

**Non-Fatal Officer Involved Shooting of
Erick Franco Sanchez
Los Angeles Police Department**

**Detective Joel Ruiz, #35739
Detective Jose Delgado, #38179
Detective Huy Nguyen, #39939
Officer Francisco Zaragoza, #39188
Officer Derrick Boykins, #40390**

J.S.I.D. File #24-0124



**NATHAN J. HOCHMAN
District Attorney
Justice System Integrity Division
August 19, 2026**

MEMORANDUM

TO: CAPTAIN OMAR BAZULTO
Los Angeles Police Department
Force Investigation Division
100 West First Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

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

SUBJECT: Non-Fatal Officer Involved Shooting of Erick Franco Sanchez
J.S.I.D. File #24-0124
F.I.D. File #F018-24

DATE: August 19, 2026

The Justice System Integrity Division of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office has completed its review of the April 18, 2024, non-fatal officer involved shooting of Erick Franco Sanchez by Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Detectives Joel Ruiz, Jose Delgado, Huy Nguyen, and Officers Francisco Zaragoza and Derrick Boykins. We have determined all of the involved officers acted in lawful self-defense and the defense of others when they fired their service weapons.

The District Attorney's Command Center was notified of the shooting at approximately 5:18 a.m. on April 18, 2024. 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, firearm analysis reports, surveillance video, and witness statements submitted to this office by LAPD Detective Erika Sanchez on May 5, 2025. Compelled statements for officers not involved in the use-of-force incident were considered in this analysis.

FACTUAL ANALYSIS

On April 18, 2024, LAPD personnel responded to the 4800 block of Torrance Boulevard in the City of Torrance to serve a Probable Cause Arrest Warrant (*Ramey* Warrant) for subject Erick Franco Sanchez.^{1,2} Sanchez's criminal history was limited to two misdemeanor vehicle code

¹ The arrest warrant was to be served by LAPD personnel alongside members of the United States Marshal Service Pacific Southwest Regional Fugitive Task Force as part of the United States Marshal Apprehension Task Force (USMATF).

² Sanchez was being investigated for crimes related to continuous sexual abuse of a child. Five felony counts related to that conduct, as well as four counts of assault with a deadly weapon upon a peace officer based on the conduct at issue in this memorandum, were eventually filed in case #24CJCF02574.

violations and no firearms were registered to him. The investigative report in the underlying criminal case, the *Ramey* warrant, and the California Department of Motor Vehicles records all showed Sanchez to be living in the south residence (“Rear House”) on a flag lot which contained a second home (“Front House”). Access to the Rear House required passing the Front House via a long driveway.



Figure 1: Photograph Depicting the Front and Rear Houses on the Flag Lot

Officers were unaware Sanchez had recently married Mariya Wrightsman, the owner of both homes on the flag lot, and was living in the Front House when service of the warrant was effectuated.

Officers formed a strategic plan: a “contact team” would approach up the driveway, pass the Front House and a wooden gate, and then take positions north of the Rear House. A second group of officers would position themselves covering the south side of the Rear House.



Figure 2: Photograph Depicting the Front and Rear House

WITNESS STATEMENTS³

Detective Tina Rios

Rios stated she was stationed outside the rear glass doors of the Front House. She heard LAPD Officer Derrick Boykins knock on the front door of the Rear House and announce himself by

³ Statements were reviewed from officers who were not involved in the use of force. Photos of the scene were derived from a subsequent walk-through of the scene. Officers serving the arrest warrant were not equipped with body-worn cameras.

yelling, “Police!” Moments later, she observed Sanchez inside the Front House holding a dark colored firearm in his left hand. Sanchez, approximately 15 feet away, looked directly at her, raised the firearm to chest level, and pointed it in her direction.



Figure 3: Glass Double Doors Through Which Rios First Saw Sanchez

Rios believed her life was in danger, and immediately yelled, “Gun!” As she attempted to unholster her weapon and move backwards, she heard gunshots coming from inside the Front House. She fell off a cement platform and suffered minor injuries.⁴ Rios then crawled towards the southeast corner of the Front House to seek cover.

Officer John Romines

Romines stated he heard two gunshots, drew his firearm to a “low-ready” position, and took cover behind a parked Honda Clarity in the driveway. He covered the front door. Officer Christian Lavender moved north up the driveway, unholstered his pistol, and also held it in a “low-ready” position.

Officer Jonathan Pacheco

Pacheco stated he heard Rios yell, “Hey, gun!” He turned towards the Front House and saw Sanchez running inside. He heard two gunshots and saw two simultaneous muzzle flashes from inside the residence.

Pacheco then observed Sanchez emerge from a gap on the east side of the Front House, leaning out with what appeared to be a firearm held at a 45-degree angle, “motioning like he was about to raise it in our direction.”

