

**Fatal Officer Involved Shooting of Greg Covey, Jr.
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department**

Deputy Randy Austin, #649268

J.S.I.D. File #23-0220



NATHAN J. HOCHMAN

District Attorney

Justice System Integrity Division

February 4, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: CAPTAIN ARTURO R. SPENCER
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
Homicide Bureau
1 Cupania Circle
Monterey Park, California 91755

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

SUBJECT: Fatal Officer Involved Shooting of Greg Covey, Jr.
J.S.I.D. File #23-0220
L.A.S.D. File #023-09617-0628-013

DATE: February 4, 2026

The Justice System Integrity Division of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office has completed its review of the July 4, 2023, fatal shooting of Greg Covey, Jr. by Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) Deputy Randy Austin. We have concluded Deputy Austin acted in lawful self-defense and defense of others when he fired his service weapon.

The District Attorney's Command Center was notified of the shooting at approximately 2:20 a.m. on July 5, 2023. The District Attorney Response Team responded to the location. They were given a briefing regarding the circumstances surrounding the shooting and a walk-through of the scene.

The following analysis is based on investigative reports, recorded interviews, surveillance video, body worn camera video (BWV), radio communications, a 9-1-1 call, firearm analysis reports, DNA analysis, autopsy reports, and crime scene photographs and diagrams submitted by LASD Detective John Carlin and Sergeant Anthony Delia on May 15, 2024, as well as supplemental materials submitted on various dates between May and October 2025. Austin gave a voluntary statement, which was considered in this analysis.

FACTUAL ANALYSIS

On July 4, 2023, at approximately 10:13 p.m., deputies from LASD Santa Clarita Station received a call regarding a gunshot victim at Fahren Court in Canyon Country. Witnesses reported three men had arrived at the location in an older model silver or gold Cadillac sedan. One of the men approached the victim and asked where he was from. The man shot the victim and yelled "Newhall," apparently in reference to a known gang in the area, Newhall 13. The victim was wounded in the abdomen and transported to the hospital.

Deputies Sergio Camberos and Drew Maher initially responded to the shooting call in Canyon Country and later drove to the area of Newhall, approximately six miles away, in response to

unrelated calls for service. At approximately 11:31 p.m., Camberos and Maher saw a Cadillac sedan matching the description of the suspect vehicle from the Canyon Country shooting.

The car was stopped in the middle of Race Street and 3rd Street, where its occupants appeared to be engaged in a conversation with a group of pedestrians on the corner. The car pulled forward at an angle against the curb, and its driver looked back at the deputies. The driver exited the Cadillac and began speaking to the deputies. Camberos asked who was in the front passenger seat, but the driver declined to answer.

As Maher and Camberos exited the patrol vehicle and approached the Cadillac, the front passenger, later identified as Greg Covey, Jr., stepped out and ran north on Race Street. Maher and Camberos chased Covey until he jumped the front fence of a residence and fled through the yard out of view. The deputies broadcast a suspect armed with a firearm had fled.



Fig. 1 — Still image from Maher’s BWV capturing Covey exiting the sedan before fleeing.

Several deputies responded to Newhall and joined in the foot pursuit of Covey. From the house on Race Street, Covey ran eastbound into a wash area. Deputy Richard Wyatt was positioned at 6th Street near the wash when he saw Covey running with a silver handgun in his right hand. In an interview, Wyatt said he began to chase Covey. He was soon joined by Deputy Adlemi Pena. Pena, who was also interviewed, saw Wyatt chasing Covey and joined in the pursuit as Covey ran northbound into an alleyway.

Wyatt saw Covey turn around and begin to taunt the two deputies. Covey began walking backwards, and Pena stated she saw Covey holding a silver handgun with the barrel facing down. Both Wyatt and Pena ordered Covey to stop and show his hands. According to Wyatt, Covey told the deputies to shoot him, turned, and began running northbound through the alley.¹

¹ Wyatt and Pena were each equipped with BWV which captured Covey turning to face the deputies before running away, consistent with the deputies’ descriptions. Covey, who appears to be a significant distance from the deputies,



Fig. 2 — Still image from Pena’s BWV capturing Covey in the alleyway during the foot pursuit.

Covey began to run westbound on Market Street from the alleyway. Wyatt and Pena gave chase but lost sight of Covey when they arrived at the intersection of the alley and Market Street. Wyatt broadcast the suspect was running down Market Street. The deputies continued west on Market Street toward Arch Street, where Wyatt and Pena saw Covey running south on the west sidewalk of Arch Street. Wyatt saw Austin appear on the west side of Arch Street before moving toward the east side of the street.

From approximately 30 to 40 yards away, Wyatt heard and saw Covey fire a gun at Austin. Wyatt said he saw Austin fire back and begin to move sideways. Wyatt saw Covey fire another round before Austin returned fire.² Pena “just heard pops” but could not see who had fired.

