

**Non-Fatal Officer Involved Shooting
Towards Dennis Bracamonte**

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

Detective Eric Saavedra, #548800

J.S.I.D. File #24-0269



NATHAN J. HOCHMAN

District Attorney

Justice System Integrity Division

April 9, 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: Non-Fatal Officer Involved Shooting Towards Dennis Bracamonte
J.S.I.D. File # 24-0269
L.A.S.D. File # 024-09283-0466-055

DATE: April 9, 2026

The Justice System Integrity Division of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office has completed its review of the August 20, 2024, non-fatal firearm discharge by Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) Detective Eric Saavedra towards Dennis Bracamonte.¹

We have concluded Detective Saavedra acted reasonably, believing based on the totality of the circumstances, that deadly force was necessary to defend himself and others against an imminent deadly threat.

The District Attorney's Command Center was notified of the shooting on August 20, 2024 at 3:52 p.m. The District Attorney Response Team (DART) responded and was given a walk-through of the scene by LASD Homicide Lieutenant Omar Camacho.

The following analysis is based on surveillance video, body worn camera video (BWV), investigative reports, audio recordings of witness interviews, scientific laboratory reports, voluntary recorded statements of witness and shooting officers, and photographs submitted to this office on September 12, 2025.

FACTUAL ANALYSIS

On August 20, 2024, detectives assigned to the LASD Gang Surveillance Unit were conducting a surveillance operation at the Extended Stay America Hotel located at [REDACTED] Firestone Boulevard in the City of La Mirada. The purpose of the operation was to arrest suspect Dennis Bracamonte for a 2023 murder based on an arrest warrant issued on June 20, 2024, in case number 24PCSF00362.

¹ As explained below, investigators discovered Bracamonte was not struck by gunfire.

During the surveillance operation several detectives, including Detective Eric Saavedra, were positioned in unmarked vehicles around the perimeter of the hotel.² Detectives observed Bracamonte and witness [REDACTED] exit the hotel lobby and enter a silver Mercedes sedan parked in the hotel's parking lot. Bracamonte entered the driver's side door of the Mercedes and [REDACTED] entered the front passenger side door.

Saavedra, who was parked in an unmarked white pickup truck in the hotel parking lot, conducted a "vehicle containment technique" (VCT) on the Mercedes which Bracamonte and [REDACTED] had entered. Saavedra pulled his vehicle directly behind the Mercedes close enough to ensure Bracamonte could not reverse his vehicle out of the parking spot to leave the location. Saavedra opened his door and began to exit his vehicle while yelling, "Sheriff's Department!"



Fig. 1: *Position of Saavedra's Truck Behind Bracamonte's Silver Mercedes at Time of Shooting.*

Saavedra told investigators Bracamonte, while still seated in the Mercedes' driver's seat, turned toward Saavedra and pointed a handgun at him through the Mercedes' open rear driver's side window.

² Saavedra was dressed for the undercover operation in green shorts, a black t-shirt, white athletic shoes, and a baseball cap. He was wearing a green outer ballistic vest with the word "Sheriff" written across the back and a cloth LASD badge on the front-right area of the vest. The vest was equipped with a radio and holder, several magazine pouches filled with magazines, and a body worn camera.



Fig. 2: Photo of Driver's Side of Silver Mercedes³

Saavedra exited his vehicle and yelled, "Gun!" While attempting to find cover, Saavedra heard what he described as a "pop," which he believed was a gunshot.⁴ Bracamonte placed his vehicle into reverse and began ramming his vehicle into Saavedra's vehicle. While colliding into Saavedra's vehicle, Bracamonte continued to point his handgun at Saavedra. While taking partial cover behind a parked white vehicle, Saavedra discharged his service weapon at Bracamonte. Saavedra and an unidentified deputy can be heard on Saavedra's BWV soon after the shooting occurred, telling Bracamonte to, "Put your hands up!" and "Drop the gun!" several times.⁵

³ Crime scene photos show broken glass on the ground beneath the front driver's side window, but do not show any broken glass on the ground below the rear driver's side window or within the back seat. Assuming the car was equipped with a rear driver's side window, this lack of broken glass suggests the rear driver's side window was rolled down at the time of the shooting.

