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LA DA Chief of Staff Joseph Iniguez with DA George Gascon (Photo: Joseph Iniguez for DA)

EXCLUSIVE: George Gascon's Chief of Staff Criminal Investigation Target

Joseph Iniguez has not been a stranger to controversy since being installed by Gascon in his post

By [Thomas Buckley](#), January 1, 2023 8:57 am

Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascon's chief of staff, Joseph Iniguez, who made headlines for allegedly drunkenly threatening and berating an Azusa police officer, is under investigation by the California Department of Justice over the incident, possibly for threatening to illegally snuff out the career of the officer.



Iniguez claims the officer violated his First Amendment rights by trying to impede him as he videoed the encounter) on Nov. 22, 2022, Iniguez's and the city's attorneys jointly filed to continue a stay on the case "pending the resolution of the Department of Justice's criminal investigation of the plaintiff."

Iniguez captured the entire incident on video, a video he says shows him acting in a proper and professional manner before being wrongly arrested for public intoxication, a direct contradiction of the officer's statements that he was slurring, using obscenities, and threatening him.

The incident apparently unfolded as follows: after he and his soon-to-be husband were pulled over by an Azusa officer for making an improper U-turn on December, 11, 2021, Iniguez reportedly became belligerent. After the officer approached the car he caught a strong aroma of alcohol. Iniguez, the passenger in the car, said he had been drinking and the odor was his.

Iniguez was arrested for public intoxication, though his fiancé – after it was determined he was below the legal blood-alcohol limit – was not charged in relation to the incident.

Iniguez has so far declined to release the video, the making of which, he claims, was the real reason he was arrested (hence the First Amendment violation allegation at the heart of his lawsuit).

The November filing continues, stating the DOJ criminal probe is "from the same set of facts" as Iniguez's lawsuit, and the stay is needed to avoid "potential Fifth Amendment issues" – i.e. ensuring Iniguez's right against self-incrimination in the criminal case from anything that may arise from the civil case.

As it relates to the "same set of facts," it is most likely that Iniguez is being investigated for allegedly threatening the officer with placement on the "Brady List."

The Brady List is a list of police officers kept by the DA's office who have been involved in incidents involving untruthfulness, being convicted as a criminal, and other offenses that generally deem them unfit for police duty. Being added to the list can derail an officer's career due to those officers no longer being deemed credible enough to testify in court, etc. The DA's office also, on most occasions, informs the defense attorney in a case that an officer involved in the arrest and/or investigation of the suspect is on the list, giving the defendant a definite advantage going forward.

For Iniguez, his invocation of the Brady List is no idle, drunken "do you know who I am!?" meaningless threat because, as chief of staff, he oversees the list itself.

The first stay in the civil case was ordered in March, 2022, the second in July, both citing the "pending on-going" DOJ investigation.

Though the DOJ investigation is at least nine months old, it does not appear Gascon has taken the typical personnel action of placing any deputy district attorney—let alone his chief of Staff facing a criminal



The stay continues, stating that “no discovery in this case has taken place,” strongly suggesting that Iniguez has not even provided the video to the city of Azusa, the defendants in the civil case, which he at some point must do if his civil case is to go forward. This has led some observers to opine that Iniguez filed the suit purely as a public relations distraction for his arrest and that the video may actually confirm the officer’s account of the evening, including the potentially career-ending threat of being improperly placed on the Brady List.

Attempts to reach Iniguez’s attorney and the DA’s office for comment – in Gascon’s case specifically on why a person under criminal investigation was still his chief of staff – were unsuccessful.

In the past, Gascon has said he has confidence in Iniguez but he has never said whether or not he himself has seen the video in question.

Prior to becoming Gascon’s chief of staff, Iniguez was a low-level deputy district attorney handling relatively minor cases (and not doing too well at that – he reportedly lost two of the four cases he took to trial).

Iniguez failed to capture the attention of the public during his brief run for the office in 2020, but, by pulling out of the race and endorsing Gascon in his effort to unseat then-DA Jackie Lacey he seemed to secure the number two spot in an office in which he had worked for only about six years. The former chief of staff was demoted to make room for Iniguez – she is now suing Gascon for retaliation.

Iniguez has not been a stranger to controversy since being installed by Gascon in his post. In response to a judge refusing to eliminate a strike on a defendant’s record, Iniguez allegedly ordered the deputy district attorney handling the specific case to “paper the judge”; i.e. file a bias complaint against her under oath.

