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Defunct Local Cannabis Business Resolves Civil Enforcement Case

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Green Bee Collective, Inc. (Green Bee), of Ventura, was ordered to pay \$75,000 in civil penalties and restitution to the District Attorney’s Office and the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) as part of a civil settlement. The case alleged Green Bee engaged in unfair business practices including false advertising of licensing status, not obtaining proper licenses, and not meeting obligations under the California Revenue and Taxation code.

Green Bee was an unlicensed commercial cannabis business from 2014 to 2019. During this time, Chief Officer Darius Bryan Behamata and Manager Samantha Paige Harpoff-Alverson, also named defendants in the case, operated Green Bee. This unlicensed marijuana business sold and delivered cannabis to county residents through: www.greenbeecollective.net. Customers purchased cannabis through the website, paid the sales price and associated taxes, then had their cannabis delivered by Green Bee employees.

Green Bee’s website claimed the business followed, “all local and state laws, Proposition 64, and Senate Bill”. Contrary to this claim, the City of Ventura did not allow any cannabis businesses to operate within city limits prior to February 24, 2021. Furthermore, the investigation in this case revealed Green Bee failed to pay approximately \$21,000 in sales tax to the state. As a result, this settlement prohibits Green Bee from operating an unlicensed cannabis business in the future. The business is further prohibited from engaging in false advertising or violations of the Revenue and Taxation Code sections 34011 and 7152.

This settlement is the result of a joint investigation by the CDTFA, Department of Consumer Affairs Cannabis Enforcement Unit, the Ventura Police Department, and the District Attorney's Office Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit.

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