



ERIK NASARENKO

VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

NEWS RELEASE



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Santa Barbara Man Sentenced for 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 sentenced on October 21, 2025, to 11 years state prison for assaulting a California Highway Patrol (CHP) officer during a 2024 DUI arrest. Mendoza was previously convicted by a Ventura County jury on August 15, 2025. 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.

“The safety of the Ventura community, including our peace officers, is our top priority,” said Deputy District Attorney Jillian Ewan who prosecuted the case. “Those who endanger the public by driving under the influence and commit acts of violence against peace officers will be held accountable.”

On October 5, 2024, California Highway Patrol officers stopped a vehicle on the southbound 101 Freeway in Ventura after seeing that the driver was 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.

Case: 2024027164

Defendant Information:

Jesse Andrew Mendoza (DOB 02/01/05)

Santa Barbara

Charges convicted of:

- 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 found true:

- 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) – The crime involved great violence
- CRC 4.421(b)(4) – The defendant was on probation, mandatory supervision, post release community supervision, or parole when the crime was committed

