



# San Diego County SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

## NEWS RELEASE INFORMATION SHEET

Subject: Attempted Kidnapping Arrest - North County  
Date of Release: September 3, 2020  
Time of Release: 2:30 p.m.  
Media Contact: Detective Jonathan Arevalo  
Email Address of Contact: Jonathan.Arevalo@sdsheriff.org  
Telephone Number of Contact: (760) 751-4400  
Provider of Information (if different): N/A

### SYNOPSIS:

A man wanted on suspicion of trying to kidnap young girls in Los Angeles and Escondido is now in custody after being arrested by a Valley Center Sheriff's Substation Deputy in the North County.

24-year-old Elijah Lopez is wanted on suspicion of following and forcibly grabbing a six-year-old girl who was walking with her blind father in Huntington Park, south of downtown Los Angeles, on Tuesday, September 1st. Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) issued a wanted flyer which reached the Valley Center Sheriff's Substation.

On September 2nd, Deputy Brian Umali was driving back to Valley Center after responding to a service call at Palomar Medical Center Escondido when he saw a man standing at the intersection of Highway 78 and Broadway. The man matched the description of the suspect in the wanted flyer from Los Angeles. Deputy Umali detained the man, who was wearing the same clothing in the LAPD crime alert. While detaining the man, an observer flagged down Deputy Umali claiming the same man had been following a juvenile. The victim ran to a nearby grocery store for help.

This arrest shows how deputies are always diligent in protecting our communities, no matter where they are at. This also highlights the cooperation amongst law enforcement agencies, regardless of jurisdiction.

Elijah Lopez is now booked at a Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Jail. LAPD and Escondido Police are continuing their investigations. Media inquiries should be directed to those agencies.