

*Jackie Lacey*  
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NEWS RELEASE

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June 30, 2016

**Driver Pleads to Vehicular Manslaughter  
in Death of Cousin**

A 43-year-old man pleaded no contest today to vehicular manslaughter for the death of his cousin who was killed when the car they were in struck a light pole in Lincoln Heights, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Jose Noe Lugo entered his no contest plea to one count of gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated and was scheduled to be sentenced Aug. 3 when he faces four years in state prison.

Deputy District Attorney Bob Chen prosecuted the case.

On Feb. 22, Lugo drove a car that had exited Interstate 5 when he struck a light pole, killing his cousin, Juan Mendez, who wasn't wearing a seatbelt in the front passenger seat.

Lugo left the crash site but returned and was arrested.

Case BA444374 was investigated by the Los Angeles 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.