

Jackie Lacey
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NEWS RELEASE

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June 8, 2017

Alleged Gang Member Charged in Robbery Death of Liquor Store Owner

An alleged gang member faces a special circumstance murder charge for the shooting death of a 61-year-old owner of a liquor store in Harvard Park, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Hector Benitez aka Scooter (dob 4/3/98) of Los Angeles faces one count of murder with a special circumstance of committing the murder during the course of a robbery.

Deputy District Attorney Lance Hansen of the Hardcore Gang Division said the charges include allegations that a handgun was used in the crime and that it was committed in association with a criminal street gang.

Arraignment is scheduled today in Department 30 of the Foltz Criminal Justice Center. Case BA457175 was filed on May 10.

On May 7, Benitez allegedly participated in a robbery at a liquor store in the 6500 block of South Normandie Avenue. During the robbery, victim Carlos Martinez was shot to death as he attempted to defend his store, the prosecutor said.

If convicted as charged, Benitez faces a possible maximum sentence of death or life in prison without the possibility of parole. A decision on whether to seek the death penalty will be made at a later date.

The defendant is being held without bail.

The case remains under investigation by the Los Angeles Police Department, South Bureau.

About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.