⁴ Saavedra did not state whether or not he believed this "pop" came from Bracamonte or another person. The footage from Saavedra's BWV during the shooting does not contain audio because Saavedra did not turn on his BWV until after the shooting had taken place. The body worn camera used by LASD has a pre-event buffer feature which automatically saves the 30 seconds of footage prior to a deputy activating the camera. This buffer feature is designed to capture the moments leading up to an incident, which could provide insight as to why a deputy began recording

⁵ Saavedra's first shots occur at the 0:43 mark on Saavedra's BWV. The audio does not begin until 0:59, after Saavedra had stopped shooting. The unidentified deputy yells, "Drop the gun!" at 1:18.

The Shooting



Fig. 2: Still from Saavedra's BWC Showing Moment when Saavedra Fired First Round at Bracamonte.

Saavedra told investigators he initially fired a single round at Bracamonte through the red subcompact car which was parked next to Bracamonte's vehicle. After firing this first round, Saavedra told investigators he saw Bracamonte "still had the gun in his right hand, pointed in my direction."⁶



Fig. 2: Still From Hotel Surveillance Footage Showing Saavedra Firing Initial Round at Bracamonte Through Red Subcompact Car.

⁶ August 29, 2024 interview of Saavedra at 15:53.

Saavedra fired an additional eleven rounds at Bracamonte. Nine of the rounds fired by Saavedra struck Bracamonte's vehicle, and four of the rounds struck the red subcompact car parked next to Bracamonte's vehicle.⁷ None of the rounds struck Bracamonte or anyone else.

Saavedra was the only deputy who observed Bracamonte holding a firearm and the only deputy who fired his service weapon during the incident. Investigators did not recover any evidence suggesting Bracamonte had fired a weapon during the incident.⁸

After the shooting, Bracamonte exited his vehicle and was taken into custody for the outstanding arrest warrant. Bracamonte alleged he had been shot, resulting in DART being notified and responding. Subsequent investigation determined Bracamonte was not struck by gunfire, and sustained only minor scratches and abrasions as a result of the shooting.

Deputies recovered a Luger 9 millimeter semi-automatic handgun from the driver's seat near the center console of Bracamonte's vehicle. This weapon was loaded with one 9 millimeter round in the chamber.



Fig. 2: *Handgun Found on Driver's Seat of Bracamonte's Vehicle.*

LASD's Chemical Processing Unit processed this handgun for fingerprints but were unable to lift any. LASD's Scientific Services Bureau conducted DNA testing on swabs taken from the

⁷ LASD Crime Scene Investigation Report dated December 17, 2024 at p. 1.

⁸ Investigators recovered a single expended cartridge case from within Bracamonte's vehicle. The cartridge case was located on the vehicle's cowl on the front passenger side just below the windshield. Investigators believe the cartridge case is unrelated to the subject shooting and "appeared to have been resting on the cowl for some time." (Det. Jaramilla September 20, 2024 Supplemental Report at p. 13).

handgun and compared the results against a buccal reference taken from Bracamonte. The results of this analysis were inconclusive.⁹

Investigators subsequently contacted Bracamonte while in custody, and requested consent to photograph injuries he sustained during the incident. In response to this request, Bracamonte stated, "I plead the Fifth." The investigators left Bracamonte without photographing him. There is no evidence suggesting investigators attempted to question Bracamonte regarding the incident.

Bracamonte was subsequently charged in case 25DWCFD00261 with two felony counts of violating Penal Code sections 29800(a)(1) and 30305(a). The case was consolidated into 24PCSF00362, the murder case. Bracamonte was subsequently convicted of the murder and sentenced to 114 years to life plus five years and four months in State Prison.

