

Non-Fatal Officer Involved Shooting of Rafiullah Erfan

Los Angeles Police Department

Officer James Funes, #44395

Officer Steven Bauman, #38832

J.S.I.D. File #25-0157



NATHAN J. HOCHMAN

District Attorney

Justice System Integrity Division

May 6, 2026

MEMORANDUM

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

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

SUBJECT: Non-Fatal Officer Involved Shooting of Rafiullah Erfan
J.S.I.D. File #25-0157
L.A.P.D. File #F017-25

DATE: May 6, 2026

The Justice System Integrity Division of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office (LADA) has completed its review of the May 12, 2025, non-fatal shooting of Rafiullah Erfan by Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Officers James Funes and Steven Bauman. We have determined the evidence supports a reasonable belief by the officers that the use of deadly force and less-lethal force was necessary in self-defense and the defense of others.

The LADA Command Center was notified of the shooting at approximately 10:20 p.m. on May 12, 2025. The District Attorney Response Team responded to the scene and was given a briefing and walk-through by Lieutenant Jess Falk.

The following analysis is based on LAPD investigative reports and other materials, including recorded interviews, photographs, surveillance video, body worn camera video (BWV), and radio communications submitted to this office by the LAPD Force Investigation Division (FID) on February 19, 2026. Compelled statements of Officer Funes, if they exist, were not considered in this analysis.

FACTUAL ANALYSIS

On May 12, 2025, at approximately 9:25 p.m., LAPD Officers James Funes and Steven Bauman, assigned to West Valley Patrol Division, responded to a radio call of an assault with a deadly weapon suspect at an apartment complex located on Reseda Boulevard in the City of Los Angeles. 9-1-1 caller [REDACTED] stated co-resident Erfan was assaulting and chasing people while armed with a knife.

Upon arrival, Funes was designated as the cover officer using his service weapon, while Bauman was designated as less-lethal, armed with a Taser. Two additional officers were equipped with 40mm less-lethal launchers (40mm).¹

As Funes and Bauman entered the hallway and turned the corner into the courtyard, they immediately encountered Erfan at a distance of approximately five to ten feet. While holding a knife in his right hand, and a cellphone in his left, Erfan raised and pointed the knife toward the officers, and advanced toward them while screaming.

In response, Funes fired three rounds from his service weapon. Nearly simultaneously, Bauman deployed his Taser.² Erfan, struck by both gunfire and Taser probes, released the knife and fell to the ground. Officers immediately moved the knife away, handcuffed Erfan, and requested medical assistance.³

Officers initiated CPR until relieved by Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) personnel. Erfan was transported to the hospital for a gunshot wound to the stomach. He survived after emergency surgery.⁴ Toxicology testing revealed the presence of methamphetamine in Erfan's system at the time of the shooting.



*Erfan's Knife as Photographed At The Scene.*⁵

¹ Funes responded to scene with his partner Officer Danny Garcia. Bauman responded to the scene with his partner Officer Jesus Pichardo. Additional responding units included Officers Joseph Ramirez, Gustavo Hernandez, Anthony Lemus, and Eduardo Yanez. Yanez and Lemus were each equipped with a 40mm.

² Forensic analysis determined the Taser was deployed 0.075 seconds after the first gunshot. The entire sequence occurred in less than one second.

³ Forensic DNA testing determined Erfan was the primary contributor of DNA found on the knife.

⁴ Investigators have been unable to obtain Erfan's medical records.

⁵ Investigators determined the length of the blade was approximately five inches.

Civilian Witness Statements⁶

On May 13, 2025, investigators interviewed [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] said she was inside her apartment when she heard screaming coming from the alley. Upon looking out her window, she observed Erfan running around, screaming, and talking to himself. She then observed Erfan get into a confrontation with an elderly man. While on the phone with 9-1-1, she looked at her Ring security camera and saw Erfan, armed with a kitchen knife and banging on her and her neighbor's door. [REDACTED] did not witness the shooting or hear gunshots.

[REDACTED] stated she heard yelling and opened her door. She observed Erfan running northbound in the courtyard with his right arm raised above his head holding a "butcher knife." She then heard three gunshots and saw Erfan fall. She observed officers approach him and begin providing aid.

[REDACTED], Erfan's brother, confirmed Erfan was experiencing severe mental health issues, was not taking his prescribed medication, and had recently been behaving erratically. [REDACTED] told officers Erfan did not speak English. [REDACTED] said Erfan did not attack him or anyone else. [REDACTED] said he did not witness the shooting itself but heard gunshots shortly after officers entered the complex.

[REDACTED] heard screaming and fighting which began inside unit 109 and continued into the hallway and courtyard.⁷ She heard banging on doors and a male voice repeatedly yelling, "Let me in!" [REDACTED] did not witness the shooting but heard approximately three gunshots immediately outside her apartment door.

[REDACTED], the property manager, said earlier that evening, Erfan approached her father-in-law on Erwin Street and "challenged him to a fight." She told her father-in-law to "keep walking." [REDACTED] heard gunshots approximately five minutes later. She did not witness the shooting.

