



ERIK NASARENKO

VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

NEWS RELEASE



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Camarillo Man Convicted of Embezzlement from Aviation Business

VENTURA, Calif. – Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that James Matthew Godsey (DOB 03/11/79), of Camarillo, was convicted by a jury of six felony counts of grand theft. The jury also found true all charged special allegations, including that Godsey caused an excessive loss of over \$100,000 and that he took advantage of a position of trust or confidence to commit the crimes.

From 2015 to 2023, Godsey worked as a bookkeeper for Channel Islands Aviation, where he was responsible for processing payroll and handling accounts payable. Between 2017 and 2023, evidence showed that he repeatedly inflated his own pay by adding unauthorized bonuses and extra wages. He also issued himself phony reimbursements for company expenses. Over six years, Godsey stole over \$527,000 from his employer.

For years, the theft remained hidden because company leadership trusted him to perform his duties honestly and did not scrutinize his payroll records. The scheme finally came to light after the company was sold and a new manager conducted an audit, uncovering the embezzlement.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Marc Leventhal, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Special Prosecutions Fraud and Technology Crimes Unit, prosecuted the case.

"Employee embezzlement cases like this one are a reminder that trust without oversight creates opportunity for theft," Mr. Leventhal said. "Employers should protect themselves by conducting regular internal audits and maintaining effective supervision over those who handle payroll and company funds."

Godsey is scheduled to be sentenced on October 21, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. in courtroom 24 of the Ventura County Superior Court. He remains free on \$10,000 bond pending sentencing.

Case: 2024022609

Defendant Information:

James Matthew Godsey (DOB 03/11/79)
Camarillo

Charges convicted of:

- (6 counts) PC 487(a) – Grand theft

Special allegations found true:

- PC 186.11(a)(1) – Excessive loss over \$100,000
- CRC 4.421(a)(8) – The manner in which the crime was carried out indicates planning, sophistication, or professionalism
- CRC 4.421(a)(9) – The crime involved an attempted and actual taking or damage of great monetary value
- CRC 4.421(a)(11) – The defendant took advantage of a position of trust or confidence to commit the offense
- PC 803(c) – Statute of limitations, late discovery

