

**Non-Fatal Officer Involved Shooting of Domenica Briones
Los Angeles Police Department**

Officer Hugo Alfaro, #41908

J.S.I.D. File #23-0415



NATHAN J. HOCHMAN

District Attorney

Justice System Integrity Division

March 9, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: CAPTAIN OMAR BAZULTO
Los Angeles Police Department
Force Investigation Division
100 West First Street, Suite 431
Los Angeles, California 90012

FROM: JUSTICE SYSTEM INTEGRITY DIVISION
Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

SUBJECT: Non-Fatal Officer Involved Shooting of Domenica Briones
J.S.I.D. File #23-0415
L.A.P.D. F.I.D. File #F067-23

DATE: March 9, 2026

The Justice System Integrity Division of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office has completed its review of the November 29, 2023, non-fatal shooting of Domenica Briones by Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Officer Hugo Alfaro. We conclude the officer acted lawfully in defense of another when he used deadly force against Briones.

The District Attorney's Command Center was notified of the shooting at approximately 12:00 a.m. on November 30, 2023. The District Attorney Response Team (DART) responded to the location and was given a briefing regarding the circumstances surrounding the shooting and a walk-through of the scene.

The following analysis is based on investigative reports and other materials, including body-worn camera video (BWV), cell phone video, and recorded interviews submitted by LAPD Force Investigation Division (FID) on January 13, 2025. Compelled statements of LAPD Officer Leonardo Ruiz were considered in this review.

FACTUAL ANALYSIS

Overview

On November 29, 2023, at approximately 10:45 p.m., [REDACTED] was inside the Chevron minimart located at 3817 W. 3rd Street when Domenica Briones entered, removed beer from the refrigerator, and walked toward the exit without paying. When confronted by the store clerk, Briones demanded [REDACTED], a stranger, to purchase it for her. [REDACTED] refused and Briones cursed at him, threatened him with pepper spray, and discarded his purchases. [REDACTED] exited the minimart and walked away.

Briones pursued [REDACTED] and threatened to kill him. On the corner of 3rd Street and S. Kenmore Avenue, Briones pepper sprayed [REDACTED] and attacked him with a knife, slicing his finger. [REDACTED]

subdued Briones and fled down S. Kenmore Avenue to escape but Briones gave chase wielding the knife. [REDACTED] armed himself with a discarded dresser drawer and used it as a shield to prevent himself from being stabbed.

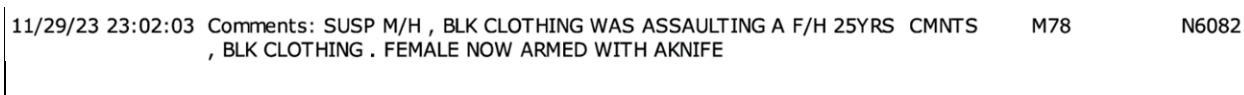
As they neared the residential section of S. Kenmore Avenue, onlookers emerged. At approximately 11:00 p.m., LAPD Communications Division (CD) received the first of six 9-1-1 calls reporting the incident. Radio Telephone Operators (RTO) broadcast the incident, directing officers to the 300 block of S. Kenmore Avenue where a Hispanic female armed with a large kitchen knife was attempting to stab a man in the middle of the street.

Uniformed LAPD Olympic Patrol Officers Alfaro and Ruiz were assigned as the primary unit to the call for service. When they arrived on scene in their marked patrol vehicle, they observed Briones chasing [REDACTED] in the middle of S. Kenmore Avenue with a knife. Alfaro gave Briones numerous commands to drop the knife, but she did not comply. Briones repeatedly attempted to stab [REDACTED], and an officer-involved shooting occurred at approximately 11:11 p.m., within 13 seconds of officers' arrival on scene. Briones sustained a gunshot wound to her left hip and was transported to the hospital for treatment. Briones survived her injury and was released from the hospital on December 4, 2023.

