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NEWS RELEASE

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Aug. 13, 2019

Man Sentenced for Killing Ex-Wife, Shooting Her Boyfriend in Whittier

A 41-year-old man was sentenced yesterday to 40 years to life in state prison for fatally shooting his ex-wife and seriously injuring her boyfriend two years ago, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Araceli Otero said Efrem Ruben Lozoya of Pico Rivera pleaded guilty last month to one count each of second-degree murder and attempted murder and also admitted intentionally discharging a handgun which caused great bodily injury and death.

Lozoya and his ex-wife, Nereida Villanueva, 33, had a 9-year-old son and a 7-year-old daughter together and had been divorced for several years.

On the morning of July 1, 2017, Lozoya dropped off his daughter at Villanueva's apartment in Whittier and was allowed inside the home by his son, the prosecutor said.

Shortly after entering Villanueva's residence, Lozoya stormed into a bedroom where he shot his ex-wife and her boyfriend, who also was in the apartment, according to evidence presented in court.

The boyfriend was paralyzed as a result of his injuries. The children ran to a neighbor's home when they heard the shooting, the prosecutor added.

Following the attack, Lozoya fled the scene but hours later turned himself in, the prosecutor said.

Case VA145165 was investigated by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Homicide 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.