ERIK NASARENKO
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE

Follow us @VenturaCountyDA
DA.VenturaCounty.gov

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

Approved: SW
Date: July 29, 2026
Release No.: 26-098

Felony Charges Filed in Complex Fraud Scam Targeting Elderly

VENTURA Calif. – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today the filing of felony charges against Yongan Ma (DOB 10/18/81), of Rosemead, California. Ma is charged with conspiracy to commit grand theft, conspiracy to commit elder fraud, and grand theft from an elder or dependent adult for his alleged role in an elder fraud scheme against a Thousand Oaks victim.

On April 2, 2026, a Ventura County senior citizen was deleting spam emails on her home computer when she clicked on a link that immediately caused a message to appear. The message instructed her not to shut off her computer and to immediately call a phone number displayed on the screen.

The victim called the number and spoke with an unidentified person who claimed her computer was infected with malware and transferred her to someone posing as an officer with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). The caller falsely told the victim she was a suspect in a money laundering investigation and needed to immediately withdraw money from her bank accounts and provide receipts to prove the funds belonged to her. The victim was also falsely told the U.S. Treasury Department was involved and would freeze her bank accounts if she did not comply.

While remaining on the phone with the victim, the scammer instructed her to visit multiple banks and withdraw $15,000 in cash. During the drive, the scammer claimed that "two people were watching her home." The victim ultimately withdrew $14,000 in cash and returned home, where she was told to package the money and wait for someone named "Lisa" to arrive. The scammer said "Lisa" would provide a password, and only after hearing the correct password should the victim hand over the cash.

At approximately 3:00 p.m. on April 2, 2026, the victim met with an unidentified woman at her home and turned over $14,000 in cash.

The following day, the victim realized she had likely been scammed and told a family member, who contacted law enforcement.

Detectives with the Ventura County Sheriff's Office determined that Ma allegedly drove an unidentified female courier to the victim's home on April 2, 2026. According to investigators, Ma dropped off the female suspect, who provided the agreed-upon password before collecting the $14,000 in cash.

Ma is accused of knowingly driving the courier to the victim's home for the purpose of carrying out the fraud and personally benefiting from his role in the scheme. Ventura County Sheriff's detectives arrested Ma on July 22, 2026, in Pasadena.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Dominic Kardum, a member of the District Attorney’s Office Fraud and Technology Crimes Unit, is prosecuting the case.

Ma made his first court appearance on July 24, 2026, where he pleaded not guilty to all charges. An Early Disposition Conference is scheduled for August 4, 2026, at 1:30 p.m. in courtroom 12 of the Ventura County Superior Court. The court released Ma on his own recognizance, over the objection of the prosecutor.

Anyone who believes they or a loved one has been the victim of a similar scam is encouraged to contact District Attorney Investigator Eric Jensen at (805) 662-1750.

The District Attorney's Office urges all Ventura County residents, especially seniors, to be on the lookout for these common scam warning signs:

- **Urgency:** "You must act right now!"
- **Secrecy:** "Don't tell anyone!"
- **Fear:** Threats that you will be arrested, sued, or lose your money if you do not comply.
- **Unusual payment methods:** Requests for gift cards, cryptocurrency, gold, wire transfers, or cash pickups.
- **Isolation:** Instructions not to contact your bank, family members, or law enforcement.

Case: 2026019203
Defendant Information:
Yongan Ma (DOB 10/18/81)
Rosemead, CA

Charges:

- PC 182(a)(1) – Conspire to commit grand theft
- PC 182(a)(1) – Conspire to commit theft from elder or dependent adult
- PC 368(d) – Theft from elder or dependent adult

Special Allegations:

- CRC 4.421(a)(3) – Victim was particularly vulnerable
- CRC 4.421(a)(8) – Crime indicates planning, sophistication, and professionalism