9-1-1 Calls and LAPD CD Communications

CD received six 9-1-1 calls reporting Briones' attack on [REDACTED]. As information was received, it was transmitted to Olympic Division officers via radio transmissions and as Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) comments transmitted to in-car Mobile Data Terminals (MDT). RTOs dispatched at least four radio transmissions and six CAD transmissions regarding the call for service.

At 22:59:43, CD received the first 9-1-1 call reporting the incident.¹ The caller stated, "There's a stranger bothering a girl...She is also hitting him sort of..."² The caller initially reported, "None of them has a weapon," but later updated, "Oh yes, and the girl has a weapon, she has a knife. She has a pocket knife." The RTO logged the incident and entered the CAD comments.

A screenshot of a LAPD CAD comment. The text is: "11/29/23 23:02:03 Comments: SUSP M/H , BLK CLOTHING WAS ASSAULTING A F/H 25YRS CMNTS M78 N6082 , BLK CLOTHING . FEMALE NOW ARMED WITH AKNIFE". The text is displayed in a monospaced font within a rectangular border.

11/29/23 23:02:03 Comments: SUSP M/H , BLK CLOTHING WAS ASSAULTING A F/H 25YRS CMNTS M78 N6082 , BLK CLOTHING . FEMALE NOW ARMED WITH AKNIFE

Figure 1: Screen Capture of LAPD CD Incident Recall Depicting the Initial CAD Comment.

At 23:02:50, CD sent radio communication to Olympic officers broadcasting, "Olympic units, ADW suspect there now. 341 South Kenmore, it's 341 South Kenmore. Suspect male Hispanic, black clothing, assaulting a female Hispanic, 25 years, black clothing, female is armed with a knife..."

Minutes later, the caller told the RTO, "They're still fighting. She's kind of like really mad and pursuing to hit him and he's running away..." The caller later added, "She has a kitchen knife not a pocketknife." The RTO updated the CAD comments accordingly.

¹ References to time in this subsection refer to the audio timestamps heard in the recorded radio transmissions.

² The first caller was identified as [REDACTED] [REDACTED] refused to speak with LAPD investigators.

11/29/23 23:06:22	Comments: SUSP APPEARS TO BE UNDER THE INFLUENCE FEMALE ARMED WITH LARGE KITCHEN KNIFE .	CMNTS	M78	N6082
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Figure 2: Screen Capture of LAPD CD Incident Recall Depicting the First CAD Update.

At 23:03:54, the second 9-1-1 caller reported the incident.³ The caller stated, “There’s a fight going on between a man and a woman. So, a woman is trying to stab a man. So, it’s serious now. Yeah, she has a knife.” The caller elaborated, “So she’s trying to stab the man. She’s literally after the man and she’s uh, like trying to fight with him, and she sprayed on his face, like she did a pepper spray or something. She pepper sprayed.” The RTO updated the CAD comments accordingly.

11/29/23 23:06:26	Comments: Dup: SUSP F/H, APPROX 25-36YRS, ARMED WITH KNIFE IN RIGHT HAND ATTEMPTING TO STAB MAN AT LOCATION. SUSP PEPPER SPRAYED MAN. UNK RELATIONSHIP.	CMNTS	M63	N6902
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Figure 3: Screen Capture of LAPD CD Incident Recall Depicting the Second CAD Update.

A third 9-1-1 call was received by CD at 23:04:15.⁴ The first speaker told the RTO, “There’s a woman with a knife outside on the street.” When the RTO asked if the woman was threatening anyone, the first speaker stated, “Yes. She’s outside with another man.” The second speaker told the RTO, “She’s attacking someone with a knife...The guy is defending himself with a cardboard box.” The RTO updated the CAD comments accordingly.

11/29/23 23:06:28	Comments: Dup: PR UNCOOPERATIVE STATED F/UNK ARMED W/KNIFE M/ UNK DEFENDING HIMSELF W/CARDBOARD BOX, NFI	CMNTS	M35	N6803
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Figure 4: Screen Capture of LAPD CD Incident Recall Depicting the Third CAD Update.

A fourth 9-1-1 call was received by CD at 23:03:56.⁵ The caller reported, “The girl is trying to attack someone right now outside...but no sharp objects or anything. They just like trying, furniture at each other.” The RTO updated the CAD comments accordingly.

