



ERIK NASARENKO District Attorney

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Approved: LOL
Date: Friday, February 11, 2022
Release No.: 22-012

Camarillo Man Pays Over \$1.3 million in Restitution and is Jailed for SNAP Fraud

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Jose Refugio Carbajal (DOB 11/25/66), of Camarillo, was sentenced to three years county jail. He will serve one year in custody and two years on mandatory supervision. Carbajal previously paid \$1,390,985 in full restitution to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) when he pled guilty to 10 felonies including public benefits fraud, identity theft, money laundering, and conspiracy.

Carbajal played a lead role in a scheme to fraudulently accept more than \$3.8 million in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits from the USDA. SNAP provides monthly food benefits to low-income individuals and families. Carbajal was the CEO of the corporation that owned Four Way Meat Market and Carniceria 4 Caminos Market, both in Oxnard. In June 2016, the USDA suspended Carbajal's right to accept SNAP benefits at both locations because he had overcharged the government for items he sold to benefit recipients. After the suspension took effect, Carbajal and his wife, Adelina Carbajal (DOB 03/01/65), of Camarillo, continued to work at both markets and accept SNAP benefits. In August 2019, the District Attorney's Office Government Fraud Unit executed search warrants in this case and seized \$242,000 in cash. Evidence obtained during the search warrants proved Carbajal also conspired with Karla Orellana (DOB 09/19/78), of Sun Valley, and Antonia Penaloza-Penaloza (DOB 06/13/65), of Panorama City, to reconfigure the point-of-sale devices at both markets allowing each location to accept SNAP benefits without detection.

Adelina Carbajal pled guilty to multiple felonies and is scheduled to be sentenced on February 25, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 23 of the Ventura County Superior Court. Karla Orellana and Antonia Penaloza-Penaloza were convicted of misdemeanors and ordered to complete 150 hours of community service and placed on probation for one year. This case was prosecuted by the District Attorney's Office

Fraud and Technology Crimes Unit, and investigated by the District Attorney's Office Government Fraud Unit, the USDA Office of the Inspector General and the Southern California High Tech Task Force.

Anyone with knowledge of SNAP benefits fraud is encouraged to report it to the District Attorney's Welfare Fraud Hotline at (805) 477-1605.

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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 290 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.