



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

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Yoakum Sentenced to 46 years for Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence

VENTURA Calif. – Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced that Jalen Amir Yoakum (DOB 08/07/00), of Lancaster, has been sentenced to 46 years in state prison for trafficking, exploiting, and abusing a young woman over several months. Yoakum was previously convicted by a jury on June 29, 2026, of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, pimping, pandering by encouragement, corporal injury to a cohabitant, and dissuading a witness by force or threat. Several special allegations and aggravating factors were also found true, including that Yoakum has a prior strike conviction, engaged in violent conduct, targeted a particularly vulnerable victim and involved another person in the commission of the crimes.



Jalen Amir Yoakum sits in courtroom 25 during his sentencing hearing.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Rikole Kelly, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Domestic Violence Unit, prosecuted the case.

"This sentence delivers justice not only for the victim, whose courage exposed the defendant's exploitation and abuse, but also for every person harmed by his violence," Ms. Kelly said. "The People are grateful to the Court for recognizing the seriousness of this conduct, the full scope of the danger the defendant has posed, and the need to protect the community from further harm."

Yoakum met the victim through Instagram in July 2024, and the two began dating before eventually living together. The victim testified that after initially appearing caring, Yoakum became increasingly controlling and physically abusive, repeatedly assaulting and strangling her while isolating her from family and friends. He then coerced her into commercial sex work through threats and violence. Yoakum created online advertisements, arranged appointments, controlled the services she performed, and took nearly all the money she earned.

Yoakum assaulted the victim one final time in January 2025 before dropping her off at an appointment in Camarillo. He drove away in her vehicle and was later arrested following a high-speed pursuit. During the investigation, the victim disclosed the abuse, and search warrants uncovered digital evidence corroborating the trafficking operation and Yoakum's control over her.

Yoakum faces separate charges in another Ventura County case stemming from the January 24, 2025, high-speed pursuit, which ended in a violent collision that seriously injured another driver. That case is scheduled for trial in August 2026.

Case: 2025002312

Defendant Information:

Jalen Amir Yoakum (DOB 08/07/00)
Lancaster

Charges convicted of:

- PC 236.1(b) – Human trafficking sexual exploitation
- PC 266h(a) – Pimping
- PC 266i(a)(2) – Pandering by encouraging
- PC 273.5(a) – Corporal injury to spouse/cohabitant
- PC 136.1(c)(1) – Dissuading a witness by force or threat

Special allegations found true:

- PC 1170(h)(3) – Prior serious or violent felony
- PC 12022.1(b) – Commission of a felony after release on bail or own recognizance
- PC 667S2 – Prior strike
- CRC 4.421(b)(2) – The defendant's prior convictions are numerous or of increasing seriousness
- CRC 4.421(a)(3) – Victim was vulnerable
- CRC 4.421(a)(8) – The manner in which the crime was carried out indicates planning, sophistication, and professionalism
- CRC 4.421(a)(4) – The defendant induced another to participate
- CRC 4.421(b)(1) – Defendant has engaged in violent conduct