11/29/23 23:06:50	Comments: Dup: ** DO NOT ID PR / DO NOT CONTACT PR ** (REFUSED) MALE AND FEMALE PHYSICALLY FIGHTING AT LOC	CMNTS	V56	N2893
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Figure 5: Screen Capture of LAPD CD Incident Recall Depicting the Fourth CAD Update.

A fifth 9-1-1 call was received by CD at 23:04:51.⁶ The caller reported, “A woman fighting...She has a knife and is trying to stab someone...She’s here with a knife and wants to stab a man...she’s crazy...The man has a box in his hands.” The RTO updated the CAD comments accordingly.

³ The second caller was identified as [REDACTED] [REDACTED] remained on scene and provided a witness statement to FID detailing his observations of the shooting and preceding events.

⁴ This call involved two reporting parties. The first speaker was an unidentified female, and the second speaker was an unidentified male.

⁵ The caller was an unidentified male.

⁶ The caller was an unidentified male.

11/29/23 23:07:24	Comments: Dup: PR # 3 C/B AGAIN , SUSP F/H BLK SWEATER , BLUE PANTS , ARMED W/KNIFE ATT TO CUT VICT M/ BLK CLOTHING	CMNTS	M42	N4444
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Figure 6: Screen Capture of LAPD CD Incident Recall Depicting the Fifth CAD Update.

At 23:07:40, CD broadcast additional radio communication to LAPD Olympic officers stating, “Additional on your ADW suspect there now... additional [REDACTED] called stated suspect female Hispanic, 25-36 years, armed with a knife in her right hand, attempting to stab a man...”

At 23:07:50, CD broadcast additional radio communication to LAPD Olympic officers stating, “Olympic units responding to the ADW suspect is female Hispanic, wearing a black sweater with blue pants, armed with a knife. Victim is a male in black clothing.”

At 23:08:40, CD broadcast additional radio communication to LAPD Olympic officers stating, “Additional on the ADW suspect there now... suspect appears to be under the influence of unknown narco. They’re now in the middle of the street. The female is attempting to stab the male.”

The sixth 9-1-1 call was received by CD at 23:09:03.⁷ The caller reported, “A woman, with a knife following a man who is trying to escape her with something like a board, so she doesn’t hit him.” The caller described the knife “in her right hand,” and stated the man was “trying to cover himself with something like a drawer.” The RTO who took the call updated the CAD comments accordingly.

11/29/23 23:11:55	Comments: Dup: SUSP F/H, 20-25YRS, BLK SWEATER, GRAY PANTS ARMED WITH POCKET KNIFE IN RIGHT HAND ATT TO STAB M/H TRYING TO COVER HIMSELF W/POSS FURNITURE OBJECT	CMNTS	M63	N6902
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Figure 7: Screen Capture of LAPD CD Incident Recall Depicting the Sixth CAD Update.

At approximately 23:11:25, Ruiz broadcast, “Shots fired! Shots fired! Officer needs help!”

Interviews

Officer Leonardo Ruiz

After the officer-involved shooting, Ruiz provided two compelled statements to FID. Ruiz stated as Alfaro drove to S. Kenmore Avenue, Ruiz, monitored the vehicle’s MDC and read the CAD comments of the call aloud as new details emerged. When they arrived, he observed Briones “waving her hands around and chasing the male and the male backing up, trying to get away from her,” matching the details of the call for service.

Alfaro exited the vehicle with his gun drawn and approached Briones. Ruiz also exited but stood behind the passenger door for cover. His view of Briones was obstructed by his position and limited to her left side. Ruiz was unable to see the knife in Briones’ right hand but believed she was armed based upon the numerous CAD comments and his observations of her right-hand

⁷ The caller was an unidentified male.

movements consistent with stabbing motions, coupled with [REDACTED]'s defensive maneuvers to avoid injury.

