



ERIK NASARENKO

VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

NEWS RELEASE



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Approved: SW
Date: January 22, 2026
Release No.: 26-014

Fentanyl Trafficker Sentenced to 15 Years in State Prison Under Proposition 36

VENTURA, Calif. – Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Jose Trinidad Bueno Garcia (DOB 02/11/75), of Van Nuys, was sentenced on January 21, 2026, to 15 years in state prison for leading a large-scale fentanyl trafficking operation impacting Ventura County.

Garcia previously pled guilty to conspiracy to possess fentanyl for sale. At the time of his plea, Garcia admitted that the offense involved more than four kilograms of fentanyl, triggering a significant weight enhancement. He also admitted that the crime involved a large quantity of contraband and was carried out with planning, sophistication, and professionalism.

Between May 2025 and October 2025, detectives with the Ventura County Combined Agency Team (VCAT) conducted an extensive investigation into a Los Angeles County-based drug trafficking organization. The investigation established that the organization was sourcing fentanyl and methamphetamine from Mexico and selling those drugs to Ventura County residents.

On October 1, 2025, VCAT detectives executed a search warrant at Garcia's residence and seized approximately 3,574 gross grams of fentanyl, 261 grams of methamphetamine, \$32,406 in U.S. currency, and additional evidence of drug sales. Search warrants were also executed at four other locations. In total, detectives seized approximately 6,517 grams of fentanyl, representing an estimated 325,850 potentially fatal doses.

Deputy District Attorney Devin Mirchi, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Major Crimes Narcotics Unit, prosecuted the case.

"This defendant led a drug trafficking organization responsible for moving an enormous amount of fentanyl into our community, putting countless lives at risk," Mr. Mirchi said. "This sentence reflects

the seriousness of the defendant's conduct and sends a clear message that fentanyl trafficking will be met with significant consequences in Ventura County."

Thirteen years of Garcia's 15-year sentence are attributable to enhancements authorized under Proposition 36, the Homelessness, Drug Addiction, and Theft Reduction Act. Prior to the passage of Proposition 36, offenders responsible for trafficking this volume of drugs would not have faced the increased penalties associated with weight enhancements, limiting accountability for large-scale drug trafficking operations.

The remaining defendants in this case are scheduled for an early disposition conference on January 29, 2026.

Case: 2025025166

Defendant Information:

Jose Trinidad Bueno Garcia (DOB 02/11/75)
Van Nuys

Charges pled guilty to:

- PC 182(a)(1) – Conspiracy to commit a crime

Special allegations admitted:

- HS 11370.4(c)(1)(E) – Fentanyl punishment by quantity (Prop 36)
- HS 11370.4(c)(2) – Substantial involvement (Prop 36)
- CRC 4.421(a)(10) – The crime involved a large quantity of contraband
- CRC 4.421(a)(8) – The manner in which the crime was carried out indicates planning, sophistication, or professionalism

