



**ERIK NASARENKO**  
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
**NEWS RELEASE**



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## Newbury Park Man Sentenced for Cashing Fraudulent Checks

VENTURA, Calif. – The Ventura County District Attorney's Office announced today that Rene Francisco Montes (DOB 06/23/89), of Newbury Park, was sentenced on September 5, 2024, to six years state prison for cashing fraudulent checks. Montes was previously found guilty by a jury on August 5, 2024, of three felony counts of unauthorized use of personal identifying information of another. Before being sentenced, Montes also admitted several special allegations related to being on parole at the time he committed the crimes, and for strike priors.

Deputy District Attorney Celeste Sanchez, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office General Trials Unit, prosecuted the case.

"The defendant's actions were part of a calculated scheme to steal directly from the victim's bank account," Ms. Sanchez said. "Today's sentence sends a clear message that such criminal behavior will not be tolerated, especially when committed against the elderly. I want to thank the deputies, bank tellers, and jurors who assisted in obtaining justice for the victim in this case."

The victim's checkbooks were previously stolen in a home burglary in Bakersfield.

Montes wrote himself two checks for \$825 each. Both were cashed at a check-cashing business in Thousand Oaks, on September 23, 2023, and on September 25, 2023. Montes then tried to cash a third fraudulent check at a Thousand Oaks bank, on September 28, 2023. By that point, the victim's accounts were held for fraudulent activity and deputies with Ventura County Sheriff's Office were called. Montes left the bank before the deputies arrived. Surveillance video showed Montes at both locations cashing and attempting to cash checks. Deputies were able to identify Montes and discovered he was on parole. He was arrested on October 10, 2023.

In addition to the prison sentence, Montez was ordered to pay \$825 in restitution to the victim.

**Case: 2023027068**

**Defendant Information:**

Rene Francisco Montes (DOB 06/23/89)

**Charges found guilty of:**

- (3 counts) PC 530.5(a) – Unauthorized use of personal identifying information of another

**Special Allegations Admitted:**

- PC 667S2 – Prior strike
- PC 1170(h)(3) – Prior serious or violent felony
- PC 12022.1(b) – Commission of a felony after release on parole
- PC 4.421(b)(3) – Defendant has served a prior prison term