Firearms Evidence

During the incident, Saavedra was armed with a Smith & Wesson 9 millimeter semi-automatic handgun. Saavedra told investigators he carried his duty weapon with 17 live rounds in the magazine and one live round in the chamber. Saavedra told investigators he discharged his duty weapon during the incident and did not reload.¹⁰

After the shooting, Saavedra participated in an ammunition inventory with investigators. When Saavedra unloaded his service weapon, investigators documented five live rounds in the magazine, and one live round in the chamber. This round count, combined with the 12 bullet holes found in Bracamonte's vehicle and the red subcompact vehicle, and the 12 spent casings found in the parking lot at the scene of the shooting, suggests Saavedra fired 12 rounds during the shooting.

CIVILIAN WITNESS STATEMENTS

██████████

██████████ told investigators she and her boyfriend had been staying at the hotel but hotel management asked them to leave the property prior to the shooting. While sitting in the hotel lobby, she met Bracamonte, who offered to provide her a ride to sell an Xbox. ██████████ entered the passenger side of Bracamonte's Mercedes, and Bracamonte entered the driver's side. Almost immediately after entering the Mercedes, a white car collided into the rear of the Mercedes.¹¹ ██████████ exited the Mercedes and fell on the ground. She then heard approximately five to six gunshots. She told investigators she thought Bracamonte "was shooting at the cops," but also stated was unsure whether the shots came from Bracamonte or the deputies. ██████████ told investigators she saw

⁹ LASD DNA Analysis Report dated August 15, 2025 at p. 2.

¹⁰ All four of the additional 9 millimeter magazines which were carried on Saavedra's vest were loaded to capacity and had not been used during the shooting.

¹¹ In her statement to investigators, ██████████ did not state whether or not the Mercedes was moving at the time that the white car collided into it.

Bracamonte raise his hand towards the deputies and then heard gunshots.”¹² [REDACTED] did not see a gun in Bracamonte’s hands.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] told investigators she and her husband [REDACTED] were in their room at the hotel when the incident occurred. [REDACTED] did not see the incident, but heard a crash outside the hotel and heard deputies identifying themselves as, “Sheriff’s Department!” then repeatedly yell, “Drop the weapon, drop the weapon!”¹³ [REDACTED] then heard numerous gunshots but was unable to identify who was shooting.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] observed the shooting from within the hotel room he was sharing with [REDACTED]. He told investigators he saw a male and female get into a Mercedes which was parked in the hotel parking lot. He then observed a truck crash into the back of the Mercedes. The driver of the truck exited the truck and identified himself as a LASD deputy and told the driver of the Mercedes to, “Put up your hands!” [REDACTED] observed Bracamonte in the Mercedes fidgeting with something which “looked like a gun.”¹⁴ [REDACTED] ducked for cover when he heard gunfire. When the gunfire ended, [REDACTED] saw Bracamonte exit his car and surrender to the deputies.

[REDACTED] told investigators the deputy who emerged from the driver’s side of the truck (Saavedra) was the only person he saw firing a gun. [REDACTED] specifically stated Bracamonte “did not turn around”¹⁵ and “did not shoot at all.”¹⁶

Investigators interviewed several other civilian witnesses who were present in the hotel or the parking lot at the time of the shooting. They gave statements which were consistent with the statements of the other civilian and deputy witnesses.

WITNESS DEPUTY STATEMENTS

Deputy Saul Gomez

Gomez was one of the deputies working alongside Saavedra in the surveillance operation, and was the passenger in Saavedra’s truck the time Saavedra performed the VCT on Bracamonte’s vehicle. After colliding into the rear of Bracamonte’s vehicle, Gomez exited the passenger side of the truck and yelled towards Bracamonte, “Sheriff’s Department, let me see you your hands!” Seconds later Gomez heard gunshots coming from the area next to him, while at the same time observing Bracamonte attempting to escape by ramming his vehicle into the front of his and Saavedra’s truck. Gomez observed Saavedra firing his weapon towards Bracamonte’s vehicle.¹⁷

¹² August 20, 2024 interview of [REDACTED] at 20:12.

