

Jackie Lacey
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NEWS RELEASE

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July 30, 2015

Man Charged in Immigration Fraud Case

A man accused of posing as a law enforcement officer and defrauding immigrant families to get their loved ones out of custody pleaded not guilty today to burglary and grand theft charges, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Gregory Chavez (dob 1/22/64) is charged in case BA438365 with 23 counts of grand theft, nine counts of first-degree burglary, four counts of attempted grand theft, two counts of perjury and convicted felon with a firearm, and one count each of second-degree burglary and counterfeit seal.

Bail was set at \$1.2 million and Chavez is scheduled to return to court Aug. 11 for a preliminary hearing setting.

Dating back to September 2010, Chavez falsely promised he could help immigration detainees with their cases. Chavez, an unlicensed private investigator, often allegedly represented himself as a "special agent" who carried a badge and boasted about working with a team of law enforcement officers.

Deputy District Attorney Leonard Torrealba of the Consumer Protection Division said Chavez collected about \$75,000 from 21 immigrant detainees' families but failed to provide any services. None of the detainees were ever released as a result of Chavez's work, Torrealba added.

Chavez was arrested Wednesday at his home in Porter Ranch.

If convicted as charged, Chavez faces up to 32 years in state prison.

The case is being investigated by the District Attorney's Office's Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

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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 seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Last year, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecuted more than 71,000 felony defendants and nearly 112,000 misdemeanor defendants.