

Marion County District Attorney's Office Announces Drunk Driver Sentenced in the Deaths of Four People

On January 11, 2023, Marion County Circuit Court Judge Lindsey R. Partridge sentenced 25 year old Enrique Rodriguez Jr. to 310 months^[1] in prison for his role in the fatal DUII incident on March 27, 2022, that killed four people and seriously injured two more.

In the early morning hours of March 27, 2022, Rodriguez, whose driver's license was suspended at the time, was speeding in his Nissan 300ZX when he crashed into a homeless encampment at the Front Street NE intersection in downtown Salem. Those killed were 24 year old Jowand Beck, 21 year old Luke Kagey, 54 year old Joseph Posada, and 29 year old Rochelle Zamacona. 43 year old Derrick Hart, and 18 year old Savannah Miller survived the incident but were both seriously injured. When tested, Rodriguez's blood alcohol content was .224%.^[2]

Rodriguez previously pled guilty on November 2, 2022 to all 11 charges of his indictment: Two Counts of Manslaughter in the First Degree, Two Counts of Assault in the Second Degree, DUII, Reckless Driving, and Three Counts of Recklessly Endangering Another Person. Rodriguez had no prior criminal convictions.^[3]

Marion County District Attorney Paige Clarkson said, "One person and one person *alone* stands responsible for the senseless and avoidable deaths of these vulnerable members of our community, and that is Enrique Rodriguez. This defendant made the tragic and deadly decision to drive drunk. Four people paid the ultimate price for his selfish behavior. And now this defendant must face the consequences of those choices. The families of those he killed and those he injured will live with this forever."

Salem Police Chief Trevor Womack said, "While today's sentence does not erase this tragic event, my hope is that the families of those killed and the survivors can move forward knowing the man responsible has been held accountable. I am grateful for the swift and professional actions taken by my officers and the firefighters and paramedics to assist the injured at this catastrophic scene. I am proud of the work done by our Traffic Team to investigate and build a case to present to the district attorney, ultimately bringing justice to the victims."

Rodriguez has been held in the Marion County Jail since the incident and will now be transferred to the Oregon Department of Corrections to serve his sentence.

^[1] 25.8 years

[2] In Oregon, one is presumed to be intoxicated if their blood alcohol content is .08% or above. This defendant's blood alcohol content was nearly three times that presumption. He additionally had the presence of marijuana in his system at the time of the crash.

[3] According to DMV records, Rodriguez has multiple violation convictions including: Careless Driving, Driving Uninsured, Driving While Suspended and Speeding.