Deputy Harrison Noll, who was present at the scene, was also interviewed.³ After Wyatt broadcast he and Pena were in pursuit of Covey down Market Street, Noll followed Austin as they both ran toward Market Street. Noll said he and Austin were near the northeast corner of 5th Street and Arch Street when Noll saw Covey standing on the west sidewalk of Arch Street in front of an apartment complex. Covey was yelling and “cussing” at the deputies. Austin shouted commands for Covey to show his hands. While Austin was standing five to ten feet from Covey, Covey reached into his front waistband, pulled out a gun, and pointed it in the direction of Austin and Noll. Noll saw Covey fire two shots at him and Austin. Noll sought cover behind a car and said Austin fired four to five shots at Covey, who fell to the ground.⁴

cannot be heard making any statements. The videos do contain audio from radio communications, the deputies issuing commands, and ambient noise.

² Both Wyatt’s and Pena’s BWV depict them running down Arch Street toward Austin and Covey at the time gunshots can be heard. In light of the distance and lighting conditions, however, neither Austin nor Covey is clearly visible in either deputy’s BWV at the time of the incident.

³ Noll was equipped with BWV during the incident but turned it on after the shooting. Accordingly, Noll’s BWV did not capture the pursuit or the officer involved shooting. Investigators did not ask Noll why his camera was off.

⁴ Investigators examined Austin’s duty weapon, a Smith & Wesson 2.0 9mm semi-automatic pistol with a Surefire X300 Ultra flashlight attached. The weapon was examined, test fired, and determined to be functional. It contained

Wyatt rendered aid to Covey with assistance from Noll. Covey was searched and found to be in possession of two loaded pistols: a Polymer80 “ghost gun”⁵ with a black slide, green grip, and affixed laser, and a Ruger P89 black-framed pistol with a silver slide and a partially obliterated serial number. Investigators recovered two expanded cartridge casings within the vicinity of where Cory fell, as well as a fired bullet jacket. All were determined to have been fired from Covey’s Ruger pistol. Covey’s DNA was found on various portions of both guns.



Figs. 3 (left) and 4 (right) — Polymer80 (left) and Ruger P89 (right) pistols recovered from Covey.

Covey sustained two gunshot wounds to his left arm and one to his abdomen. He was transported to Henry Mayo Hospital, where he was treated. Covey remained hospitalized until July 6, 2023, when he was pronounced dead at approximately 8:19 p.m. On July 10, 2023, Los Angeles County Deputy Medical Examiner Paul V. Gliniecki performed an autopsy and ascribed the cause of Covey’s death to multiple gunshot wounds.

Statement of Deputy Randy Austin⁶

Austin gave a voluntary, recorded interview on July 10, 2023. He stated on July 4, 2023, he heard radio traffic from a call in Canyon Country indicating a victim was shot by suspects who yelled “Newhall.” He was responding to a call concerning fireworks when he heard Camberos broadcast he was detaining a man with a gun near Race and 3rd Streets. Austin responded to the intersection, where he found Camberos, who told Austin that the suspect had run toward the rear of a house on Race Street. Austin drove to the alleyway behind Race Street, where he found a woman who told him she had seen a man wearing a white shirt running quickly in a northeast direction. Austin used his radio to inform other responding deputies about the suspect.

Austin heard a deputy broadcast he was chasing the suspect northbound in an alleyway. Austin ran through the neighborhood until he approached 6th Street, where he saw a foot pursuit heading

a magazine with seven cartridges and one cartridge in the chamber. Austin normally loaded 17 cartridges per magazine plus one cartridge in the chamber. Seven fired cartridge cases, one fired bullet, one fired bullet jacket, and multiple fired bullet jacket fragments were identified as having been fired from Austin’s duty weapon.

⁵ A “ghost gun” lacks a serial number by which it can be identified. It is typically assembled by a user from purchased or homemade components.

⁶ Austin was equipped with BWV during the incident but turned it on after the shooting. Accordingly, Austin’s BWV did not capture the foot pursuit or the officer involved shooting. Investigators did not ask Austin why his camera was off.

westbound on Market Street. Austin saw deputies running after Covey, who was wearing a white shirt. Austin ran west on 6th Street to remain parallel of the foot pursuit, then turned onto Arch Street. Austin ran north and saw Covey running southbound toward him.

Covey was on the west sidewalk of Arch Street and Austin was on the east sidewalk. Austin realized Covey was getting closer and drew his duty weapon while moving from the east sidewalk to the street. He yelled for Covey to get on the ground and show his hands. Covey slowed to a walk and stopped on the sidewalk approximately 20 to 25 feet from Austin.

Austin again yelled for Covey to show his hands. Covey threw his hands out front as if taunting Austin before suddenly producing a black and silver handgun. He pointed the gun at Austin. Austin believed Covey was trying to kill him. Austin fired at Covey and believed that Covey was hit because his legs stiffened and his knees locked before he fell to the ground. While on the ground, Covey returned fire. Austin heard multiple gunshots and saw the muzzle of Covey's gun flash. Austin moved laterally toward a vehicle to his right and fired again at Covey. Deputies arrived and rendered aid to Covey.

Surveillance Video

Surveillance video was obtained from multiple locations. In the videos, Covey can be seen running through the area, followed by deputies. One camera captured Covey in an alleyway walking away from Wyatt and Pena. Covey can be seen holding an object in his right hand, consistent with the deputies' description of him holding a gun with the barrel facing down.