Alfaro ordered Briones to drop the knife, but she did not comply. Ruiz unholstered his firearm, concerned he would have to shoot Briones due to her persistent attack on [REDACTED], and "how close the suspect was to the victim," saying, "Because what I believed was, she had a knife." Alfaro delivered another command to drop the knife which also went ignored. Ruiz observed Briones less than a foot from [REDACTED], "flinging her arms around" and when Briones came within approximately 15 feet of Alfaro, he heard two to three gunshots in rapid succession. Briones then ceased her attack.

[REDACTED].

[REDACTED] told FID he was inside Chevron purchasing coffee when Briones demanded he buy beer for her. When he declined, Briones said, "You're fucked when you get out of here!" and threw his coffee in the garbage.⁸ [REDACTED] left, and Briones followed while continuing to threaten him.⁹ As he called 9-1-1 for help, Briones pepper sprayed [REDACTED] and attempted to stab him in the stomach with a knife. [REDACTED] extended his hand to prevent himself from being stabbed, and was cut in the process.¹⁰ [REDACTED] described Briones' knife as having a black handle with an approximate three-to-four-inch blade.

[REDACTED] hit Briones with his cell phone, and when she fell to the ground [REDACTED] fled.¹¹ Briones followed [REDACTED] and told him, "You're going to die today," while attempting to stab him again. [REDACTED] obtained a dresser drawer from the street and used it to push Briones' knife away from his body. When police arrived, Briones was "very aggressive and with the knife." Briones continued her attempts to stab him even after police arrived on scene. According to [REDACTED], "They told her, 'Hey, drop the knife'...and she wouldn't obey. That's when they shot her." Briones' attack persisted until she was shot.

Domenica Briones

Briones also provided a statement to FID. Briones stated at the time of the incident she was under the influence of alcohol and marijuana and did not recall much of what transpired.¹² She did not recall being armed with a knife, pepper spraying [REDACTED], or walking to the middle of S. Kenmore Avenue.

She stated [REDACTED] followed her home from Chevron, assaulted her, and stole her cell phone. [REDACTED] also used a drawer to attack her. When police arrived, Briones heard them deliver several, "Freeze!" commands but did not believe they were directed to her. As she backed away from [REDACTED], she was shot.

⁸ The events inside the Chevron minimart are documented in store surveillance video, without audio.

⁹ Surveillance footage from nearby businesses depict Briones following [REDACTED] while behaving aggressively.

¹⁰ [REDACTED] was treated by paramedics for a laceration to his right index finger and the effects of chemical irritant spray.

¹¹ Surveillance footage at a nearby business shows [REDACTED] strike Briones with a cell phone before fleeing toward S. Kenmore Avenue.

¹² Briones told medical personnel she consumed six beers and smoked marijuana prior to the incident. Toxicology screening showed only the presence of cannabinoids in Briones' blood.

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In █'s interview with FID, he stated prior to police arrival, Briones was armed with a knife in her right hand and attempting to stab █. █ used a drawer to block the knife strikes and pleaded with Briones to drop the knife. Officers arrived and drew their firearms. One of the officers yelled, "Drop the knife! Drop the knife!" but Briones did not comply. She advanced toward █, came within a foot of him, and attempted to stab him in the chest. █ appeared terrified and, "At that point, the officer, you know, tried to neutralize the situation. He shot two bullets. I don't know if the bullets did hit her or not." Briones stopped her attack immediately.

Two additional independent witnesses provided similar statements to FID and described Briones actively attacking █ with a knife at close range when Alfaro fired both rounds.

Video Footage

BWV

Alfaro and Ruiz were equipped with Axon body-worn cameras which captured portions of the incident.¹³ Although the constant motion of the encounter and focus and resolution limitations affect the clarity of the video, the recordings are instructive for audio and select aspects of the incident.

