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Lucas to decide on accepting lawyer

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EL PASO, Texas — Henry Lee Lucas' murder trial for the 1983 killing of an El Paso woman may be delayed by his indecision over accepting a court-appointed attorney and the intervention of a Central Texas prosecutor.

State District Judge Brunson Moore said Monday he will hold a hearing in the El Paso County Jail to determine whether Lucas will accept the court-appointed lawyer so the trial can get under way.

Moore said Lucas' upcoming trial for the 1983 ax murder of 72-year-old Librada Apodaca probably will not start on March 3 as scheduled because of Lucas' problem with defense lawyers.

The 49-year-old Lucas has fired two court-appointed attorneys named by Moore, State Sen. Tati Santiesteban, D-El Paso, and Judy Sanders.

Lucas hired Gary Richardson of Tulsa, Okla., for an undisclosed fee but fired him after Richardson tried to withdraw from the case and Moore refused his request to quit. A fourth attorney, Arthur Abraham of El Paso, quit the case.

The trial may be further delayed, Moore said, by an offer from a district attorney to help Lucas find a lawyer to defend him.

Lucas, in a letter to Moore last week, said McLennan County District Attorney Vic Feazell has offered to help him find a lawyer.

Lucas has been convicted of three murders, including that of his

mother. He has pleaded guilty to seven murders in Texas and one in West Virginia, that of a police officer, and been charged with 14 other killings in Louisiana, Arkansas, Washington, New Mexico and Colorado.