

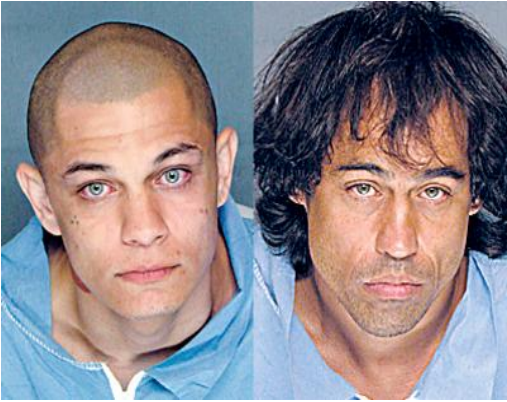


## Judge: Gay couple must be kept separate

*Despite judge's order, they were mistakenly put in same cell*

By **The Record**

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A married gay couple accused of murder must be kept separate as legal proceedings against them continue, a San Joaquin Superior Court judge ruled this morning, upholding an earlier decision by sheriff's officials.

Judge Bernard Garber had already decided that Tracy residents Robert and Jorge Morgan cannot sit next to each other in court or hold joint conferences with their attorneys. The Morgans had also asked that they be together at the jail and when transported to and from the courthouse.

"I don't see anything inappropriate" in the decision of the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office to keep the men separate, Garber said. "I think security has to be paramount."

A jail lieutenant had testified that the order keeping the men separate was appropriate not only because of their relationship but also because of the nature of the crime of which they are accused and the attention it has received.

No one factor decides whether inmates should be kept separate, Lt. Kimberly Moule had said.

The Morgans are accused of robbing and stabbing to death 58-year-old Cynthia Ramos on Aug. 6 in her own home in Tracy.

Read Tuesday's Record for more on this story by staff writer Alex Breitler