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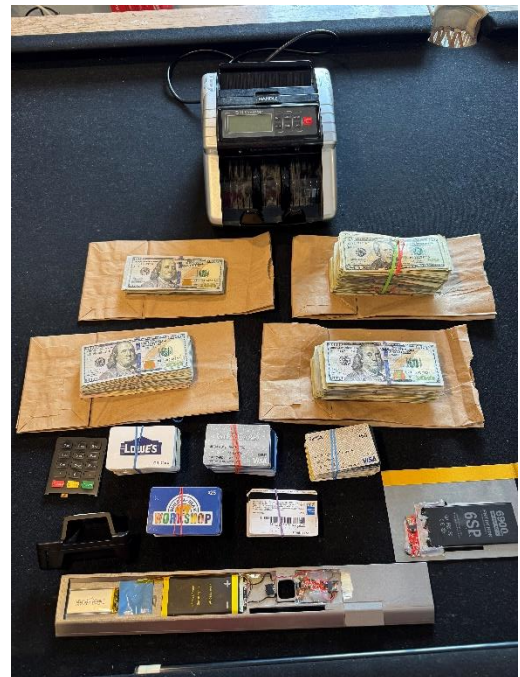
Three Arrested in Northridge for EBT Fraud and Conspiracy Charges Tied to Kern County

(Bakersfield) – Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced a significant arrest made by District Attorney investigators and partnering agencies.

On April 10, 2025, Kern County District Attorney's Office Investigators, with assistance from Investigators from the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office, California Department of Social Services Investigations Branch, and the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, served a search warrant at the 8300 block of White Oak Avenue in Northridge. The Kern County District Attorney's Office was investigating large-scale Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card fraud in Kern County.

While searching the residence, Investigators found evidence of an ongoing conspiracy to commit EBT fraud. Card skimming and pinhole camera components, card readers, cloned access cards, and over \$40,000.00 in US currency were seized.

Norbert Karaba (34), Nicolae Bud (51), and Giorgio Marcelo (29) of Northridge were arrested on numerous fraud and conspiracy charges and booked into the Kern County Jail.



Norbert Karaba has a current pending case in Kern County (BF202622A) relating to EBT fraud. Karaba's charges stem from an arrest made by the District Attorney's Office on December 2, 2024, after investigators monitored EBT activity in the South Bakersfield area and identified Karaba as the subject withdrawing funds from the ATM. Investigators seized 78 cloned EBT cards and cash totaling \$63,952. Prior to today's arrest, Karaba was out of custody on a \$200,000 bail.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented; “I cannot stress this enough - if you are an individual exploiting vulnerable families, know that this office has intensified its efforts to address these crimes. Such actions are not only damaging our community, but are also harming innocent victims. We are fully committed to combatting EBT fraud in Kern County, and we are all hands-on deck to put an end to it.”

As a reminder to the community, the Kern County Department of Human Services suggests the following precautions to keep your card safe:

- Report a theft to DHS [in person](#), online through users’ [BenefitsCal.com](#) account, or through the EBT helpline at 877-328-9677. There are several factors that are taken into consideration, based on the regulations regarding whether the replacement can be made, but if eligible, a replacement card will be issued to the customer within 10 business days. DHS is working through every request as expeditiously as possible.
- Download and use the ebtEDGE Mobile Application as a method to better manage benefits and reset your pin number frequently.