

**Non-Fatal Officer Involved Shooting of John Blocker
Los Angeles Police Department**

**Officer Denis Arevalo, #42798
Officer Arshavir Shaldjian, #38710**

J.S.I.D. File #22-0202



NATHAN J. HOCHMAN
District Attorney
Justice System Integrity Division
May 8, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: CAPTAIN OMAR BAZULTO
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Force Investigation Division
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FROM: JUSTICE SYSTEM INTEGRITY DIVISION
Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

SUBJECT: Non-Fatal Officer Involved Shooting of John Blocker
J.S.I.D. File #22-0202
L.A.P.D. File #F026-22

DATE: May 8, 2025

The Justice System Integrity Division (JSID) of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office (LADA) has completed its review of the June 17, 2022, non-fatal shooting of John Blocker by Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Officers Denis Arevalo and Arshavir Shaldjian. We conclude the use of deadly force by the officers was in lawful self-defense and the defense of others.

The District Attorney's Command Center was notified of this shooting at 10:54 a.m. on June 17, 2022. The District Attorney's Response Team (DART) responded to the location and was given a briefing regarding the circumstances surrounding the shooting and a walk-through of the scene.

The following analysis is based on body worn camera video (BWV), digital in-car video (DICV), surveillance video, photographs, witness interviews, and investigative reports. No compelled statements were considered in this analysis.

FACTUAL ANALYSIS

On June 17, 2022, LAPD Officers Dennis Arevalo and Arshavir Shaldjian responded to a radio dispatch for assault with a deadly weapon at the intersection of Beverly Boulevard and North La Brea Avenue after a 9-1-1 caller reported observing a man pointing a gun at nearby construction workers. As the officers approached the intersection, they observed Blocker, who matched the description of the man given by the 9-1-1 caller. Before Arevalo and Shaldjian came to a complete stop in their patrol vehicle, Blocker retrieved a handgun from a plastic bag he was carrying and began firing at the officers. Arevalo and Shaldjian exited the patrol vehicle and returned fire.

Blocker ran northeast from the intersection. As the officers re-entered their vehicle to pursue Blocker, he stopped running, turned towards their vehicle, and fired four more rounds. Arevalo and Shaldjian again exited their vehicle and returned fire.

Arevalo and Shaldjian radioed for backup officers to respond to their location as Blocker ran through a business parking lot towards Detroit Street. Blocker was eventually found wounded outside of a residence on the 300 block of Detroit Street and taken into custody without further incident. A semi-automatic handgun with a magazine loaded with two rounds of ammunition was recovered next to Blocker as he lay wounded on the doorstep of the residence. He was transported to the hospital and treated for a gunshot wound to his left arm. No officers or other civilians were injured.

9-1-1 Call

On June 17, 2022, at approximately 9:18 a.m., a witness called 9-1-1 to report seeing a man, later identified as Blocker, pointing a gun at construction workers on Beverly Boulevard, west of Poinsettia Place. The witness described the man as Black, wearing a blue sweater, and carrying a white bag. The witness followed Blocker at a distance and relayed Blocker's movements to dispatchers.

At 9:24 a.m., LAPD Hollywood Patrol Division officers responded to the dispatch. At 9:26 a.m., the 9-1-1 caller told dispatchers Blocker had entered a Starbucks located on the southeast corner of Beverly Boulevard and Detroit Street. The information was relayed to responding officers by dispatch. The 9-1-1 caller then reported seeing Blocker exit the Starbucks and standing on the corner of Beverly Boulevard and North La Brea Avenue. Blocker was still at the location when LAPD officers arrived.

Officer Involved Shooting¹

At 9:30:30 a.m., Shaldjian and Arevalo respond in a marked patrol vehicle to the intersection of Beverly Boulevard and North La Brea Avenue. As Shaldjian and Arevalo approach the intersection, they see Blocker, who matches the description given by the 9-1-1 caller: A Black male, wearing a blue sweater, and carrying a white bag.

As Arevalo and Shaldjian approach the intersection, their patrol vehicle's DICV system recorded Blocker standing on the southwest corner of the intersection holding a white bag.

