



ERIK NASARENKO

VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

NEWS RELEASE



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Ventura Man Sentenced for Felony Vandalism & Hate Crime

VENTURA, Calif. – Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that John Williams (DOB 03/04/93), of Ventura, was sentenced on September 17, 2025, to five years four months in state prison for vandalism involving swastikas on public and private property.

Williams previously pled guilty on August 19, 2025, to three felony counts of vandalism for damage exceeding \$400, three felony hate crime counts of placing a terrorizing symbol on private property, two misdemeanor counts of vandalism, and one misdemeanor count of possession of a stun gun by a convicted felon. He also admitted to the special allegations for committing the crimes while on parole and having a prior strike conviction.

“Defacing our community with swastikas is more than vandalism, it is an act meant to intimidate, divide, and instill fear,” said District Attorney Nasarenko. “This sentence delivers accountability to the defendant and affirms that Ventura County will not tolerate hate-driven crimes against our residents and neighborhoods.”

On March 30, 2025, Ventura police officers responded to a report from a business regarding graffiti on their property. A swastika and the words “VC Pride” were tagged on a wall. As officers investigated, they received four additional reports of swastika graffiti found on both public and private properties in Ventura. Williams is seen on surveillance footage at two of the locations around the time the vandalism took place, and the sound of spray paint can be heard on the video before Williams is seen again fleeing the scene.

Officers located Williams and uncovered evidence connecting him to the vandalism. A further review of his social media activity revealed that he had been documenting graffiti at one location and posted images online while implying that someone else was responsible.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Hayley Moyer, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Major Crimes Unit, prosecuted the case.

In a victim impact statement submitted to the court, one of the three victims described the effect of Williams' actions:

"His deliberate choice to plaster Nazi swastikas—symbols of hate, fear, and division—across public and private spaces was not mere vandalism, but an attack on the safety and unity our community strives to maintain. No one should have to live in fear of hate symbols or the hidden danger of someone like John Williams."

Case: 2025007862

Defendant Information:

John Williams (DOB 03/04/93)

Ventura

Charges pled guilty to:

- (3 counts) PC 594(b)(1) – Vandalism over \$400
- (3 counts) PC 11411(c) – Terrorizing symbol on private property
- (2 counts) PC 594(b)(2)(A) – Vandalism not exceeding \$400
- PC 22610(a) – Possession, purchase, use of a stun-gun – person convicted of a felony

Special allegations admitted:

- PC 667S2 – Strike 2
- PC 1170(h)(3) – Prior serious or violent felony, prison eligibility
- CRC 4.421(b)(3) – The defendant has served a prior prison term
- CRC 4.421(b)(3) – The defendant was on parole