[REDACTED] observed Erfan on the street holding a frying pan and attempting to strike passing vehicles. [REDACTED] later observed officers arriving and saw Erfan push out the window screen of unit 109. Erfan ran upstairs and began to bang aggressively on [REDACTED]'s apartment door. Through his peephole, [REDACTED] saw Erfan with his hands inside his jacket, appearing furious. Shortly thereafter, [REDACTED] heard officers yelling commands, followed by two to three gunshots. [REDACTED] saw Erfan on the ground and a knife nearby.

Statement of Steven Bauman

Bauman provided a voluntary statement to investigators. Bauman stated he responded to a radio broadcast of a male armed with a knife, chasing residents inside the apartment complex. Upon arrival, Bauman heard banging and screaming emanating from unit 109. He observed Erfan holding a frying pan and pushing out the window screen, in an attempt to break the window. Erfan then dropped the frying pan, grabbed a knife, screamed, and ran out his front door.

⁶ All interviews referenced in this memorandum, unless otherwise noted, were recorded.

⁷ Investigators determined Erfan was residing in unit 109.

Bauman announced he would serve as the less-lethal officer using his department issued Taser. As he and Funes approached the rear hallway entrance, Bauman could hear loud screams coming from the courtyard area. As they turned the corner into the courtyard, Bauman observed Erfan at close-range holding a knife in his right hand. Bauman stated Erfan's arm was raised in an upward and forward position oriented toward them. He described Erfan as screaming and advancing toward them. Bauman estimated the distance to be five to ten feet.

Bauman stated he discharged his Taser at the same time Funes discharged his service weapon. After Erfan fell and released the knife, Bauman assisted in securing the weapon, handcuffing Erfan, and providing medical aid until paramedics arrived.

When asked why he discharged his Taser, Bauman said, "Immediate defense of life."

Video Recordings

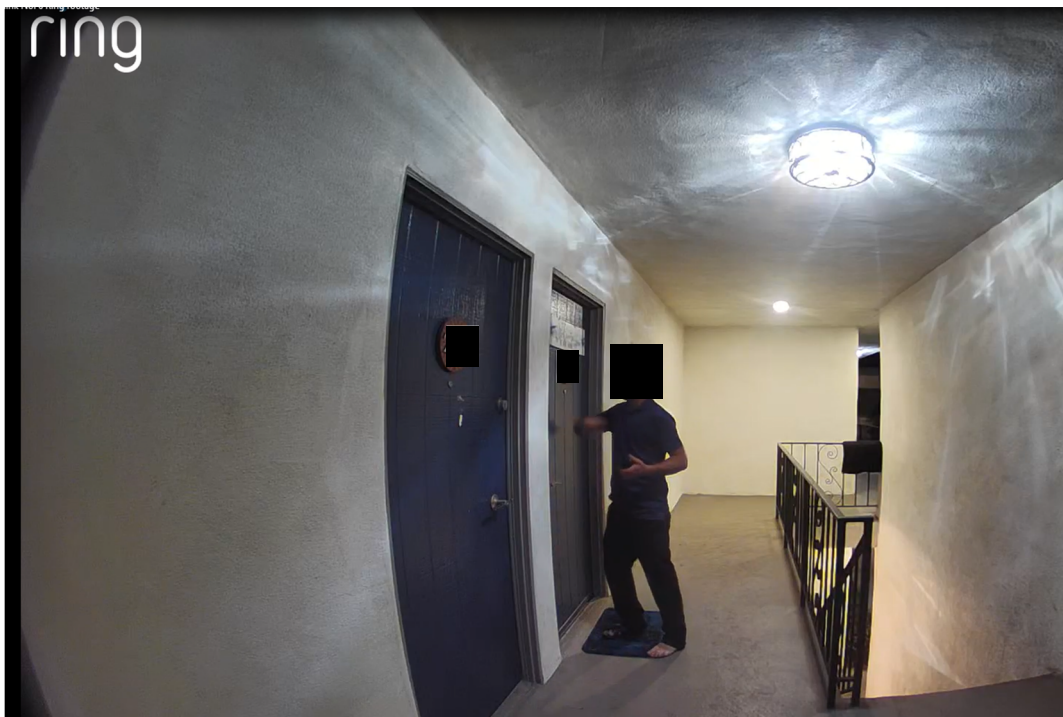
During the incident, officers wore BWV devices.⁸ BWV captures officers assembling outside the rear security entrance of the apartment complex. Officers verbally coordinate roles with Bauman stating he will deploy his Taser and positioning himself as the "less-lethal" officer. Funes assumes the "cover officer" role with his service weapon drawn.

As officers enter the rear hallway, audible screaming can be heard echoing from the courtyard area. At approximately 9:35 p.m., as Funes rounds the corner into the courtyard, Erfan immediately comes into view. Erfan can be seen holding a knife in his right hand with the blade angled forward. His right arm is raised above waist level as he screams loudly and runs quickly toward Funes and Bauman.

