



ERIK NASARENKO

VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

NEWS RELEASE



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

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

Approved: SW
Date: February 9, 2026
Release No.: 26-021

Oxnard Man Sentenced for Assault with Deadly Weapon & Gang-Related Charges

VENTURA, Calif. – Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Sergio Contreras (DOB 01/04/06), of Oxnard, was sentenced to 16 years in state prison for assault with a deadly weapon, conspiracy to commit a crime, and street terrorism. He was previously convicted by a jury on December 10, 2025. The jury also found true all special allegations, including causing great bodily injury in the commission of a felony and violent felony street gang activity. The court further found true multiple aggravating factors, including that the crime involved great violence, Contreras was armed with and used a weapon, he engaged in violent conduct, and he was on probation when he committed the offense.

On August 19, 2024, the victim was in an El Rio restaurant parking lot when Contreras and three others, all known gang members, targeted him. Surveillance video captured Contreras driving a white Honda Accord into the lot, parking near the victim, and remaining inside with the others as they watched him. Contreras then exited, exchanged words with the victim, and punched him before placing him in a headlock. The three passengers immediately joined in, punching and kicking the victim.

The victim briefly broke free and tried to run but was tripped and knocked to the ground, where all four attackers continued the assault. The video shows Contreras removing what appeared to be a folding knife from his pocket, opening it, and stabbing the victim twice, once in the leg and once in the arm as the victim shielded his neck. Contreras then folded the knife, put it back in his pocket, and fled with the others, who also took one of the victim's shoes.

The knife was never recovered. Detectives later found the stolen shoe during a search of one of the defendant's residences.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Lauren Malan, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Major Crimes Gangs Unit, prosecuted the case.

“This was a gang-motivated attack that could have easily resulted in a loss of life,” Ms. Malan said. “The defendant’s actions demonstrate the extreme danger gang violence poses to our community, and this sentence reflects the seriousness of that conduct and our commitment to holding violent offenders accountable.”

Two of the other defendants involved in the attack previously pled guilty to assault with force likely to produce great bodily injury, conspiracy to commit a crime, and street terrorism. The third was a juvenile who pled guilty to assault with force likely to produce great bodily injury, conspiracy to commit a crime, and participation in a criminal street gang.

Case: 2024022782

Defendant Information:

Sergio Contreras (DOB 01/04/06)
Oxnard

Charges convicted of:

- PC 245(a)(1) – Assault with deadly weapon (knife)
- PC 182(a)(1) – Conspiracy to commit a crime
- PC 186.22(a) – Street terrorism

Special allegations found true:

- PC 12022.7(a) – GBI in commission of felony
- PC 186.22(b)(1)(C) – Violent felony street gang activity
- PC 667S2 – Prior strike 2
- PC 1170(h)(3) – Prior serious or violent felony, prison eligibility
- CRC 4.421(a)(1) – The crime involved great violence
- CRC 4.421(a)(2) – The defendant was armed with and used a weapon
- CRC 4.421(b)(1) – The defendant has engaged in violent conduct
- CRC 4.421(b)(4) – The defendant was on probation

