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NEWS RELEASE

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**Van Nuys Man Ordered to Stand Trial
for Sexual Assault of Child in Mall**

A 26-year-old Van Nuys man is scheduled to be arraigned today after being ordered to stand trial on charges of sexually assaulting a 5-year-old girl who was lost at a mall, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Julie Kramer said Jorge Enrique Lopez Maza (dob 12/2/90) was held to answer on April 20 for one count each of kidnapping to commit a lewd act on a child and lewd act upon a child.

The felony information in case PA086183 includes allegations that the victim was under the age of 14 and the defendant kidnapped the victim and the movement of the victim substantially increased the risk of harm to the victim.

Arraignment is scheduled today in Department J of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, San Fernando Branch.

According to testimony at the preliminary hearing, on April 21, 2016, the young victim was at the Panorama Mall with her grandmother. The girl became separated from her grandmother and Lopez Maza allegedly approached the girl and convinced her to go with him to find her grandmother, according to witness testimony.

The defendant led the victim outside the mall to an isolated area within the parking lot and sexually assaulted the victim, the prosecutor said. The little girl was able to run away. A good Samaritan heard the victim scream and chased Lopez Maza several blocks to a local market where the defendant was ultimately apprehended by law enforcement, the prosecutor added.

Bail is set at a \$1 million. Lopez Maza faces a possible maximum sentence of 25 years to life in state prison if convicted as charged.

The case remains under investigation by the Los Angeles Police Department, Mission Division.

[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.