

naertnahte 2026

Judge sentences convicted OC child rapist to 75 years to life plus 18 years and 8 months

Posted Friday, 17. April 2026

Recorded 09:00 PST on Wednesday, 15. April 2026

Central Justice Center in Santa Ana, California



CRIMINAL INFORMATION

Criminal name	Jason Valentine Esparza	
Booking number	3299856	
Booking date	17. November 2023	
Case number	23WF1194	
Charge date	11. April 2023	
List of charges	20. September 2006	5. ct. felony oral copulation or sexual penetration with child 10 years of younger
	1. September 2016	3. ct. felony contacting a minor with intent to commit specified offence
	7. April 2023	3. ct. felony attempted oral copulation or sexual penetration with child 10 years of younger 2. ct. felony attempted forcible lewd act on a child under 14 years of age
Conviction date	12. November 2025	
Sentencing date	15. April 2025	
Sentencing	Ct. 1: 15 years to life Ct. 2: 15 years to life, served consecutively to ct. 1 Ct. 3: 15 years to life, served consecutively to ct. 1 Ct. 4: 15 years to life, served consecutively to ct. 1 Ct. 5: 15 years to life, served consecutively to ct. 1 Jump to Ct. 13: 9 years Ct. 6: 4 months, served consecutively to ct. 13 Ct. 7: 12 months, served consecutively to ct. 13 Ct. 8: 12 months, served consecutively to ct. 13 Ct. 9: 16 months, served consecutively to ct. 13 Ct. 10: 28 months, served consecutively to ct. 13 Ct. 11: 16 months, served consecutively to ct. 13 Ct. 12: 28 months, served consecutively to ct. 13 INDETERMINATE TOTAL: 75 years to life DETERMINATE TOTAL: 18 years and 8 months served consecutively to indeterminate	

[Click here to watch the video of the sentencing hearing on YouTube.](#)

[Click here to read the online version.](#)

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Convicted 60-year-old child molester and rapist Jason Valentine Esparza appeared before the Hon. Andre Manssourian for his sentencing on Wednesday at the Central Justice Center.

According to the Orange County District Attorney's office, Esparza's sexually criminal activities have spanned several decades. He was convicted on 12. November 2025 for raping minors as young as four years of age, charged on 11. April 2023 for raping a minor on 20. September 2006 and attempting to molest another minor on 1. September 2016. He was also convicted for attempting to rape another minor after Huntington Beach police executed a sting operation on 7. April 2023.



ORANGE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY PRESS RELEASE: *"The Huntington Beach Police Department (HYPD) began investigating Esparza after receiving an anonymous cyber-tip from the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) program in September 2022.*

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During the eight-month investigation, HBPD Crimes Against Persons Unit detectives began communicating with Esparza while posing as an adult female who was babysitting a four-year-old girl. During those communications, Esparza is accused of expressing his desire to perform very specific sexual acts on the child, and he employed tactics that were later learned to be consistent with how a 2006 five-year-old victim was sexually assaulted.

On April 7, 2023, Esparza was told that the child was at a Huntington Beach hotel room and he [was] arrested by undercover detectives when he entered the room. Subsequent investigation located child victims spanning decades in both Los Angeles County and Orange County."

He originally faced a maximum of 16 years and 4 months in prison after being charged for the Huntington Beach sting. Upon further investigation, prosecutors discovered two other minors who had been raped or molested by Esparza, for which he cumulatively faced a maximum sentence of "75 years to life plus an additional 18 years and 8 months in state prison".

At the sentencing hearing, Esparza and his stand-in attorney Mr David W. Paulson (Mr Cameron J Talley had a scheduling conflict) were present with the Deputy District Attorney of the Sexual Assault Unit, Mr Devin S Crowley. Officers and detectives of the Huntington Beach Police Department involved with the case were also present to support the victim (only one of two was present) and her family, who spoke at the start of the hearing.

Mother of JANE DOE: *"It's mind-blowing to look back now and realise that while we were all living so openly and innocently, he was hiding something dark. I never would have imagined he was capable of doing something like this."*

"He groomed my daughter, but he also groomed me. He created an image of himself as a good man, someone who cared about our family, someone safe. He surrounded himself with adult women and even slept with my best friend to reinforce the idea he wasn't interested in children. He was calculated and manipulative in design to lower my guard, and it worked."

