




GREGORY D. TOTTEN
District Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

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Oxnard Resident Sentenced in Workers' Compensation Insurance Fraud Case

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Gregory D. Totten announced today that Ernestina Rodriguez (DOB 2/27/1963), of Oxnard, was placed on formal probation for a period of 36 months after having pled guilty to a felony violation of Insurance Code section 1871.4(a)(1), making a false or fraudulent statement of a material fact for the purpose of obtaining workers' compensation benefits. She had previously made restitution in full to the victim, Zenith Insurance Company, in the amount of \$9,333.50 and will serve 150 days in the Ventura County jail as a condition of probation.

Rodriguez was employed as a field worker in Oxnard and filed a workers' compensation claim for injuries to her back, neck, and knees on February 14, 2015. She was placed off work and began receiving medical treatment and temporary total disability benefits provided by Zenith Insurance. During the time she received treatment, she denied to her treating physicians, a Qualified Medical Examiner, and at a deposition that she had ever filed any prior workers' compensation claims involving the same body parts as she was claiming in February 2015. In fact, the defendant had filed and settled two prior workers' compensation claims for the same body parts in 2002 and 2010. Her material misrepresentations affected the way her claim was apportioned and caused Zenith Insurance to pay her \$9,333.50 in benefits that she was not entitled to receive.

Workers' compensation insurance fraud is not a victimless crime. Fraudulent claims increase insurance rates for businesses. Our office will vigorously prosecute dishonest employees who make fraudulent

claims, as well as unscrupulous business owners who fail to provide insurance coverage for their employees.

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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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