

Missing 27-Year-Old Woman Last Seen in 1973 Found Dead in Texas, Solving Cold Case After 53 Years

Cheryl Lanier was last seen in San Francisco in 1973

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Cheryl Lanier.Credit :

San Francisco Police



NEED TO KNOW

- A 27-year-old woman vanished more than 50 years ago in California
- This week, police announced that her remains had been found in Texas, and the case had finally been solved
- Officials offered their "sincerest condolences to the family and friends" of the young woman

More than half a century after a 27-year-old woman vanished in California, officials confirmed that her remains have been found in Texas.

On Wednesday, May 6, police announced that they'd solved the case of Cheryl Lanier, who was last seen in San Francisco in 1973, the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) said in a [statement](#).

The agency offered its "sincerest condolences to the family and friends" of the young woman.

The mystery began in the 1970s when the 27-year-old woman disappeared in San Francisco. It wasn't until 2010 that a missing persons report was filed, prompting a years-long investigation by SFPD detectives.

The case remained unsolved until last summer, when the department received a tip out of Houston that a deceased "Jane Doe" may be Lanier, police said. From there, investigators connected with the Houston Police Department and the state's Bureau of Forensic Services in the Justice Department. Detectives employed DNA analysis to confirm that the remains belonged to Lanier.

After 53 years, the case was solved and "closure" was brought to her family, authorities said. In total, agencies in California, Texas, New York and South Carolina worked together to close the case.

The Houston Police Department did not immediately respond to PEOPLE's request for comment.

Born on Oct. 25, 1946, Lanier was described as an African American woman who was 5 feet 7 inches tall and weighed 130 pounds when she was last seen. Police did not share how she got from San Francisco to Houston, or how she died.