



**ERIK NASARENKO**  
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
**NEWS RELEASE**



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Approved: SW  
Date: January 9, 2025  
Release No.: 24-005

**Ventura Doctor to Lose License After Pleading Guilty  
to Having Sexual Relationship with Patient**

VENTURA, Calif. – Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Terry Cole, M.D., (DOB 09/17/48), of Ventura, pled guilty to one felony count of dissuading a witness and one misdemeanor count of sexual exploitation of a patient. He will permanently lose his license to practice medicine as part of today's plea. Due to Cole's age and lack of criminal history, it is anticipated that the witness dissuasion count will be reduced to a misdemeanor at sentencing.

"No professional is above the law, including physicians," said District Attorney Nasarenko. "This plea protects patients by ensuring that the defendant's medical license is permanently revoked."

On September 26, 2022, the Medical Board of California received a complaint that Cole had a sexual relationship with a patient in violation of California law. An investigation into the allegations began and the findings were turned over to the Ventura County District Attorney's Office. Cole was charged on December 29, 2023, with sexual exploitation of a patient and dissuading a witness.

Cole pled guilty at today's information arraignment. At the completion of a three-day preliminary hearing in December, Cole had been held to answer on all charges by Ventura County Superior Court Judge Catherine Voelker.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Karen Wold, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Consumer Protection Unit, prosecuted the case.

"Sexual exploitation of patients is unlawful and will not be tolerated," Ms. Wold said. "Medical professionals are held to the highest ethical standards and our office is committed to ensuring those who exploit their positions of power are held accountable."

Cole is scheduled to be sentenced on February 21, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 12 of the Ventura County Superior Court.

**Case: 2023026457**

**Defendant Information:**

Terry Lester Cole (DOB 09/17/48)

Ventura

**Charges pled guilty to:**

- PC 136.1(a)(1) – Dissuading a witness from testifying
- BP 729(a) – Sexual exploitation of a patient