



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

PRESS RELEASE

8/29/18

NINE ARRESTED FOR SUSPECTED WELFARE FRAUD

During the week of August 20, 2018, criminal investigators from the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigations served nine felony arrest warrants on suspects wanted for allegedly committing welfare fraud in Tulare County.

The following individuals were arrested and either booked into the Tulare County Sheriff's Pre-Trial Facility or cited and released for a future court appearance:

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| -Maribel Acosta, 38, of Woodlake | -Andrea Jimenez, 44, of Visalia |
| -Armando Diaz, 32, of Visalia | -Katherine Sconiers, 35, of Visalia |
| -Shelbie Williams, 26, of Visalia | -Diego Acuna, 34, of Visalia |
| -Tiffany Randle, 34, of Porterville | -Virginia Meza, 31, of Visalia |
| -Kayla Albright, 27, of Porterville | |

The total amount of alleged fraud in all these cases was \$56,536.00.

It is a felony for an individual to make a false statement or misrepresentation of material facts in order to obtain over \$950 of aid that they were not entitled to receive. Penalties for welfare fraud can be restitution, probation, possible jail or prison, and loss of future benefits. The District Attorney's Bureau of Investigations will continue to diligently investigate all suspected fraud committed against public assistance programs in Tulare County. The Welfare Fraud Unit consists of eight investigators, two investigator aides, an investigations supervisor, and a dedicated welfare fraud prosecutor. In 2017, the Unit identified \$465,483 worth of fraud, filed 70 cases, and investigated 2,270 reports.

If members of the public have information related to suspected fraud, they are encouraged to contact the Tulare County District Attorney's Bureau of Investigations at (559) 636-5410.

*Media inquiries can be directed to the Office of the District Attorney, County of Tulare
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