Funes fires three rounds in rapid succession. Nearly simultaneously, Bauman deploys his Taser. After being struck, Erfan falls backward onto the concrete courtyard surface. The knife leaves his hand and lands near his right side. Funes uses his foot to move the knife away from Erfan's reach.

Security camera footage from [REDACTED]'s front door Ring camera captures Erfan assaulting [REDACTED] with a frying pan. Later, Erfan can be observed armed with a knife, as he approaches, yells, and bangs on several apartment front doors.

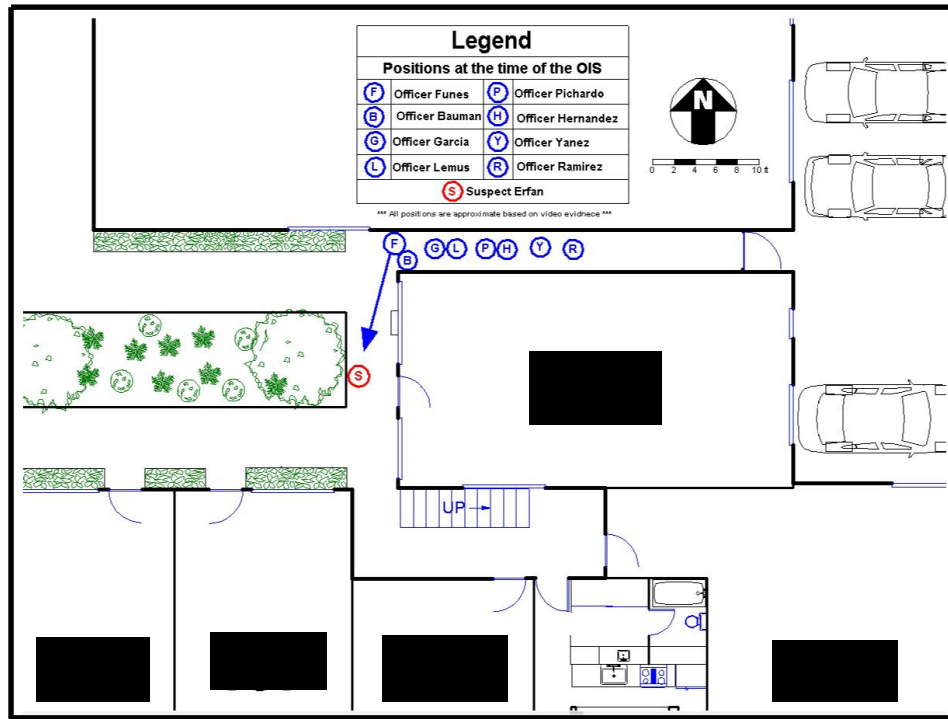
⁸ As a result of BWV manufacturer settings, audio and video are both recorded upon activation by the officer. The previous minute of video, without audio, is also captured.



Still from [REDACTED]'s Ring Camera Depicting Erfan (Center) Holding a Knife and Cellphone in his Left Hand.



Still from Funes' BWV as he Fires his Service Weapon and Erfan (Center) Holds a Knife in his Right Hand while Running Towards the Officers (Bauman (Left)).



LAPD Diagram of the Parties' Relative Positions at the Time Funes Fired his Service Weapon. Unit [REDACTED] is Located Between Units [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].)

LEGAL ANALYSIS

Any peace officer who has reasonable cause to believe that the person to be arrested has committed a public offense may use objectively reasonable force to effect the arrest, to prevent escape, or to overcome resistance. A peace officer is justified in using deadly force upon another person only when the officer reasonably believes, based on the totality of the circumstances, that such force is necessary to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury to the officer or to another person, or to 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(b), (c)(1)(A), and (c)(1)(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).

“Totality of circumstances” means 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. 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) and (e)(3).

Here, the evidence shows both Officer Funes' use of deadly force and Officer Bauman's use of less-lethal force were objectively reasonable to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury to themselves or others.

Officers were responding to reports of an armed suspect chasing residents inside an apartment complex. When Funes and Bauman turned the corner into the courtyard of the apartment complex, they encountered Erfan holding a knife in his right hand with the blade visible, his arm raised in a forward position, screaming and advancing toward them. The confined courtyard setting limited the officers' ability to retreat and reduced the time available for alternative tactics as they both reacted to the same rapidly unfolding lethal threat.

Although Funes was aware Bauman was equipped with a Taser, he was not required to rely on such less-lethal force when confronted with an imminent deadly threat. At a distance of approximately five to ten feet, Erfan had the ability to reach the officers in a fraction of a second. Under these circumstances, a reasonable officer could conclude that waiting to determine whether the Taser would be successful against Erfan would create an unreasonable risk of imminent serious bodily injury or death.

Accordingly, the evidence supports a reasonable belief that the use of deadly force was necessary to defend against a threat of serious bodily injury or death.

CONCLUSION

Based on the available evidence, we conclude Officer Funes acted lawfully in self-defense and defense of others when he fired his service weapon. We also conclude Officer Bauman acted lawfully in self-defense and defense of others when he discharged his Taser.