

July 12, 2022  
For Immediate Release

Contact: [Steve Walker](#) (619) 843-7977  
[Tanva Sierra](#) (619) 531-3315  
*En Español* [Barbara Medina](#) (619) 531-3305

## Habitual Offender Who Took Advantage of Deficiencies in the Law Sentenced

### *Craig Blas Has Been Arrested and Released 12 Times in Two Years*

San Diego County District Attorney Summer Stephan announced today that 32-year-old defendant Craig Blas, a repeat criminal offender, has been sentenced to seven years in prison after pleading guilty to a number of felony counts including possession of fentanyl for sale with an allegation of being personally armed with a firearm; possession of methamphetamine for sale with an allegation of being personally armed with a firearm; possession of a firearm by possessor of controlled substance; possession of a firearm by a felon; person prohibited from owning or possessing ammunition and resisting an officer.

In the period of two years, Blas has been arrested and released 12 times for a range of criminal conduct, including possession with intent to sell fentanyl, possession of a firearm by a felon and evading an officer with reckless driving.

Recent changes in the law, including Propositions 47 and 57, which reduced certain crimes from felonies to misdemeanors and awarded increased custody credits and/or early release for non-violent crimes, has resulted in some defendants serving less time in custody than they would have otherwise served. In addition, the emergency bail schedule instituted during the COVID-19 state-declared emergency, which was designed to minimize the number of people in custody, had the similar result of allowing some offenders to remain out of custody while their cases awaited final disposition. The emergency bail schedule is no longer in effect thus allowing habitual offenders like Blas to remain in custody.

“The time has run out on this habitual criminal who took advantage of weakened laws and emergency orders to continue to commit crimes and harm his community,” DA Stephan said. “That is why he stands convicted of every charge and the Judge is appropriately sentencing him to prison. We need to continue to fight against the loopholes and deficiencies in the law that are being used by repeat offenders to their own advantage.”

On May 7, Escondido Police officers were patrolling a high crime area when they saw Craig Blas and recognized him as having an active warrant. The defendant attempted to run from officers, but they were able to apprehend him as he fled. Officers found a 9 mm magazine

sticking out of his back pocket, three fentanyl pills, a pistol red dot optic aiming device and \$736 cash. Officers saw the defendant throw an item in the driver's seat of the car with which they had seen him walking around. Upon looking, they discovered on the driver seat a fanny pack containing a loaded ghost handgun, 36 grams of methamphetamine and 235 M30 fentanyl pills. A loaded 9mm magazine with eight 9 mm rounds were on the floorboard next to the gun. In the trunk were drug paraphernalia and another 3.6 grams of fentanyl.

# # #

**About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office**

*The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.*