¹ The facts in this section are derived primarily from BWV, along with security camera videos near the incident. Video cameras were located at the [REDACTED] Beverly Boulevard, and video of the incident was retrieved. One camera provides a view of the intersection of Beverly Boulevard and North La Brea Avenue and captured the OIS. A second camera provides a view of Beverly Boulevard west of North La Brea Avenue, and captured Blocker shooting at the officers. Video of the incident was also retrieved from the [REDACTED] located at [REDACTED] North La Brea Avenue. One camera provides a view of the intersection of Beverly Boulevard and North La Brea Avenue and captured the OIS. A second camera provides a view of Beverly Boulevard west of North La Brea Avenue, and captured Blocker shooting at the officers.



Figure 1: Still frame photographs from DICV depicting Blocker at the intersection of Beverly Boulevard and North La Brea Avenue.

As the officers enter the intersection in their vehicle, Blocker reaches into the white bag he was holding with his right hand, retrieves a handgun from the bag, and begins firing in the direction of Shaldjian and Arevalo's vehicle.

At 9:30:49 a.m., Arevalo exits the vehicle and fires one round from approximately 35 feet away from Blocker, at the same time Blocker is firing at the officers. At 9:30:51, Arevalo fires two additional rounds. Shaldjian exits the patrol vehicle, takes cover behind the passenger door, and fires one round towards Blocker. Blocker runs away heading northeast from the intersection, across Beverly Boulevard, still holding the handgun and the plastic bag.



Figure 2: Enlarged still frame photograph from [REDACTED] security video showing Blocker running across Beverly Boulevard after firing initial rounds towards Arevalo and Shaldjian's patrol vehicle.

At 9:30:55 a.m., BWV captured Shaldjian radioing dispatch, and advising, "Shots fired, La Brea and Beverly, suspect male Black, blue sweatshirt." Blocker runs across Beverly Boulevard while still holding both the gun and the plastic bag, and stops in the middle of the street. Blocker turns towards Arevalo and Shaldjian, who had reentered their patrol vehicle to begin pursuit.

As he runs across Beverly Boulevard, Blocker drops the white bag he was holding, raises the gun, and fires three additional rounds towards the officers' patrol vehicle. Blocker's gun appears to malfunction, at which point he manipulates the firearm and fires one additional round towards the patrol vehicle.



Figure 3: Enlarged still frame photograph from [REDACTED] security video showing Blocker firing rounds towards Arevalo and Shaldjian's LAPD patrol vehicle from the middle of Beverly Boulevard.

As Blocker fires the four rounds towards the pursuing officers, Arevalo and Shaldjian again stop, exit the vehicle, and return fire. Shaldjian's BWV shows him taking cover behind the open passenger door of the vehicle and firing five rounds towards Blocker from approximately 110

feet away. Arevalo's BWV shows him exit the driver's door of the vehicle and fire one round towards Blocker from the same distance.

As Arevalo and Shaldjian return fire, video surveillance from the [REDACTED] on the corner of Beverly Boulevard and North La Brea Avenue captured Blocker lowering his gun and running northwest towards Detroit Street through a shopping plaza. Arevalo and Shaldjian discontinue their pursuit of Blocker as additional LAPD units arrive.

BWV and dispatch recordings indicate at approximately 9:33 a.m., Support Division Air Unit-3 arrived overhead. The air unit directed responding officers to set up a perimeter and assume containment positions. LAPD Tactical Flight Officer (TFO) Jamie Delieuze observed Blocker sitting hunched over with his head down in an alcove by the doorway on Detroit Street. Delieuze alerted ground officers to Blocker's location and requested an ambulance response.

Blocker was found lying on the ground in front of a residence on Detroit Street. An arrest team was formed to approach and apprehend Blocker. BWV captured Blocker lying on the ground in front of the residence at 10:04 a.m. A firearm is on the ground approximately one foot from Blocker. Blocker is taken into custody without further incident. LAPD Officer Jesse Rubalcava recovers the semi-automatic handgun from the ground near where Blocker is arrested. Rubalcava unloads the handgun and secures it in his patrol vehicle. BWV captured him removing the magazine from the handgun and pulling the slide back. The magazine contained two rounds of ammunition. The chamber was empty. The gun was booked into evidence after being collected by LAPD criminalists for analysis and ballistics testing.²

After he was arrested, Blocker was transported to Cedars-Sinai Hospital by Los Angeles Fire Department personnel for medical treatment. [REDACTED]



Figure 4: Photograph of the gun recovered near where Blocker was arrested.

