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**For Immediate Release**  
**June 23, 2020**

## **ROCKLAND COUNTY FATHER PLEADS GUILTY TO RECKLESS ENDANGERMENT IN HOT CAR DEATHS OF ONE-YEAR-OLD TWINS**

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark today announced that a Rockland County man has been sentenced to a one-year Conditional Discharge after pleading guilty to second-degree Reckless Endangerment charges in the deaths of his one-year-old twins.

District Attorney Clark said, "The defendant, Juan Rodriguez, left his one-year-old twins in the backseat of his car for hours while he went to work. The children were strapped in their car seats throughout the hot summer day, with no windows open. These babies suffered horribly and we owed them a thorough investigation. This was a tragic, unfortunate incident. I hope that as the sweltering weather is upon us, caregivers will be extra vigilant about children in vehicles."

District Attorney Clark said the defendant, Juan Rodriguez, 39, of New City, Rockland County, N.Y., pleaded guilty today to two counts of second-degree Reckless Endangerment, a misdemeanor, before Bronx Criminal Court Judge Jeffrey Rosenblueth via video. Judge Rosenblueth sentenced the defendant to a one-year Conditional Discharge.

According to the investigation, on the morning of July 26, 2019, the defendant drove to 130 West Kingsbridge Road, while his one-year-old twins, Luna Rodriguez and Phoenix Rodriguez, sat in their car seats in the backseat row of his Honda sedan. The defendant arrived to his job at the James J. Peters Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center at 8:22 A.M. and left work at 4:02 P.M., leaving his twins in the car unattended for approximately eight hours. After driving for two blocks, Rodriguez discovered his two children unresponsive in the backseat. The defendant called his wife, then called 911. First responders declared the twins dead at the scene.

According to the investigation, the temperature inside the vehicle where the twins were left in reached up to more than 100 degrees Fahrenheit. According to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, the twins died of hyperthermia. The body temperature of both children was recorded at 108 degrees Fahrenheit.



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The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Jaime Breslin of the Child Abuse/Sex Crimes Bureau, under the supervision of Rachel Ferrari, Chief of the Child Abuse/Sex Crimes Bureau, and Christine Scaccia, Chief of the Homicide Bureau, and under the overall supervision of Joseph Muroff, Chief of the Special Victims Division.

District Attorney Clark thanked Homicide Counsel Felicity Lung of the Child Abuse/Sex Crimes Bureau, and Assistant District Attorneys Timothy Collins and George Suminski, both of the Homicide Bureau, for their assistance in the investigation. District Attorney Clark thanked Theresa Ramos, Principal Intelligence Analyst in the Crime Strategies Bureau; Peter Kennedy, Chief of the Technical Investigation Bureau, and Selena Ley, Principal Forensic Examiner in the Digital Forensics Lab.

District Attorney Clark also thanked NYPD Detective Edward Reardon of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct Squad, and NYPD Detectives Sean Butler and Nick Ciuffi (retired), both of Bronx Homicide.

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