



## CALIFORNIA

# L.A. sheriff's deputy sentenced to probation for assault on woman with mental disability



A roll of police tape is left on the windshield of Los Angeles County sheriff's vehicle. (Jae C. Hong / Associated Press)

**By Keri Blakinger**  
Staff Writer

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A Los Angeles County sheriff's deputy pleaded no contest to two misdemeanors more than three years [after prosecutors say](#) he assaulted a woman during a disturbance call and then lied about it in a report.

Konrad Thieme was sentenced last week to one year of probation and 100 hours of community service for two counts of excessive force by a police officer, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office said in an email.

Thieme's attorney declined to comment.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department said Friday that Thieme has been relieved of duty since 2021.

"These actions do not reflect the values of our department's dedicated personnel," the department wrote in an emailed statement. "We remain committed to zero tolerance for criminal misconduct and to upholding the highest standards as we work to ensure the safety and security of our communities."

The resolution to the case comes more than a year after the county agreed to pay \$1.75 million to the 32-year-old woman Thieme assaulted and shocked with a Taser.

At the time of the attack, Sarah Jafari — who suffers a mental disability, [according to her lawsuit](#) — was living at her mother's home. On the evening of April 10, 2021, her mother called the Sheriff's Department because Jafari was banging a door against a wall.

According to a [summary of the incident](#) written by the Sheriff's Department [Risk Management Bureau](#), Jafari's mother had complained that her daughter had a knife and was destroying the house. When Thieme arrived, he saw Jafari in the driveway yelling at her mother.

Thieme asked Jafari whether she had a knife, according to the incident summary, and she told him she didn't. Thieme ordered her to get the patrol car, but when he reached out to guide her toward the cruiser she pulled away and he threatened to punch her, the summary says.

Other deputies arrived, and one shocked her with a Taser. Afterward, the summary says, Jafari took a “fighting stance” and asked why she was being detained. She allegedly refused to comply when Thieme tried to search her, and the summary says the deputy became concerned Jafari was “stalling” to retrieve a weapon — so he lunged at her.

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Jafari’s head hit the ground, and as she lay on the ground she still allegedly refused to follow the deputies’ orders.

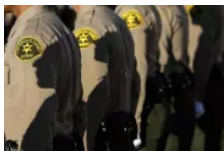
The deputies alleged Jafari assaulted them until they shocked her with a Taser again, handcuffed her and put her in a patrol car as the struggle continued, according to the summary.

Jafari [maintained in a lawsuit filed in late 2021](#) that she was passive the entire time. The suit says video of the incident showed that, when Thieme initially approached her, she walked backward slowly with her hands out so the deputies “could see she was of no danger of harm to them.” Then, the suit says, the deputy punched Jafari’s throat, unprovoked, causing her to fall backward on her head.

After Jafari was shocked with a Taser, her suit says Thieme grabbed her by her hair and tossed her in the back of a patrol car “like a rag doll.” She was taken to a hospital for treatment of her injuries.

Thieme then lied in his report and wrote that Jafari was resisting arrest, according to the suit; based on the deputies' "fraudulent allegations," Jafari was jailed, though prosecutors dropped the charges and "refused to participate in the frame-up."

After the arrest, the suit says, other deputies returned to her home to try to persuade Jafari's mother to lie and say Jafari had a knife in her clothes prior to the attack, according to the lawsuit.



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The suit says Jafari suffered a traumatic brain injury, which caused seizures later requiring hospitalization and that she was "extremely traumatized by being attacked by cops."

An internal criminal investigator from the Sheriff's Department reviewed the incident and determined that — contrary to Thieme's statements — Jafari did not appear to be in a fighting stance when she asked why she was being detained. And when another deputy handcuffed her, she did not appear to be resisting, according to the internal review.

The department summary faulted the other deputies for failing to intervene when they saw the excessive use of force and noted that the deputies should have contacted the Mental Evaluation Team when they realized Jafari showed symptoms of mental illness.

The summary didn't make any determination as to whether Thieme had violated department policies, because the administrative investigation was put on hold as the criminal case against Thieme played out in court.

However, [records show the state](#) temporarily suspended his peace officer certification in July 2023, due to the pending criminal charges and alleged dishonesty.

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**Keri Blakinger**

Keri Blakinger covers the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Before joining the Los Angeles Times in 2023, she spent nearly seven years in Texas, first covering criminal justice for the Houston Chronicle and then covering prisons for the Marshall Project. Blakinger was a 2024 Pulitzer Prize finalist in feature writing for her insightful, humane portrait, reported with great difficulty, of men on Death Row in Texas who play clandestine games of "Dungeons & Dragons," countering their extreme isolation with elaborate fantasy. Her work has appeared everywhere from the BBC to the New York Daily News, from Vice to the Washington Post Magazine, where her 2019 reporting on women in jail helped earn a National Magazine Award. She is the author of "Corrections in Ink," a 2022 memoir about her time in prison.

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