



GREGORY D. TOTTEN
District Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

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Repeat Offender Sentenced for Securities and Elder Fraud

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Gregory D. Totten announced today that James Leroy Johnson (DOB 04/23/47), formerly of Newbury Park and Westlake Village, was sentenced to 10 years in state prison. In August, Johnson pled guilty to six felonies including making a false statement in relation to the sale of a security, theft from an elder, and grand theft. He also admitted that he stole more than \$500,000 and had recently finished a state prison sentence when he committed these crimes. This matter was investigated by the Ventura County Sheriff's Office Major Crimes detectives.

In August of 2012 Johnson relocated to Ventura County after serving a state prison sentence for securities fraud. Between October 2012 and 2014, Johnson sought investments in First Light Trading, LLC, without telling investors about his recent prison stint. Johnson claimed to be a successful day-trader and convinced several victims to give him money to trade. He also sought investments in an organic foods venture. Johnson falsely told victims that his company was well-funded and that he would pay out large amounts of interest. While Johnson spent their money for his personal purposes, victims were strung along with false promises of imminent payment. Six victims who lost more than \$1 million cooperated with the prosecution. Johnson's victims included elderly single women.

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The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and other professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.

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