¹³ August 21, 2024 interview of [REDACTED] at 6:01.

¹⁴ August 21, 2024 interview of [REDACTED] at 10:45.

¹⁵ *Id.* at 12:26.

¹⁶ *Id.* at 11:57.

¹⁷ Saavedra was positioned to the left of Gomez at this time.

Gomez then saw Bracamonte holding both of his hands up in front of his face “as if he were giving up.”¹⁸ Gomez did not see what Bracamonte was doing with his hands previously.

While arresting Bracamonte, Bracamonte told Gomez he had been shot. Gomez told investigators he saw blood on Bracamonte’s shoulder. Gomez checked him for injury but did not see any evidence of a gunshot wound.

Deputy Luis Torres

Torres was one of the deputies working alongside Saavedra in the surveillance operation. Torres told investigators after seeing Saavedra’s truck make contact with the back of Bracamonte’s vehicle, he heard Saavedra yell, “Gun!” and then heard gunshots. Torres was not able to see what Bracamonte was doing at the time of the shooting. He saw Saavedra shooting but was unsure whether or not Bracamonte was shooting. Torres observed Bracamonte raise his hands upwards at which point Torres began issuing commands to Bracamonte to exit his vehicle. Gomez arrested Bracamonte. Torres then saw the tan handgun on the driver’s seat of Bracamonte’s vehicle.

Investigators interviewed other deputies who were present at the time of the shooting. These deputies provided statements which were consistent with the statements summarized above.

LEGAL ANALYSIS

The Law

A peace officer is justified in using deadly force when the officer reasonably believes, based on the totality of the circumstances, that such force is necessary for either of the following reasons: (1) to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury to the officer or another person; or (2) 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 section 835a(c)(1)(A) &(B).

Deadly force shall be used “only, when necessary, in defense of human life,” and officers “shall use other available resources and techniques if reasonably safe and feasible to an objectively reasonable officer.” Penal Code section 835a(a)(2).

“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 section 835a(e)(2).

¹⁸ Gomez interview at 19:57.

When considering 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 section 835a(a)(4) and (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 section 835a(a)(4).

Analysis

Saavedra stated he fired his weapon in self-defense after seeing Bracamonte pointing a gun at him.

Multiple sources of evidence support Saavedra's account and explain why Saavedra was the only deputy who saw Bracamonte pointing a firearm. First, Saavedra's position in the driver's seat of the white truck was, with the exception of [REDACTED], in closest proximity to Bracamonte and provided him with a clear and unobstructed view of Bracamonte. In addition, Saavedra's account of Bracamonte pointing a gun at him is supported by the audio from Saavedra's BWV, in which an unidentified deputy can be heard yelling, "Gun!" after Saavedra exited his vehicle. Also, immediately after the shooting deputies recovered a handgun on the driver's seat of Bracamonte's vehicle. Lastly, [REDACTED] stated although she did not see Bracamonte holding a gun, she saw his hand raised in the direction of the deputies immediately prior to the shooting. Given a handgun was found in the same location, it is reasonable to assume he was holding this gun as he was raising his hand towards the deputies.

Based on these circumstances, Saavedra's belief that the use of deadly force was necessary to defend against an imminent threat of death or bodily injury to himself and the other deputies present in the parking lot was reasonable.

Although witness [REDACTED] told investigators he only saw Bracamonte "fidgeting" with something which looked like a gun, and did not turn around in the direction of the deputies, it is unclear from [REDACTED]'s interview whether or not [REDACTED] was watching Bracamonte's hands and body throughout the entirety of the incident.

All other evidence recovered in this matter corroborates Saavedra's statement.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, we find Deputy Saavedra was reasonable in his belief that deadly force was necessary to stop an imminent deadly threat.