



# ERIK NASARENKO District Attorney

## NEWS RELEASE

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Approved: LOL  
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### **Former Deputy Sheriff Pleads Guilty to Sexual Misconduct with Inmate**

*VENTURA, California* – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that former Ventura County Sheriff’s Deputy Leonard Herrera Lopez (DOB 08/06/71), pled no contest to two misdemeanor offenses involving a female inmate at the Ventura County Jail. Lopez was charged with engaging in consensual sexual activity with a female inmate, a violation of Penal Code section 289.6(a)(2), and with entering the cell of the same female inmate without another employee present, in violation of Penal Code section 4021(b).

On September 6, 2019, the female inmate was assigned to a custody unit under Deputy Lopez’s control and supervision. Lopez entered the inmate’s cell unaccompanied by other jail staff in the early morning hours of September 6, 2019. Lopez kissed and touched the inmate, which constituted the sexual misconduct with her. The inmate later reported Lopez’s conduct to other jail staff. The Sheriff’s Major Crimes Bureau immediately launched a comprehensive investigation. Under state law, inmates are incapable of providing legal consent to engage in any sexual activity with custodial staff.

Lopez is scheduled to be sentenced on June 24, 2021, at 1:30 p.m. in courtroom 14 of the Ventura County Superior Court. Lopez faces a maximum possible sentence of 180 days in jail and one year of probation.

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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. Follow us on Twitter [@VenturaDAOoffice](https://twitter.com/VenturaDAOoffice) Instagram [@VCDAOoffice](https://www.instagram.com/VCDAOoffice) Facebook [@VCDAOoffice](https://www.facebook.com/VCDAOoffice)