered 27-year-old Karen Muscovitz and held J. Dunn hostage at gunpoint for 36 hours in Melbourne, Florida. Edwards was a diagnosed paranoid schizophrenic with a prior criminal history. He had been in state psychiatric custody under Florida Statute §916 for nineteen years.

On December 9, 2022, the Florida Department of Children and Families issued a Notice of Anticipated Discharge. Edwards was released in January 2023 with zero conditions, zero monitoring, and zero notification to the victims. J. Dunn and Karen's family found out more than a year after his release by calling to check his status themselves. The state never called.

## THE AUTHOR

J. Dunn was shot in the head in Melbourne, Florida in 1994. In 1995, the same Florida statute now at the center of Karen's Law dismissed the charges against the man who shot him. He knows the incompetency defense from both sides: as a recipient of its mercy, and as a witness to its catastrophic absence.

J. Dunn is not a lawyer, a lobbyist, or a politician. He is a survivor and a direct victim of record in Case No. 05-2004-CF-051843. He built this campaign. He wrote the book. He sent the certified letter to State Attorney Scheiner on March 28, 2026. The 30-day response deadline passed May 1, 2026 with no reply.

## THE EIGHT DOCUMENTED STATE FAILURES

- 2000: Edwards convicted of battery and assault. Fined \$211, given probation. No mandatory mental health treatment.
- 2004: Edwards murders Karen Muscovitz. Held J. Dunn hostage 36 hours. System had already failed to treat him.
- 2004–2018: 14 years of commitment with no mandatory release plan built.
- 2018: Charges dismissed without contacting victims for consent, violating §916.145(1)(u).
- 2018: Victims not notified of charge dismissal, violating §960.001.
- Dec 9, 2022: DCF issues Notice of Anticipated Discharge. Victims not notified.
- January 2023: Released with zero conditions, zero monitoring, zero victim notification. Violates Marsy's Law, §960.001, and DCF Operating Procedure 155-48.
- Jan 2024: Dunn and Arnie Muscovitz find out by calling to check. The call the law required never came.

## KAREN'S LAW

Florida Statute §916.17 already permits conditional release. It says the court *may* order a conditional release. Karen's Law changes one word:

## MAY → SHALL

When charges involve a violent felony, dismissal due to incompetence shall be accompanied by a mandatory conditional release order specifying:

- Required medication and verification of compliance
- Designated mental health provider with defined re-commitment triggers
- Supervising officer and reporting requirements
- Written notification to all victims no less than 30 days before release

*Once a defendant no longer meets involuntary commitment criteria, the state loses all jurisdiction permanently. Karen's Law acts at the last moment the court retains legal authority to impose conditions.*

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## FOUR DOCUMENTED FLORIDA FAILURES

### Travis Edwards — Brevard County, 2022–2023

Released after murdering Karen Muscovitz. Zero conditions. Zero notification. Karen's family found out 1 year later.

### Thomas Matejcek — Manatee County, 2023

Placed in unlicensed home by Centerstone. Walked out. Murdered his mother and her boyfriend. 4 executives fired.

### Ahmad Jihad Bojeh — Osceola County, 2026

Released with conditions. Conditions not enforced. Shot and killed 3 tourists. 2 handguns found under his bed.

### Tyrone Burns — Manatee County, 2018

Centerstone lost track of him. Moved to Georgia. Murdered a young woman. \$6M wrongful death settlement.

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## PROOF IT WORKS

- New York, Kendra's Law (1999): 74% reduction in hospitalizations. 77% reduction in arrests.
  - California, CONREP (1986): 85% success rate. 91% medication compliance. \$68M annual savings. 98% of victims call advance notice "very important."
  - 47 states: Already require mandatory conditional release. Florida is one of a handful that does not.
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## ARNIE MUSCOVITZ

Karen's father. Founder, Merrimack Valley Chapter of Parents of Murdered Children. Flew to Florida dozens of times over two decades fighting for justice. Found out Travis Edwards was released by dialing the number himself. Available for interview.

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