


**GREGORY D. TOTTEN**  
**District Attorney**

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Deputy Sheriff Charged with Sexual Misconduct**

*VENTURA, California* – District Attorney Gregory D. Totten announced today the filing of two misdemeanor charges against Ventura County Sheriff's Deputy Leonard Herrera Lopez (DOB 8/6/71). Lopez is charged with engaging in sexual activity with a female inmate at the Ventura County jail, a violation of Penal Code section 289.6(a)(2). He is also charged with entering the cell of the same female inmate without another employee present, in violation of Penal Code section 4021(b). Both state law and Ventura County Sheriff's Policy prohibit custodial staff from entering the cells of opposite sex inmates unless accompanied by a same-sex staff member.

The inmate was assigned to a unit under the control and supervision of Lopez. Lopez is alleged to have entered the inmate's cell unaccompanied by other jail staff in the early morning hours of September 6, 2019.

Once Lopez was inside the inmate's cell, he is further alleged to have engaged in sexual conduct with her. The inmate later reported the conduct to other jail staff. The Ventura County Sheriff's Major Crimes Bureau immediately launched a comprehensive investigation. Under state law, inmates cannot provide legal consent to engage in sexual activity with custodial staff.

Lopez is scheduled to be arraigned on September 3, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 11 of the Ventura County Superior Court. Lopez faces a maximum possible sentence of 365 days in jail.

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The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and other professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.

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