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NEWS RELEASE
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UPDATE ON 2018 DUI-RELATED CRASH CASE AND CONVICTION

RIVERSIDE – Our office has received numerous inquiries from the public about a 2018 driving under the influence case involving defendant Nelson Clark Sims.

What follows is an update on this case based on publicly available information.

As jury selection was underway for his trial in February 2020, Sims, DOB: 9-6-58, pled guilty to all counts directly to the court – not a plea agreement with our office -- and a Riverside County Superior Court judge sentenced him a month later to five years in state prison.

Sims later filed a motion to withdraw his guilty pleas and on Aug. 7, 2020, a judge denied that motion, upholding the previous guilty pleas and five-year sentence to state prison.

CASE BACKGROUND: This case began on May 13, 2018, when Sims was arrested after a crash on Interstate 215 in Murrieta. The vehicle Sims was driving was driving at an unsafe speed and rear-ended a slower moving vehicle, causing the victims' vehicle to hit the center median and overturn. The crash caused great bodily injury to a passenger in the victim vehicle, including multiple back fractures and a heart contusion. The driver of the victim vehicle was also injured.

Forensic testing of Sims' blood revealed a blood alcohol content of 0.14 percent, nearly twice the legal limit, as well as the presence of marijuana.

The DA's Office filed multiple felony DUI-related charges in case SWF1800428. At the time of the DUI crash in Murrieta, Sims was on probation for a DUI-related conviction in San Diego County.

During the early stages of the prosecution in the Riverside County case, Sims was released from custody after posting bail. As part of that release, he was required to wear an alcohol ankle monitor.

On three separate dates in December 2019 and January 2020, the monitoring service reported to the court that Sims had been consuming alcohol. On Jan. 24, 2020, the court ordered that Sims be taken back into custody based on those violations.

Prior to his trial date and subsequent guilty plea to the court, Sims was repeatedly considered for alternative dispositions in both the Veteran's Court and Mental Health Court programs. However, each time, it was determined by those programs that he was not eligible for either.

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