



COUNTY OF FRESNO

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Fresno County District Attorney's Office Unable to File Sexual Assault Charges Against Monsignor Craig Harrison

Following a thorough investigation into alleged sexual assault offenses committed by Monsignor Craig Harrison, the Fresno County District Attorney's Office has concluded that the applicable statute of limitations bars the filing of criminal charges.

While the allegations made against Monsignor Harrison appear credible to investigators, they reportedly occurred in the 1990's. These allegations were not reported to law enforcement until April of 2019. Delayed reporting is not uncommon in sexual assault cases, but it can limit the ability to criminally charge and prosecute offenders.

In reviewing cases for the filing of criminal charges, prosecutors are required to follow certain ethical considerations. We may only file charges if: (1) there has been a complete investigation and thorough consideration of all pertinent data, (2) there is legally sufficient, admissible evidence of a corpus delicti, (3) there is legally sufficient, admissible evidence of the accused's identity as the perpetrator of the crime, and (4) the prosecutor has considered the probability of conviction by an objective factfinder hearing the admissible evidence. Even in cases where the allegations meet the stated filing criteria, prosecutors cannot file charges if the statute of limitations has expired.

The District Attorney's decision is based upon the statute of limitations that applies to criminal cases. A different statute of limitations may apply to civil actions. Additionally, our decision pertains only to the Fresno County allegations that were reported and investigated.

The District Attorney's Office remains committed to prosecuting all sexual assault offenses, especially those directed at our most vulnerable citizens and where perpetrators abuse their positions of trust. However, we are prevented from proceeding with criminal prosecutions when doing so is prohibited by the statute of limitations.

The Fresno County District Attorney's Office will have no further comment on this matter.

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