"He was the one who manipulated, he was the one who deceived, he is the one who violated the trust."

My daughter has suffered trauma that no child should ever endure ... she will carry this emotional scar for the rest of her life. What he did wasn't a mistake or misunderstanding. It was deliberate, predatory, and deeply damaging."

JANE DOE: *" This man has caused so much confusion, pain and fear as I've grown up. I didn't know at the time, what was happening, or that it was wrong or abnormal for a child to experience."*

"I've jumped into toxic relationship after toxic relationship having the thought that a man is meant to take advantage of you until you can't handle it anymore. I find it hard to trust the majority of the people I meet, or feel like I've made a real connection with anyone."

" He was a family friend, even a boyfriend at some point, and nobody expected to hear that he had done vile things to me."

" And now this is who I am, damaged, used, taken for granted, broken. It's taken many, many conversations with my therapist to come to terms with the new belief that I didn't ever think was an option."

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"All I can pray for is that he can't do this to anyone else, and they don't have to experience the same pain, fear and isolation I have."

Aunt of JANE DOE: *"I want to express the deep pain, anger and lasting harm he has caused, not only to my niece but to my entire family."*

"Once we found out years later, my sister had guilt, which was not her fault, or my niece's fault. How dare you take away the innocence of a child and ruin their trust? How are they supposed to trust anybody in life when someone like you fooled them?"

"The effects of this crime have ripped through all of us and our family (unintelligible) and sense of trust and ability to feel safe have been shattered. This shows a clear pattern of predatory behaviour and complete disregard for the safety and innocence of others. It is devastating to know that this was not an isolated act but a part of something far more destructive."

"And I hope Jason, you realise the hurt and the damaged you caused this family that trusted you, and I hope you have endless sleepless nights."

Crowley requested the maximum 75 years to life plus 18 years and 8 months for the sentencing.

Paulson requested that Hon. Manssourian consider two mitigating factors for Esparza's sentence. The first being a letter from Esparza's mother, expressing support for her son, and the second being Esparza's criminal history, or lack thereof. Esparza himself declined to make any statements.

PAULSON: *"...and within that letter, it is the grief and the emotion that a mother would feel. Parents stand by their children, no matter the circumstances that they face, and this is a letter of support for her son. Mr Esparza is Ms Nelson's son and it is not only reasonable but incumbent on her to express from her heart how she feels about all of this."*

"And the second is the complete lack of any prior criminal arrests or convictions on the part of Mr Esparza. That speaks for the totality of his life. This is a 0 to 100 mph type accusation and crime."

Hon. Manssourian remarked upon the defence Talley, who was not present for the sentencing, provided for Esparza. He calls Talley "the best defence attorney I have encountered in trial", stating that it was a "masterful job in, specifically in cross-examination". Talley had no choice but to "rip the witnesses and victims apart" and mercilessly attack law enforcement because he had nothing to play. The Hon. also congratulated HBPD Det. Joe Kearby for remaining level-headed and dignified while he "took some shots that he didn't deserve at all".

Hon. Manssourian also commended Jane Doe for doing a great job during the trial, naming her as the one hero of this case, and describing her as "strong", "courageous" and "confident". He noted that, considering Talley's defence and how much he tried to damage her, she was able to maintain her credibility and she "always came off as believable". He further comments, "For you to be able to come in and tell the truth and have your truth mean something meant that they had to believe it."

Going back to Jane Doe's statement at the beginning of this hearing, Hon. Manssourian noted that there was one line he took away from it: "... and I don't have to let this experience define me". He commented that if she can be honest at all times with herself and embrace that way of thinking, it will serve her really well and be productive for her.

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Hon. Manssourian describes this case as "really a weird case" and "one of the strangest cases that I've ever experienced" in his 30 years of work. He says sexual assault cases are tragic, but often routine, in which a "creep has access to young girl and does what he does, and here we are". But the part that mind-boggles him is the fact that Esparza was able to manipulate and find so many adult women willing to "engage in the sick, perverted acts that were testified to in this case". Two of the women who had testified against Esparza during the trial had to be advised of their Fifth Amendment rights, and Hon. Manssourian stated that they could have been considered co-conspirators in a different case. While he does find the testimonies of these women credible, he does not doubt that they were interested in Esparza's sexual fantasies.