⁴ During a subsequent examination of the crime scene, two bullet impacts to the floor were identified inside the room where Rios saw Sanchez holding a gun. The investigation determined both of those projectiles were fired by Sanchez.



Figure 4: Gap in Front House from which Sanchez Emerged (Circled)

Pacheco raised his weapon and prepared to fire in the immediate defense of his life, however, Boykins moved into his line of fire so Pacheco lowered his weapon. Boykins and Ruiz then both fired their service weapons, and Sanchez retreated inside.

Detective Porfirio Montejano

Montejano stated he was on the south side of the Rear House when he heard the door knock, two gunshots, and a radio broadcast of someone someone yelling, “Hey, he is firing at us!” He moved toward the south side of the Front House and observed Detectives Ruiz, Huy Nguyen, and Rios running towards the rear of the Front House, while Detective Francisco Zaragoza stood to his left. Montejano saw a muzzle flash inside the Front House and heard more gunshots. He saw Zaragoza fire four to six rounds in what appeared to him to be “cover fire” as personnel redeployed.

Detective Edgar Ramos

Ramos stated he used a bullhorn to order occupants of the Front House to exit. Mariya Wrightsman eventually exited, followed by Sanchez, who had a gunshot wound to his left arm.

Julio Renteria

Firefighter/Paramedic Julio Renteria asked Sanchez what had happened as part of his medical assessment. Sanchez told him he woke up, heard noises, saw people on his property, grabbed his gun, and “just start[ed] shooting.” He stated he realized the people were officers only after he began firing.

Erick Sanchez

Sanchez gave a recorded statement to law enforcement after being treated at the hospital on April 18, 2024. He said his dogs woke him. He checked his surveillance cameras and saw a man in shorts behind the house.⁵ Sanchez believed people might be stealing from him because of the visible construction to his home. He informed Wrightsman, who retrieved her handgun and gave it to him. He went to investigate and heard people speaking English but did not understand what

⁵ LAPD Officer John Romines was wearing shorts at the time of this incident.

they were saying. He made his way to the rear of the home, inside the new construction. He pointed his gun towards the ground and fired one round to scare off whoever was outside. He then heard four or five gunshots, was struck in the left arm, and heard officers identify themselves as “police.”⁶ Sanchez returned to the bedroom, dropped the gun outside the doorway, told Wrightsman he had been shot, and ultimately complied with officers’ commands to exit.



Figure 5: Photos Depicting Sanchez's Gun on Floor Inside Front House (Circled and Close-Up)

Mariya Wrightsman

Wrightsmen gave a recorded statement to law enforcement on April 18, 2024. She stated Sanchez woke her and told her someone was in the house. She did not hear anyone herself but retrieved her registered handgun and gave it to Sanchez, then remained in the bedroom. She heard gunshots, saw Sanchez return bleeding from his arm, assisted him, and went outside to obtain help.

USE OF FORCE

Investigators determined Detectives Delgado, Ruiz, and Nguyen, and Officers Boykins and Zaragoza all fired their service weapons.⁷ All shots were fired northbound from the south side of the property towards the area where Rios first observed Sanchez. The entire exchange, from the first shot to the last, lasted approximately eight seconds.⁸

Sanchez fired three rounds. Two were recovered from the floor near Rios’s original position; the third was lodged in plywood against the east wall at the rear of the Front House, near where Pacheco saw Sanchez emerge.

⁶ Sanchez denied hearing any officer identify themselves before he had been shot.

⁷ Delgado and Ruiz fired two rounds, Nguyen fired one round, and both Boykins and Zaragoza fired six rounds.

⁸ Security footage obtained from an adjoining residence captured the sounds of gunfire, which was used to determine the length of time between the first and final shots by officers.

CHARGES FILED

Sanchez was transported to Harbor-UCLA Medical Center for treatment of a gunshot wound to the left upper arm, and was subsequently released for booking.

He was charged with four counts of Penal Code §245(D)(1), assault with a deadly weapon on a Peace Officer.⁹

LEGAL ANALYSIS

A peace officer is justified in using deadly force when the officer reasonably believes, based on the totality of the circumstances, 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).

⁹ As of the time of the writing of this memo the case is in pretrial in Department 119 at the Criminal Justice Center.

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).

Here, Sanchez pointed a loaded firearm directly at Detective Rios, then fired three rounds. All officers on scene were immediately aware Sanchez was armed, via Rios’ broadcast, and they heard the subsequent gunshots. Based on the totality of this evidence, each officer who responded with lethal force could reasonably believe 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 § 835(a)(C)(1)(A).

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, we find LAPD Detectives Joel Ruiz, Jose Delgado, Huy Nguyen, and Officers Francisco Zaragoza and Derrick Boykins acted in lawful self-defense and defense of others when they used deadly force against Sanchez.