



# ERIK NASARENKO District Attorney

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Oxnard Resident Sentenced to Jail for Elder Theft**

*VENTURA, California* – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Rita Runyon (DOB 11/06/54), of Oxnard, has been sentenced to six months in jail after pleading no contest to three counts of identity theft and two counts of theft from an elder. After completion of her jail sentence, Runyon will be placed on mandatory supervision for 30 months. Runyon was also ordered to pay \$62,000 in restitution and have no contact with the victim.

From 2015 through 2018, Runyon lived in the elderly victim's home, and ingratiated herself with the victim. Runyon falsely convinced the victim that her family was not taking care of her. After the victim moved to a senior living facility, Runyon gained control of her financial accounts and stole money from her. Runyon also misused the victim's credit cards by making personal purchases without the victim's authorization.

The scheme unraveled when Runyon used the victim to gain access to an estate of the victim's close friend, a resident of Santa Clara County. When the friend died, Runyon allegedly transferred a large portion of the estate to herself. Runyon is scheduled to be arraigned on charges that she stole more than \$500,000 on August 6, 2021, in Santa Clara County Superior Court.

This matter was investigated by the Oxnard Police Department and the Southern California High Tech Task Force and prosecuted by the District Attorney's Office Fraud and Technology Crimes Unit.

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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 professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.