² The recovered firearm was a 9mm semi-automatic Kahr Arms pistol with a seven round capacity magazine. The gun was recovered with two live 9mm rounds in the magazine. The firearm was reported stolen in Wilshire Division on June 13, 2022 (DR No. 2207-10365). Investigators recovered two expended cartridge cases and a live 9mm round from the area of Beverly Boulevard, where Blocker fired towards the officers before manipulating the apparently malfunctioning firearm. Ballistics testing indicated the expended cartridge cases were fired by the 9mm Kahr Arms handgun recovered near where Blocker was taken into custody.

Witness ██████████ was interviewed at the scene and said he heard gunfire and saw Blocker point a gun at officers. ██████████ said he heard Blocker yell, "I'm going to shoot you!" multiple times.

Witness ██████████ told investigators she heard gunshots, and saw Blocker shooting at officers and moving around the street before she ran inside a nearby bakery.

Witness ██████████ was interviewed and stated he saw Blocker shoot "three, four rounds right at two of the officers. Then he turned around and he did something with the gun, and he shot like two or three more rounds."

Witness ██████████ was interviewed and stated, "They shot back at him, towards him. At some point he moved off the sidewalk and into the middle of the street...I heard him try to shoot a few more times and it was clicking...but then after that he did get another shot off."

Witness ██████████ heard gunshots and looked out his window. He saw Blocker holding a bag as he ran from Beverly Boulevard to a two-story duplex at approximately ██████████ Detroit Street.

DART members observed a blood trail on the east sidewalk of Detroit Street and Beverly Boulevard, which ran in a northerly direction before stopping where Blocker was arrested.

The LADA filed felony charges against Blocker for violations of Penal Code sections 664/187, attempted murder, 245(d)(2), assault on a peace officer with a deadly weapon, and 245(b), assault with a semi-automatic firearm. A pretrial hearing is scheduled for May 21, 2025.

LEGAL ANALYSIS

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 to 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 §§ 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 § 835a(a)(2). A peace officer may lawfully use deadly force if he or she "[r]easonably believed, based on the totality of the circumstances, that the force was necessary to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury to the officer or another person." CALCRIM No. 2670; see Penal Code § 835a (c)(1)(A).

"A threat of death or serious bodily injury is 'imminent' when, based on the totality of the circumstances, and 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 some future harm, no matter how great the fear and no matter how great the likelihood of harm, but is one that, from appearances, must be instantly confronted and addressed." Penal Code § 835a(e)(2).

The right to self-defense is the same whether the danger is real or apparent. *People v. Toledo* (1948) 85 Cal.App.2d 577, 580. “An officer is not constitutionally required to wait until he sets eyes upon a weapon before employing deadly force to protect himself a fleeing suspect who turns and moves as though to draw a gun.” *Thompson v. Hubbard* (2001) 257 F.3d 896, 899. “[A]n officer may reasonably use deadly force when he or she confronts an armed suspect in close proximity whose actions indicate an intent to attack. In these circumstances, the Courts cannot ask an officer to hold fire in order to ascertain whether the suspect will, in fact, injure or murder the officer.” *Martinez v. County of Los Angeles* (1996) 47 Cal.App.4th 334, 345.

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 §§ 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). Moreover, “[a] peace officer who attempts to make an arrest need not retreat, desist from their efforts by reason of resistance or threatened resistance of the person being arrested.” Penal Code § 835a(d).

In the current case, Blocker fired a gun at Arevalo and Shaldjian’s marked LAPD patrol vehicle as they entered the intersection of Beverly Boulevard and La Brea Avenue. Arevalo and Shaldjian exited their vehicle and returned fire. BWV shows the officers take cover as Blocker fires at them. Blocker ran a short distance before turning and again firing multiple rounds towards the pursuing officers. Arevalo and Shaldjian stopped and returned fire again. Drivers of numerous vehicles in the area sped away during this exchange of gunfire in the middle of a busy street. When his firearm suffered an apparent malfunction, Blocker did not relent, successfully clearing the malfunction before firing once more at officers. Blocker’s actions demonstrated a clear intent to kill the officers while putting numerous civilians at risk of being caught in the crossfire.

Based on the totality of the evidence, both Arevalo and Shaldjian reasonably believed that the use of deadly force was necessary to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury to themselves and to others within the meaning of Penal Code section 835(a)(C)(1)(A).

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, we find that Arevalo and Shaldjian acted in lawful self-defense and defense of others when they used deadly force against Blocker.