

Jackie Lacey

District Attorney
<http://da.lacounty.gov>



NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact:

Sarah Ardalani
Public Information Officer
213-257-2000
SArdalani@da.lacounty.gov
Twitter: @LADAOffice

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Pair Convicted of Failing to Care for Pregnant Dog

A 35-year-old woman and a 54-year-old man each pleaded no contest for failure to care for an animal after authorities discovered a group of neglected animals including a pregnant pitbull mix, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Martha Salmeron and Pedro Espana Cruz gave their plea in case 6CS04300 on Nov. 3 at the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Compton Branch before Judge Karen Ackerson Gauff.

The two defendants were each immediately sentenced to three years of probation and ordered to attend animal cruelty classes. Additionally, they cannot own, possess, reside with, or care for any animal for five years.

Salmeron and Cruz's next court appearance is scheduled for Dec. 5 in Department 5 at the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Compton Branch. The pair will need to show proof of enrollment in animal cruelty classes. Additionally, the defendants will have to address restitution payments that include boarding costs for seven dogs and two birds.

Deputy District Attorney Osman Abbasi, who prosecuted the case, said Salmeron owns two businesses in South Los Angeles. Cruz is her employee. At both locations, Salmeron and Cruz held several dogs and birds, the prosecutor said.

Authorities received an anonymous complaint regarding animal neglect at the business sites. When authorities went to inspect the premises, they found seven dogs and two birds in various stages of neglect, including body sores and malnourishment, according to the prosecutor. One neglected animal was a pitbull mix pregnant with 15 puppies, the prosecutor added.

Following months of investigation, Salmeron and Cruz were charged on Aug. 31.

The case was investigated by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (spcaLA).

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.