Such orders are illegal and would require a deputy to commit perjury.

By putting such an inexperienced attorney in the chief of staff position, Gascon signaled to the entire community that he was intentionally setting up the DA’s office for – in the traditional sense – failure, which would be in ideological line with both Gascon and Iniguez, said former president of the deputy district attorney’s union Marc Debbaudt.

“If I had the kind of video evidence that Iniguez claims he has, I would have released it the next day to show the world I’m right,” said Debbaudt. “But he’s only an ideological, butt-kissing sycophant.”



1 Mildred K. O'Linn (State Bar No. 159055)
mko@manningllp.com

2 Garros Chan (State Bar No. 320561)
gxc@manningllp.com

3 **MANNING & KASS**
ELLROD, RAMIREZ, TRESTER LLP
 4 801 S. Figueroa St, 15th Floor
 Los Angeles, California 90017-3012
 5 Telephone: (213) 624-6900
 Facsimile: (213) 624-6999

6 Attorneys for Defendants, OFFICER R.
 7 MARTINEZ, an individual and Officer of
 the Azusa Police Department, CITY OF
 8 AZUSA, a public entity

9 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**
 10 **CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA, WESTERN DIVISION**

11
 12 JOSEPH F. INIGUEZ,
 13 Plaintiff,

14 v.

15 OFFICER R. MARTINEZ, an
 individual and Officer of the Azusa
 16 Police Department; CITY OF AZUSA,
 a public entity; and DOES 1 to 20,
 17 Defendants.

Case No. 2:22-cv-00106 MCS (GJSx)
[District Judge: Mark C. Scarsi;
Magistrate: Gail J. Standish]

**PARTIES' STATUS REPORT AND
 JOINT STIPULATION FOR
 FURTHER CONTINUANCE OF
 STAY OF PROCEEDINGS
 PENDING COMPLETION OF
 DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
 INVESTIGATION; PROPOSED
 ORDER**

Complaint Filed: 01/06/22
 FAC Filed: 01/12/22
 Trial Date: N/A

21
 22 **TO THE HONORABLE COURT:**

23 Plaintiff, JOSEPH F. INIGUEZ, ("Plaintiff") and defendants, the CITY OF
 24 AZUSA and OFFICER R. MARTINEZ, ("Defendants") provide the following status
 25 report and hereby stipulate for the purpose of jointly requesting the honorable Court
 26 to continue the currently ordered stay in this case pending the resolution of the
 27 Department of Justice's ("DOJ") criminal investigation of plaintiff.

28 ///

4881-3935-7759.1

PARTIES' STATUS RPT & JT STIP FOR FURTHER CONT. OF STAY PENDING DOJ INV



GOOD CAUSE STATEMENT

1. Plaintiff filed the complaint on January 12, 2022 [Dkt. 10].

2. Defendants filed their answer to plaintiff's operative complaint on February 16, 2022 [Dkt. 11].

3. On February 16, 2022, the Court ordered a Scheduling Conference to take place on April 11, 2022 [Dkt. 13].

4. On March 17, 2022, the parties met and conferred via a telephonic conference to discuss the current status of this matter. Specifically, counsel for both parties discussed a pending criminal investigation by the California Department of Justice ("DOJ") with respect to plaintiff from the same set of facts in this case. Counsel discussed the implications of potential Fifth Amendment issues the criminal investigation of plaintiff would create in relation to this civil matter.

5. On March 28, 2022, the parties submitted a joint stipulation for a stay of civil proceedings until the completion of the DOJ investigation [Dkt. 14].

6. On March 29, 2022, the Court entered an order to stay the civil proceedings in this matter pursuant to the parties' above-mentioned stipulation [Dkt. 16].

7. On July 22, 2022, the parties submitted an additional joint stipulation for a stay of civil proceedings until the completion of the DOJ investigation [Dkt. 17].

8. On July 25, 2022, the Court entered an order to stay the civil proceedings in this matter pursuant to the parties' stipulation [Dkt. 18].

9. On information and belief, the DOJ criminal investigation remains **pending and ongoing.**

10. To date, no discovery in this case has taken place.

11. On information and belief, the factual issues to be decided in the instant civil action arise from the same set of facts that the DOJ is investigating.