When BWV footage begins, Alfaro is driving the patrol vehicle with Ruiz in the front passenger seat utilizing the vehicle's MDC.¹⁴ At 23:11:06, Alfaro unholsters his firearm, manually activates his BWV, and opens his driver door. As he exits the vehicle, Alfaro shouts, "Hey! Drop the knife!" A male voice in the foreground yells, "Step – step away from him!"¹⁵ Briones enters camera view rushing toward █, who holds a drawer as a shield. Alfaro commands, "Drop the knife!" and the male voice in the foreground again orders, "Step away from him!" Briones closes the distance and lunges toward █. as she swings her right arm in a stabbing motion. As Briones nears Alfaro, he again shouts, "Hey! Drop the knife!" Briones continues advancing toward █ while swinging her right arm toward his upper body. █ backpedals and raises the drawer to block Briones' right hand. Briones comes within one foot of █ swings her right arm toward him, and Alfaro fires two gunshots in rapid succession at 23:11:19.¹⁶

Briones stops her attack, slows her pace, and walks toward a parked vehicle on the curb line. █. successfully retreats. While Alfaro continues ordering Briones to drop the knife, she conceals her right hand under her jacket, places it inside her purse and withdraws it seconds later. Alfaro handcuffs Briones shortly thereafter and searches her purse, where he locates a knife.

¹³ Due to the canted orientation and delayed activation of Ruiz's body-worn camera, his BWV did not capture the events immediately preceding the officer-involved shooting. Accordingly, only Alfaro's BWV is referenced in this section.

¹⁴ No audio is captured during the two-minute buffer period prior to manual activation.

¹⁵ In Ruiz's compelled statement to LAPD FID, he denied giving commands to Briones.

¹⁶ One round struck Briones in her left hip. The other round struck an unoccupied green Ford SUV parked behind Briones.

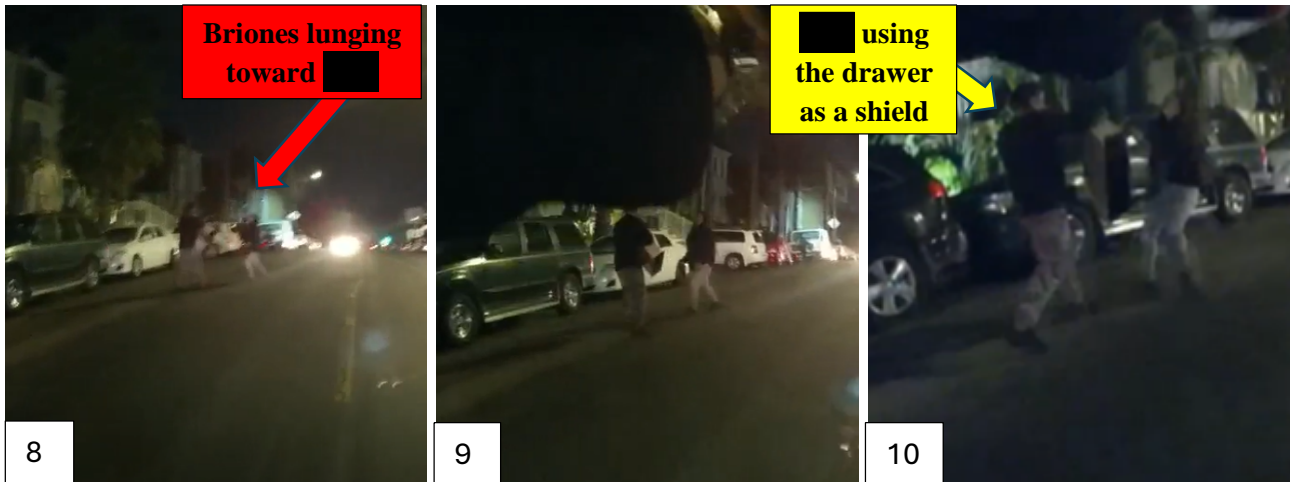


Figure 8-10: Screen Captures of BWV Showing Briones Advance Toward [REDACTED] While Swinging Her Arms.



Figures 11 and 12: Screen Captures of BWV Seconds After the Shooting Depicting the Outline of Briones' Right Hand Inside Her Purse and Being Quickly Withdrawn.



Figures 13 and 14: Screen Capture of BWV Showing the Knife Inside Briones' Purse and a Photograph of the Knife After Being Removed, Respectively.