Fig. 5 — Still image from a surveillance video of Covey walking with an object in his right hand.

One video, taken from the front of a residence at the location of the incident, captures Covey walking down the sidewalk and lifting his arms with what appears to be an object in his hands. Covey stops and faces a blue truck. Austin then appears from behind the blue truck. The video captures Austin firing multiple rounds at Covey from a pistol affixed with a flashlight. Covey falls to the ground as Austin retreats. It is unclear whether Covey, who is partially obscured by a tree, fires a weapon either before or after hitting the ground.

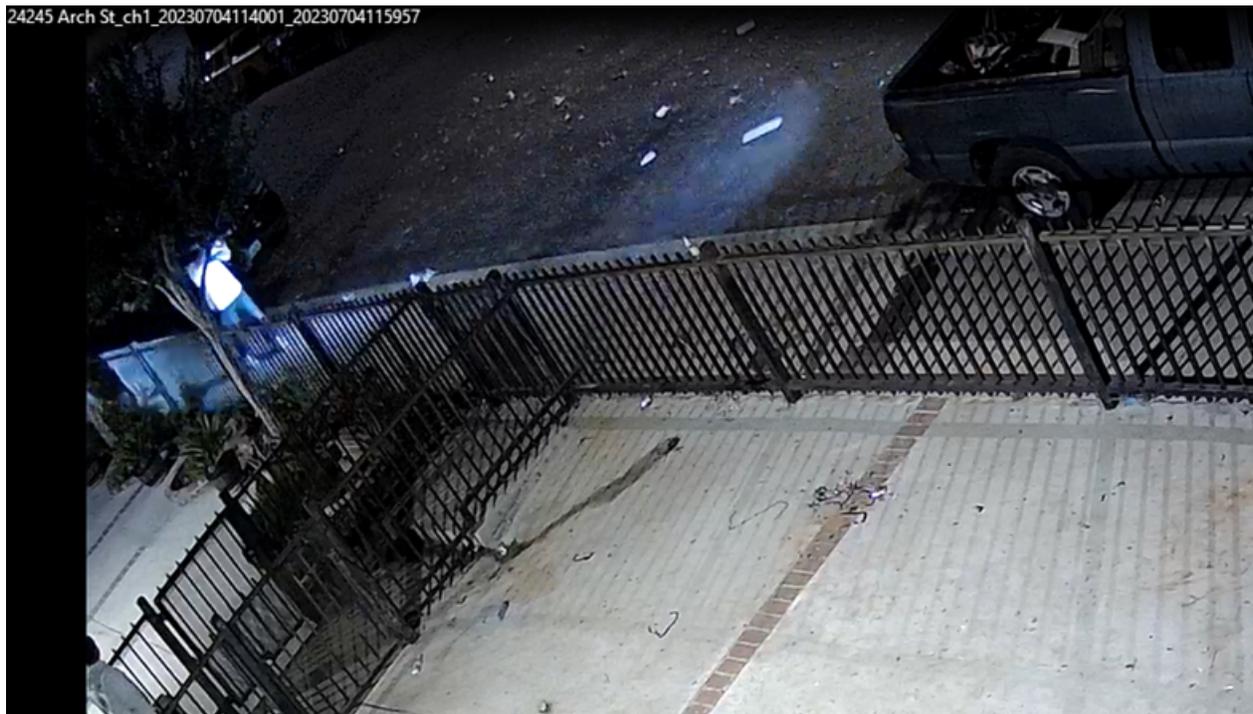


Fig. 6 — Still image from a surveillance video of Covey raising arms in direction of blue truck.

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 this case, Austin, along with other deputies, responded to a foot pursuit of a suspect believed to have been involved in an earlier shooting incident, who was known to be armed with a handgun. As Austin came upon Covey on Arch Street, surveillance video depicts Covey stopping, facing Austin's direction, and raising his arms while holding an object, likely a firearm.

Eyewitnesses gave conflicting accounts as to the order in which Austin and Covey fired their weapons. Both Noll and Wyatt stated they saw Covey fire at Austin before Austin returned fire. Austin stated he first fired his duty weapon at Covey after Covey pointed a gun at him, and Covey fired twice at Austin in response, prompting Austin to return fire in a second exchange.

Regardless of the order in which Covey and Austin fired, Covey's action of raising a firearm and pointing it at Austin alone demonstrated a clear intent to cause death or serious bodily injury to Austin or Noll, who was positioned near Austin. Under these circumstances, an objectively reasonable peace officer could fairly conclude Covey had the present ability, opportunity, and intent to cause immediate death or serious bodily injury to Austin or Noll. Accordingly, based on these facts, Austin's use of deadly force in self-defense and defense of others was reasonable.

In addition, Austin reasonably used deadly force to apprehend Covey, who was believed to be involved in an earlier shooting in Canyon Country and had fled from multiple deputies. Based on the totality of the circumstances, Austin could reasonably believe the use of deadly force was necessary to immediately apprehend Covey, a fleeing felon, to prevent him from causing death or serious bodily injury to another person.

CONCLUSION

We find Deputy Austin acted lawfully when he used deadly force against Covey.