12. A court may decide in its discretion to stay civil proceedings when "the interests of justice seem to require such action." *See Keating v. Office of Thrift*



Supervision, 45 F.3d 322, 324 (9th Cir. 1995) (quoting *United States v. Kordel*, 397 U.S. 1, 12 (1970)). "The decision whether to stay civil proceedings in the face of a parallel criminal proceeding should be made 'in light of the particular circumstances and competing interests involved in the case.'" *Id.*

13. Requiring the parties to participate in civil discovery could potentially unfairly prejudice them while an investigation is ongoing that could result in criminal consequences.

14. Additionally, neither party will be unfairly prejudiced by a stay in the case.

STIPULATION TO STAY ALL FURTHER PROCEEDINGS

15. Accordingly, in light of the foregoing Good Cause, the parties hereby stipulate to and jointly request that the Court continue the ordered stay of civil proceedings in this matter – for 120 days *or* until the aforementioned criminal investigation by the DOJ has been completed, whichever occurs first.

IT IS SO STIPULATED.

DATED: November 22, 2022

MANNING & KASS

ELLROD, RAMIREZ, TRESTER LLP

By: /s/ Garros Chan

Mildred K. O'Linn

Garros Chan

Attorneys for Defendants,

OFFICER R. MARTINEZ, an individual

and Officer of the Azusa Police

Department, CITY OF AZUSA, a public

entity

DATED: November 22, 2022

MICHAEL H. ARTAN, LAWYER, APC

JONAS & DRISCOLL LLP

By: /s/ Michael H. Artan

Glen T. Jonas

Michael H. Artan

Attorneys for Plaintiff,

JOSEPH F. INIGUEZ

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Thomas Buckley

Thomas Buckley is the former Mayor of Lake Elsinore and a former newspaper reporter. He operates a small communications and planning consultancy and can be reached directly at planbuckley@gmail.com. Read more of his work at his Substack 'The Point.'

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5 thoughts on "EXCLUSIVE: George Gascon's Chief of Staff Criminal Investigation Target"



Showandtell

January 1, 2023 at 11:46 am

Given Gascon's Chief of Staff and Right-Hand Man's Joseph Iniguez's outrageous behavior during and after this incident I guess it was only a matter of time before there would be more fallout from it. Such ARROGANCE from Iniguez; the sort you would expect from an unqualified D.A. "chief of staff" in Gascon's office. Puffed-up personalities, power trips and playtime because of an undeserved position is the attitude one would expect to see from such a person and, sure enough, Iniguez fulfilled our expectations.

Would be great to see him pay. We'll see

Reply



SafeSchoolsandNeighborhoods

January 1, 2023 at 8:12 pm

It takes a while, sometimes a long while, for the truth to come out. By that time, of course, it's no longer newsworthy, and as the mainstream media is already lockstep in line with the Gascon/Newsom narrative, it could well be that when the truth about Iniguez comes out, as well as the truth about the radical Marxist Public Defenders who form Gascon's inner circle, the public may have lost interest. But one thing the public will not have lost interest in is the growing threat to their safety. Our cars, homes, and stores, are no longer 'safe spaces.' It seems as if the right to exist free from the threat of criminals who operate with impunity and the active support of the Newsom/Gascon narrative will have to get a little worse before people wake up and smell the roses. By then it will be too late for those pay the price for this crazy Marxist agenda, but be assured of one thing, the Los Angeles DA's Office may be run by Gascon, Iniguez, Woo, and Blacknell, but everything they do, each and every attack on our liberty which is disguised as 'fairness' to violent criminals and their utterly worthless enabling families, is being documented, recorded, witnessed, and memorialized by the rank and file members of the DA's Office. Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely. As the Newsom/Gascon's Marxist agenda becomes more emboldened and loses its grip, as the reality dawns on voters, as the mainstream media wakes up to what they have been complicit in, the day will come when these insurgents will face the consequences for what



truly represent the best of society, there's always hope. Happy New Year!

Reply



Showandtell

January 2, 2023 at 4:04 pm

Great post! Fingers crossed that what you concluded takes place.
Happy New Year to you.

Reply

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EDITOR: KATY GRIMES, KATY@CALIFORNIAGLOBE.COM

REPORTER: EVAN SYMON, EVAN@CALIFORNIAGLOBE.COM

GENERAL MANAGER & ADVERTISING: KEVIN SANDERS, KEVIN@CALIFORNIAGLOBE.COM





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