



ERIK NASARENKO

VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

NEWS RELEASE



Follow us @VenturaCountyDA
[DA.VenturaCounty.gov](https://www.vventura.gov)

Contact: Joey Buttitta
Title: Communications Manager/PIO
Phone: (805) 767-3400
Email: Joey.Buttitta@venturacounty.gov

Approved: SW
Date: August 12, 2025
Release No.: 25-098

Gang Member Charged in Drug Conspiracy Orchestrated from Prison

VENTURA, Calif. – Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Omar Hernandez Ruiz (DOB 07/27/87), of Santa Paula, has been charged with conspiracy to transport methamphetamine. Ruiz also faces several special allegations and aggravating factors, including committing the crime for the benefit of, at the direction of, and in association with a criminal street gang.

From September 2024 through November 2024, Ruiz is accused of coordinating the transportation of high quantities of drugs utilizing several co-conspirators. On November 14, 2024, one of Ruiz's drug runners was arrested with over nine pounds of methamphetamine. Ruiz was incarcerated at the California State Prison, Centinela at the time of these alleged events. He is serving 156 years to life in prison for a 2013 Santa Paula murder and assault on a peace officer.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Stephanie Leija, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Major Crimes Gang Unit, is prosecuting the case.

Anyone with additional information about Ruiz or his alleged actions is urged to contact the Ventura County Sheriff's Office. Please reach out to Detective Steve Eckman at (805) 384-4771 or Steve.Eckman@venturacounty.gov, or Detective Jose Torres at (805) 383-8725 or Jose.Torres@venturacounty.gov.

Ruiz was transported to Ventura County Jail and was arraigned on August 11, 2025, where he pled not guilty to all charges. His next scheduled court date is for an early disposition conference on August 20, 2025, in courtroom 12 of the Ventura County Superior Court.

Case: 2025017850

Defendant Information:

Omar Hernandez Ruiz (DOB 07/27/87)

Santa Paula, CA

Charges:

- PC 182(a)(1) – Conspiracy to Commit a Crime

Special allegations:

- PC 186.22(b)(1) – Street terrorism
- PC 667S3 – Strike 3
- PC 1170(h)(3) – Prior serious or violent felony
- PC 667(a)(1) – Serious felony prior
- CRC 4.421(a)(8) – The manner in which the crime was carried out indicates planning, sophistication, or professionalism
- CRC 4.421(a)(10) – The crime involved a large quantity of contraband
- CRC 4.421(b)(2) – The defendant's prior convictions are numerous or of increasing seriousness
- CRC 4.421(b)(3) – The defendant has served a prior term in prison