



City of Coalinga

Police Department

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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

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Two Gang Members Arrested On Gun Related Sales Charges

On Tuesday, February 3, 2026, at about 2:45pm, Coalinga Police Department, in partnership with the Multi-Agency Gang Enforcement Consortium (MAGEC), participated in an operation involving gang members from the City of Avenal. Coalinga Police Department authored two search warrants for two separate addresses in the City of Avenal, and both were served at the two locations, one in the 800 block of S. Corcoran Street and 1200 block of S. 7th Street.

Upon arrival at 1200 block of S. 7th Street, officers contacted an individual, identified as Benecio Sanchez Jr., a known Hanford Norteno gang member who was being investigated for illegal sales of firearms. As Benecio saw officers he fled on foot through the apartment complex and was quickly taken into custody by deputies and officers. As Benecio was running, he discarded a backpack onto a roof of a nearby building that had an illegal privately manufactured (ghost) gun inside.

Benecio is being charged with the following charges:

PC 29800 – Convicted felon in possession of firearm

PC 30305 – Felon in possession of ammunition

PC 25850 (a) – Carry loaded firearm on person

PC 25850 (c) (3) – Carry loaded firearm in public while participating in street gang

PC 25850 (c) (6) – Carry loaded firearm in public or vehicle when you are not the registered owner
PC 29180 (c) – Possession of a un serialized firearm
PC 32310 – Possession of large capacity magazine
PC 148(A) (1) – Willfully resist or delay public officer
PC 30605 – Possess an illegal assault weapon
PC 182 – Criminal Conspiracy
PC 186.22 – Participate in street gang

Officers and deputies then responded to 800 block of S. Corcoran Street and began a call out for the occupants who were residing at the address. All subjects came out of the residence including the suspect, Antonio Armaro, a known Avenal Norteno gang member. Antonio was taken into custody on the related illegal gun sale charges without incident.

Antonio is being charged with the following charges.

PC 182 – Criminal Conspiracy
PC 186.22 – Participate in street gang

Both suspects were transported back to the Coalinga Police Department for booking. They were later transported to Kings County Jail on all charges.