Cell Phone Video

Several witnesses recorded the incident using cell phone cameras.¹⁷ These videos provide clearer visual depictions of the events than the BWV. In the cell phone videos, Briones is observed chasing █ with the knife prior to police arrival. The blade's metallic surface is illuminated by overhead streetlamps, vehicle headlights, and ambient residential lighting.

When the patrol vehicle approaches, Briones increases the intensity of her attack. She rapidly advances toward █, raises the knife, and lunges toward him numerous times. Briones violently and repeatedly attempts to stab █ in police presence and continues her attack until Alfaro fires his service weapon.



Figures 15-17: Screen Captures of Cell Phone Video Depict Briones Holding a Knife in Her Right Hand at Waist Level Before Winding Her Arm Back in a Manner Indicative of an Imminent Stabbing.

Charges Against Briones

On December 4, 2023, Briones was charged in case 23CJCF00478 with two felony assault counts against █. On June 18, 2025, Briones pled no contest to assault with a deadly weapon, to wit, knife, in violation of Penal Code section 245(a)(1), and sentencing was continued until September 30, 2025. Briones failed to appear on that date and a bench warrant was issued for her arrest. On January 16, 2026, Briones was arrested and the warrant was recalled and quashed. She is scheduled to be sentenced on April 9, 2026, and remains in custody with a “no bail” hold.

¹⁷ All cell phone videos referenced in this subsection contain audio and video recordings but are not time-stamped.

LEGAL ANALYSIS

A peace officer is justified in using deadly force upon another person when the officer reasonably believes, based on the totality of the circumstances, that such force is necessary either to: (1) defend against an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury to the officer or to another person; or (2) apprehend a fleeing person for any felony that threatened or resulted in death or serious bodily injury, if the officer reasonably believes that the person will cause death or serious bodily injury to another unless immediately apprehended. Penal Code § 835a(c)(1)(A) & (B).

A threat of death or serious bodily injury is imminent when, based on the totality of the circumstances, a reasonable officer in the same situation would believe that a person has the present ability, opportunity, and apparent intent to immediately cause death or serious bodily injury to the peace officer or another person. An imminent harm is not merely a fear of future harm, no matter how great the fear and no matter how great the likelihood of the harm, but is one that, from appearances, must be instantly confronted and addressed. Penal Code § 835a(e)(2).

In assessing the totality of the circumstances, all facts known to or perceived by the peace officer at the time, including the conduct of the officer and the subject leading up to the use of deadly force, are taken into consideration. Penal Code § 835a(a)(4) & (e)(3). The peace officer's decision to use force is not evaluated with the benefit of hindsight and shall account for occasions when officers may be forced to make quick judgments about using force. Penal Code § 835a(a)(4).

In the instant case, uniformed police officers were dispatched in response to numerous 9-1-1 calls directing them to the middle of S. Kenmore Avenue where a woman was reportedly armed with a knife in her right hand attempting to stab a man. When they arrived on scene, Alfaro and Ruiz made observations consistent with the CD broadcasts. Alfaro drew his firearm, ready to confront what appeared to be an imminent and deadly threat. He approached Briones and issued a lawful command for her to drop her knife. Instead, Briones closed the distance to [REDACTED], and repeatedly slashed at him with her right arm in police presence. [REDACTED] hastily retreated and used the drawer as a barrier to prevent Briones' right arm from striking him, consistent with fending off a knife attack.

Alfaro issued a second lawful command for Briones to drop the knife. This command appeared to have no impact on Briones. She rapidly approached [REDACTED] and increased the intensity of her attack. After ignoring Alfaro's third lawful command to drop the knife, Briones advanced to within a foot of [REDACTED] and drew her arm back in a manner consistent with a stabbing motion. Based upon the totality of the circumstances, a reasonable officer would have believed [REDACTED] was in imminent danger of suffering death or serious bodily injury at the hands of Briones. As such, the use of deadly force was necessary to fend off an imminent deadly threat to [REDACTED].

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, we conclude Officer Hugo Alfaro's use of deadly force was legally justified in defense of another.