



ERIK NASARENKO
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
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Contact: Joey Buttitta
Title: Communications Manager/PIO
Phone: (805) 767-3400
Email: Joey.Buttitta@ventura.org

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**City of Oxnard Partners with District Attorney's Office
to Combat Internet Crimes Against Children**

Oxnard, Calif. – The City of Oxnard has entered a partnership with the Ventura County District Attorney's Office to intensify efforts against Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC). This three-year agreement, beginning July 1, 2024, commits a total of \$494,544 to support the assignment of a dedicated investigator from the District Attorney's Office to tackle these heinous crimes within Oxnard.

Under the terms of the agreement, the District Attorney's Office will assign an investigator to focus on ICAC cases originating from Oxnard. This initiative is designed to enhance the detection, investigation, and prosecution of internet-based child exploitation offenses. The City of Oxnard will provide \$160,000 in funding the first year, \$164,800 in the second year, and \$169,744 in the third year, which will partially offset the cost of the investigator's salary and benefits.

ICAC cases often begin with a CyberTip, a notification originating from internet service providers, email providers, or wireless carriers. These tips are forwarded to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), which then directs them to local law enforcement for further action. The number of CyberTips has surged nationwide, nearly doubling between 2019 and 2021, driven by factors such as increased internet access among children, improved detection technologies, and a shift in predator behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The protection of our children is paramount," said District Attorney Erik Nasarenko. "This model partnership with the City of Oxnard and the Oxnard Police Department will enhance our ability to investigate and prosecute those who exploit our most vulnerable residents."

The district attorney investigators are well-equipped to handle these complex cases. The assigned investigator will work closely with the Oxnard Police Department to ensure thorough investigations and successful prosecutions.

“This agreement will enhance our ability to protect children in our community from those who would exploit and victimize them,” said Oxnard Police Chief Jason Benites. “We are most appreciative of the partnership that our department has with the District Attorney’s Office in helping us keep our community safe from those who seek to harm others.”

The agreement outlines a comprehensive process for handling CyberTips, from initial receipt and evaluation to search warrants and arrests. The collaboration will also include community outreach and training programs to educate the public and law enforcement on the dangers of child exploitation and the signs to watch for.