



# ERIK NASARENKO

VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

## NEWS RELEASE



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Approved: SW  
Date: August 18, 2025  
Release No.: 25-102

### Santa Barbara Man Convicted of Assaulting CHP Officer During DUI Arrest

VENTURA, Calif. – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Jesse Andrew Mendoza (DOB 02/01/05), of Santa Barbara, was convicted by a Ventura County jury on August 15, 2025, for assaulting a California Highway Patrol (CHP) officer during a 2024 DUI arrest. The jury found Mendoza guilty of felony assault on a peace officer, assault, escape from arrest, resisting an officer, and driving under the influence. Prior strike special allegations were also found true by the judge. Mendoza faces a maximum of 15 years in state prison when sentenced.

On October 5, 2024, California Highway Patrol officers stopped a vehicle on the southbound 101 Freeway in Ventura after observing it speeding and weaving through traffic. The driver, Mendoza, showed signs of impairment and performed poorly on the field sobriety tests. He was arrested for DUI.

While being transported to the CHP Ventura station, Mendoza slipped out of his handcuffs and attacked the officer driving the patrol vehicle, clawing at the officer's face and neck. The officer had to abruptly stop the patrol vehicle to protect himself. As the officer evaded Mendoza's attack, Mendoza escaped from the patrol car and fled on foot. Officers chased and apprehended him. Mendoza had to be carried back to the patrol vehicle.

One officer sustained facial injuries in the attack. He has since recovered. Patrol car video footage captured Mendoza manipulating his restraints before the incident. At the time of this arrest, Mendoza had a prior conviction for assault with a deadly weapon and personally inflicting great bodily injury in Santa Barbara County just five months earlier.

Deputy District Attorney Jillian Ewan, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office DUI Unit, prosecuted the case.

“This case demonstrates how police officers are at risk in every circumstance and are subjected to unprovoked attacks,” Ms. Ewan said. “I am grateful to the jury for their careful consideration of the evidence and for delivering a just and thoughtful verdict.”

Mendoza is scheduled to be sentenced on September 16, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 46 of the Ventura County Superior Court. He remains in custody with no bail.

**Case: 2024027164**

**Defendant Information:**

Jesse Andrew Mendoza (DOB 02/01/05)

Santa Barbara

**Charges:**

- PC 245(c) – Assault upon a peace officer
- PC 240 – Assault
- PC 836.6(b) – Escape from arrest
- PC 148(a)(1) – Resist, obstruct, delay of peace officer
- VC 23152(a) – Diving while under the influence of any alcoholic beverage
- VC 23152(b) – Driving with a 0.08% or higher blood alcohol

**Special Allegations:**

- PC 667S2 – Prior strike 2
- PC 1170(h)(3) – Prior serious or violent felony
- PC 667(a)(1) – Serious felony prior
- CRC 4.421(a)(1)
- CRC 4.421(b)(4)

