



City of Arts & Innovation

NEWS RELEASE

Police Department
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Chief of Police

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TWO ARRESTED IN CHILD SEX ABUSE INVESTIGATION



RIVERSIDE, CA – On January 2, 2025, detectives began investigating a report of ongoing sexual abuse of a minor that had been occurring for several years. Their efforts led to the identification and arrest of the primary suspect, 55-year-old William Thomas Trader of Riverside, a few hours later. Trader, a registered sex offender with a prior conviction for sexual abuse of a minor, was booked into a Riverside County jail on multiple charges, including aggravated sexual assault of a minor and lewd and lascivious acts upon a child under the age of 10.

Detectives identified a second suspect in their investigation, 46-year-old Merriam Dogillo, and determined that she had relocated out of California. An arrest warrant was issued, and with assistance from our METRO Team as part of the U.S. Marshals Pacific Southwest Regional Fugitive Task Force, Dogillo was located and arrested by U.S. Marshals in New York on March 6, 2025. She is currently awaiting extradition proceedings to be transferred to Riverside County, where she also faces multiple counts of sex abuse against a minor.



Our METRO Team's primary mission on the U.S. Marshals task force is to assist detectives in locating violent suspects who flee Riverside to other jurisdictions. They also support the U.S. Marshals Service in tracking down fugitives who have fled from other areas into Riverside.



"Through the meticulous work done by our investigators and METRO team, we were able to identify and arrest two individuals for horrific crimes against children," stated Captain Chad Milby, who oversees the police department's Investigations Division. "These arrests were the result of extensive collaboration with various units within the police department, victim advocacy organizations, and child protection services. One of the primary objectives of the Riverside Police Department has always been to ensure the safety and well-being of the children involved, and we will continue to offer them every resource available to aid in their healing process."

Anyone with additional information related to this investigation is urged to contact Detective Vanessa Castillo at (951) 353-7609 or VCCastillo@RiversideCA.gov. Anonymous tips can be submitted through the Riverside Police Department's "Atlas 1" mobile app using the secure "Send a Message" feature. The app is available for download on both [APPLE](#) and [ANDROID](#) devices.