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ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
TODD SPITZER

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PRESS RELEASE

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Former Fountain Valley Police Officer Charged with Stealing Thousands of Dollars in Court Pay for Traffic Court Appearances He Never Made
27 traffic court cases were dismissed after officer was a no-show at court hearings.

SANTA ANA, Calif. – A former Fountain Valley police officer has been charged with felony grand theft after he submitted timecards claiming he appeared in traffic court when in fact he was a no-show, and 27 different cases had to be dismissed because he failed to appear.

Stuart Robert Chase, 50, of Corona, has been charged with one felony count of grand theft and one felony count of filing a false claim to a government entity. He faces a maximum sentence of three years in state prison.

The Fountain Valley Police Department initiated an internal affairs investigation after finding irregularities on Chase's timecard.

The internal affairs review found that between August 4, 2021, and November 1, 2023, Chase was paid a total of \$2,590.93 in overtime and comp time for 12 different court dates that he reported to his department he attended but was recorded as "not present" by the court. In addition to the 12 court dates on which he failed to appear, Chase also failed to appear in traffic court 24 times while on duty during his regularly assigned shift.

Chase has since resigned from the Fountain Valley Police Department and paid the money back in its entirety.

"Serving the public is a solemn responsibility and when a member of law enforcement willfully disregards his sworn duty to uphold the law and fulfill his obligations as a peace officer, it tarnishes the reputation of every hardworking man and woman who wear the badge," said Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer.

Chase's actions were reported to Peace Officers Standards and Training, and his certification review is pending.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Rick Majchrzak of the Special Prosecutions Unit is prosecuting this case.

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