



ERIK NASARENKO

VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

NEWS RELEASE



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Two Oxnard Defendants Convicted of Carjacking and Robbery

VENTURA, Calif. – Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Leann Guzman (DOB 07/06/98), of Oxnard, and Richard Mendez (DOB 05/31/99), of Oxnard, have been convicted of carjacking and robbery following a violent incident in Oxnard earlier this year. Several special allegations and aggravating factors were also found true, including a strike prior.

In a rarely used courtroom procedure, the co-defendant case was tried using two separate juries, one for each defendant, in the same courtroom. This let witnesses testify just once in front of both juries, while still protecting each defendant's rights by making sure certain evidence was only seen by the jury allowed to hear it. Both juries found the defendants guilty on all charges.

On the morning of March 20, 2025, the defendants were given a ride when they instructed the driver to stop near a street in Oxnard. Guzman then forcibly removed the keys from the ignition. Mendez pointed an object that appeared to be a firearm at the driver, demanded all of his property, and ordered him out of the vehicle. Guzman warned that Mendez would shoot if the driver didn't comply.

Fearing for his life, the victim exited the vehicle. When he said he would call police, the defendants laughed and showed him they had taken his phone. Guzman then got into the driver's seat and drove away with Mendez in the back seat.

Oxnard police detectives used GPS data from an ankle monitor worn by Mendez, along with DNA and cellphone evidence, to identify and arrest both defendants. Mendez was on active parole at the time of the crime.

Deputy District Attorney Brandon Yeaton, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Court Operations Unit, prosecuted the case.

“These convictions demonstrate the effectiveness of strong investigative work, innovative courtroom procedure, and the use of technology to hold violent offenders accountable,” Mr. Yeaton said. “No one should fear being threatened or robbed while offering a ride.”

Guzman is scheduled to be sentenced on August 22, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 26 of the Ventura County Superior Court. Mendez’s sentencing is set for August 25 at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 26. Guzman faces up to nine years in state prison. Mendez faces up to 23 years in state prison.

Case: 2025007029

Defendant Information:

Richard Mendez (DOB 05/31/99)

Leean Guzman (DOB 07/06/98)

Oxnard

Charges convicted of:

- PC 215(a) – Carjacking
- PC 211 – Second degree robbery

Special allegations found true:

- PC 667S2 – Strike prior
- PC 667(a)(1) – Serious felony prior
- PC 1170(h)(3) – Prior serious or violent felony
- CRC 4.421(b)(2) – The defendants prior convictions are numerous and of increasing seriousness
- CRC 4.421 (b)(3) – The defendant has served prior prison sentence
- CRC 4.421(b)(4) - The defendant was on parole when the crime was committed