Hon. Manssourian summarised Esparza's defence at trial as a complete denial of what happened.

Hon. MANSSOURIAN: *"Mr Esparza's defence at trial was basically to deny, to say these things didn't happen, they were mistakes, the women are all lying, Jane Doe's mistaken, I didn't do these things. And, you know, why am I at the hotel in Huntington Beach? It is because I'm here to work on some kind of a sting operation. It's not because I'm interested in a 4-year-old, which of course is my pattern. But I'm here to bust the real perverts in this case."*

He called out Esparza for suddenly "shaking his head side-to-side, as if 'no, no, these things didn't happen", retorting, "Yes, yes, they did happen, make no mistake". He reiterates, "He knows what he did, and he knows that I know what he did".

Hon. MANSSOURIAN: *"I want you [Jane Doe] to know, that I know, that this all happened. It's true. He did this to himself. No question about it. Period. Let him deny all he wants. It doesn't matter. He's going to take all these denials into years worth of appeals, too. But it doesn't matter. We know what happened. I know what happened. And he's going to be sentenced according to what I know happened."*

Under CA PEN § 1203.065a, which prohibits the granting of probation for individuals convicted of specific sex crimes such as rape and oral copulation, Esparza is ineligible for probation. Hon. Manssourian added that "even if he were eligible, this court would of course deny him probation, finding him entirely unsuitable for probation" on the grounds that there were multiple victims involved and the "sheer number of times he committed these acts, in particular, on Jane Doe".

As for the sentencing, Hon. Manssourian acknowledged Esparza's lack of criminal history as Paulson requested, and Esparza's personal circumstances. He also makes it clear that he is aware of the physical abuse and sexual molestation Esparza had gone through during his childhood.

Hon. Manssourian makes a point of Esparza's sexually criminal activities, stating that there was "no end in sight for Mr Esparza". Sexual recidivism rates do decrease with age, a.k.a. "aging out", in certain cases. However, the Hon. emphasises that "his appetite wasn't waning at all", and that "he was still interested in meeting a 4-year-old at that hotel up until the day of his arrest".

He concludes by saying that the mitigating circumstances do not outweigh the aggravating circumstances, and that the aggravating circumstances do outweigh the mitigating circumstances.

Hon. MANSSOURIAN: *"It's not like he did this a number of times, and then stopped, and then decades later, got caught. No. No end in sight. If he was allowed to, he would've continued preying on this community."*

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The sentencing for ct. 1 is 15 years to life in state prison. The sentencings for cts. 1 through 5 are 15 years to life in state prison to be served consecutively to ct. 1. This accumulates to an indeterminate sentencing of 75 years to life. The sentencing for ct. 13 is 9 years. 4 months consecutive to ct. 13 for ct. 6, 12 months each consecutive to ct. 13 for cts. 7 and 8, 16 months each consecutive to ct. 13 for cts. 9 and 11, and 28 months each consecutive to ct. 13 for cts 10 and 12. This accumulates to a determinate sentencing of 18 years and 8 months. The total sentencing handed down by Hon. Manssourian is the maximum 75 years to life plus 18 years and 8 months in state prison. Esparza's fines and fees were suspended. Restitution, on the other hand, to Jane Doe, was ordered and the amount will be determined by the probation department.

A protective order was also issued to Jane Doe and Jane Doe 2 (who was not present at the hearing), which demands that he not contact, harass, strike, threaten or assault either of them and that he stay at least 100 yards from their homes, job/workplace, vehicles and themselves.

Under CA PEN § 296, Esparza must submit a sample of his DNA. Under CA PEN § 290, Esparza is required to register with local law enforcement as a sex offender for the rest of his life.

Hon. Manssourian thanked everybody for being present at the hearing to support this case and Jane Doe, and he thanked the Huntington Beach Police Department for the investigation.

Hon. MANSSOURIAN: *"Mr Esparza, I'm still at a loss. 6 months into digesting this case, maybe less than 6 months, let's call it 5 months. I still don't have the words. But, you earned this sentence, and I wish you good luck, so to speak."*

Thank you for reading and supporting naertnahte.