



ERIK NASARENKO

VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

NEWS RELEASE



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

Approved: SW
Date: June 24, 2026
Release No.: 26-083

Federal Prosecutors Adopt Ventura County Case Involving Hundreds of Pounds of Methamphetamine



VENTURA Calif. – Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that federal prosecutors have assumed prosecution of a Riverside County man previously charged in Ventura County in connection with a large-scale methamphetamine trafficking operation involving hundreds of pounds of narcotics and multiple firearms.

On June 17, 2026, the United States Attorney's Office for the Central District of California obtained a federal indictment charging Sergio Samuel Sanchez (DOB 04/19/89) with federal narcotics and firearms offenses arising from the same conduct alleged in the Ventura County case. On June 22, 2026, the Ventura County District Attorney's Office moved to dismiss the state case in favor of federal prosecution. Sanchez made his first federal court appearance on June 23 for arraignment.

“This case involved an extraordinary quantity of methamphetamine and multiple firearms, posing a significant threat to public safety,” said District Attorney Erik Nasarenko. “Federal prosecution ensures that those who engage in large-scale drug trafficking operations face the substantial penalties available under federal law.”

The case originated from an investigation conducted by the Ventura County Combined Agency Team (VCAT), a multi-agency narcotics task force led by the Ventura County Sheriff's Office. On December 17, 2025, VCAT detectives executed a search warrant at Sanchez's residence in Moreno Valley and searched his vehicle.

During the operation, detectives recovered approximately 344 pounds of methamphetamine packaged in one-pound bags and an additional quantity of methamphetamine stored in a vehicle on the property. Investigators also located a money counter, digital scale, approximately \$3,200 in cash, and multiple firearms, including a privately manufactured "ghost gun," rifles, a shotgun, ammunition magazines, and a loaded handgun carried by Sanchez at the time of his detention.

The federal indictment includes charges related to possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine, possession of firearms in furtherance of drug trafficking, and criminal asset forfeiture. Sanchez faces a mandatory minimum of 15 years prison, with a maximum up to life.