

# Jackie Lacey

District Attorney  
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NEWS RELEASE

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## Suspect in Metro Tunnel Pursuit Charged

A 27-year-old man accused of leading police on a pursuit that ended in a Metro tunnel has been charged, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Rafael Lopez Jr. (dob 7/9/90) of Los Angeles has been charged with six counts in case VA147070: fleeing a pursuing peace officer's motor vehicle while driving recklessly; fleeing a pursuing peace officer's motor vehicle and driving against traffic; driving or taking a vehicle without consent; receiving a stolen vehicle, trailer, construction equipment or vessel; hit-and-run driving resulting in injury to another person; and hit-and-run driving resulting in property damage.

The defendant is scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in Department 5 of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Downey Branch. Prosecutors are asking that bail be set at \$150,000.

Prosecutors said on the evening of Feb. 20, police observed a reported stolen truck near Gage and Salt Lake avenues in Huntington Park.

Officers attempted to pull over the vehicle, however, the truck's driver, later identified as Lopez, allegedly continued driving, prosecutors added. During the police pursuit, Lopez reportedly drove at high speeds, ran through red lights, traveled on the wrong side of the road and hit another vehicle, according to prosecutors.

The defendant then allegedly drove onto the light rail lines of the Metro Gold Line and into an underground tunnel, where he abandoned the vehicle, prosecutors said.

Authorities began searching for Lopez and reportedly found him hiding in a closet inside the tunnel, prosecutors said. The defendant was subsequently taken into custody.

If convicted as charged, Lopez faces a maximum possible sentence of four years and four months in state prison.

The case is being investigated by the Huntington Park Police Department.

## **About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office**

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.