



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

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**PRESS RELEASE**

7/25/17

**VISALIA MAN SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR DUI MANSLAUGHTER**

On July 21, 2017, in Department 17 of Tulare County Superior Court, South County Justice Center, Judge Michael Sheltzer sentenced Johnny Mendoza, age 27 of Visalia, to 15 years in state prison for DUI manslaughter.

On May 26, 2017, Mendoza pleaded no contest to one count of gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated with a special allegation of causing injury to more than one person and one count of DUI causing injury with a prior DUI conviction, with three special allegations of causing great bodily injury. Mendoza possesses a prior misdemeanor DUI conviction from 2014 in which his BAC was .23%. Mendoza was on probation for that case when this crash occurred. He also failed to attend mandated DUI classes and had not installed an ignition interlock device that had been instructed by the Court.

At approximately 3:30pm on June 12, 2016, the 42-year-old female victim was driving westbound on Highway 65 near Spruce Avenue with 5 passengers. The victim and her 13-year-old daughter were talking and laughing when they saw Mendoza heading towards them in their lane of travel. The victim attempted to swerve her van out of the way but Mendoza crashed into them head on. The driver died shortly after the collision, her 13-year-old daughter sustained a broken arm, her 6-year-old son suffered a severe head laceration, and a 22-year-old passenger sustained a broken neck. The victim's 11-year-old son and 17-year-old daughter were also injured. The investigation revealed that Mendoza's BAC was .09% while also testing positive for methamphetamine.

The case was prosecuted by Supervising Deputy District Attorney Janet Wise and investigated by the California Highway Patrol.

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