

Defendant Convicted of Vehicular Manslaughter w/Gross Negligence, Aggravating Factors



Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

Semper Justitia

DATE: February 25, 2022

CASE: Charles Howell (Case #20FE020091)

PROSECUTOR: Deputy District Attorney Gregory Hayes, Career Criminal Prosecution Unit

Charles Howell was convicted by a jury of vehicular manslaughter with gross negligence. The jury found true aggravating factors that the passenger in the victim's vehicle was injured and that Howell engaged in violent conduct that indicates a serious danger to society; has prior convictions that are numerous or of increasing seriousness; has served a prior term in prison or county jail; and was currently on probation, mandatory supervision, post-release community supervision, or parole when the crime was committed with prior unsatisfactory performance under supervision. Howell's two prior strike convictions for robbery at an ATM and a prior strike conviction for maliciously preventing or dissuading a witness were also found true.

On December 17, 2020, Howell was driving and approached a red light at the intersection of 65th Avenue and Fruitridge Road. Other cars were stopped at the red light and there was heavy cross traffic on Fruitridge. Howell split lanes and went between the cars waiting at the red light on 65th. He continued to travel through the intersection at approximately 60 mph. Santiago Diaz was lawfully crossing the intersection when Howell broadsided

Diaz's car, killing Diaz and injuring his passenger.

Howell faces a maximum sentence of 40 years to life in prison. Sentencing is set for April 22, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. in Department 16 before the Honorable Delbert Oros.

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