

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



NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact:

Ricardo Santiago
Public Information Officer
213-257-2000
RSantiago@da.lacounty.gov
Twitter: @LADAOoffice

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Man Charged With Over a Dozen Car Thefts During COVID-19 Pandemic

A Huntington Park man has been charged in four separate felony cases with stealing more than a dozen cars in Los Angeles and surrounding areas between March and June after getting re-arrested and released, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced today.

Jose Enrique Esquivel aka Jose Esquibel (dob 11/1/95) faces a total of 14 felony counts.

On March 30, Esquivel was arrested for allegedly driving a stolen truck and released per the COVID-19 emergency bail schedule, aimed at reducing the jail population during the pandemic. He was charged in case BA487677 with one count of driving or taking a vehicle without consent.

The defendant was again arrested for either driving or attempting to steal a truck but released on April 28, May 8, twice on May 14, May 20, May 23, May 27, June 6, June 8, June 13 and June 15.

Esquivel is charged in case VA153718 with 11 counts of driving or taking a vehicle without consent and in case BA487691 with one count of second-degree burglary of a vehicle for his second May 14 arrest.

On June 23, Esquivel was arrested for allegedly stealing another truck but held on bail because the emergency bail schedule had ended. The defendant was charged in case BA488174 with one count of driving or taking a vehicle without consent.

The defendant has pleaded not guilty to the charges and bail is set at \$550,000. In case VA153718, he is scheduled to return on July 27 to Department J of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Norwalk Branch.

Esquivel is scheduled to return on August 10 to Department 38 of the Foltz Criminal Justice Center for cases BA487677, BA487691 and BA488174.

The felony complaints include allegations that the defendant committed most of the crimes while out on his own recognizance and he was previously convicted of driving or taking a vehicle without consent twice in 2017 and once in 2018 and 2019.

Deputy District Attorney Alexander Karkanen of the Task Force for Regional Auto Theft said Esquivel faces a possible maximum sentence of 17 years in state prison if convicted as charged.

The cases remain under investigation by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's and the Los Angeles Police departments.

[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.