

03-31-2021

LASD Deputy Involved Shooting (DIS) on the 5100 block of Live Oak Street, Cudahy.

The following information is based on facts determined from an investigation into the incident described. The investigation is ongoing and as witnesses are interviewed, evidence is analyzed and reports are reviewed, our understanding of the facts may change. The details described below accurately reflect the facts as we currently know them.

On March 31, 2021, at approximately 8:40 pm, East Los Angeles (ELA) Sheriff's Station received a 911 call, from a residence in the 5100 Block of Live Oak Street in the city of Cudahy. The caller reported a family member was having a mental health crisis and creating a disturbance by pushing other family members. The person was identified as Isaias Cervantes a 25 year old male Hispanic. According to the family member calling the station, Cervantes has obsessive compulsive disorder, depression, anxiety and is hard of hearing.

At approximately 8:50 P.M., two deputies assigned to the city of Cudahy arrived at the residence. They contacted family members and a crisis counselor outside of the residence, near the sidewalk. The crisis counselor had informed the deputies she had not been able to gain Cervantes' cooperation and his behavior had escalated from verbally aggressive to physically aggressive. The deputies spoke with Cervantes' mother and the crisis counselor, gathering additional details about Cervantes' behavior for approximately five minutes before approaching the residence and attempting to speak to Cervantes.

The deputies walked to the open front door where they saw Cervantes seated on a couch in the living room. A deputy asked Cervantes to step out of the house to speak with them, but he refused. Cervantes invited the deputies into the living room. The deputies explained to Cervantes he was not under arrest, but he was leaving no other option than to be put in handcuffs. When Cervantes continued to invite them inside, the deputies entered the living room. The deputies intended on detaining him to speak to him outside in front of the residence.

Cervantes complied with the deputies, who assisted him in standing up. The deputies each grasped one of Cervantes' arms and began to place his hands behind his back. Cervantes' demeanor suddenly changed from cooperative to assaultive and he attacked one of the deputies. A violent struggle ensued, which caused both of the Body Worn Cameras worn by the deputies to become dislodged from their uniforms and fall inside the room.

During the struggle, Cervantes attempted to disarm one of the deputies by pushing his gun holster strap forward and pulling on his handgun, partially removing it from the holster. The deputy pushed down on Cervantes' hand and pushed the gun completely back into the holster.

During the struggle, one deputy was heard saying “He is going for my Gun!”

The second deputy asked, “Does he have your gun?”

The second deputy fired a single shot at Cervantes, striking him one time in the left side of his torso.

A few seconds later a Deputy was heard saying, “Let Go, Let Go!”

A female civilian voice says, “Isaia, you need to let go of the gun, Isaia.”

Although struck, the deputies continued to struggle with Cervantes until they gained control of his hands and handcuffed him.

The deputies immediately requested paramedics and placed Cervantes in a recovery position. The deputies monitored his breathing until the arrival of the Los Angeles County Fire Department Paramedics. Cervantes was transported by ambulance to a local hospital where he received medical treatment.

During the assault, Cervantes punched the deputy in his face and used his hand to gouge the deputy’s face and eyes. This resulted in facial abrasions, bilateral eye contusions, corneal abrasions and a cervical sprain.

There were no other persons injured in the incident.

During an interview with a family member after the incident, the family member stated Cervantes was upset over his father being in the hospital. Cervantes had told the family member to call the police and “tell them to shoot me.” In addition, he also told the family member “I don’t want my dad to die, and I want to die too.”

The preliminary investigation has revealed that earlier the same evening, at 7:26 P.M., ELA Sheriff’s Station received a 911 hang up call from Cervantes’ residence. The dispatch personnel called the number back, but there was a busy signal. It was later learned from the family members that Cervantes had made the 911 call.

LASD Homicide investigators responded to the scene to conduct interviews, follow up and process the scene. Representatives from the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB), and the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office, Justice System Integrity Division (JSID) also responded and monitored the investigation.

Once completed, the criminal investigation will be forwarded to the District Attorney’s Office to determine if the force used by the involved personnel violated any criminal laws. Once the District Attorney’s Office investigation is completed, the LASD will evaluate the actions of the personnel within the application of policy, procedures and tactics.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is encouraged to call Sheriff's Homicide at 323-890-5500. Anonymous tips may be received through CRIMESTOPPERS at 800-222-8477.

***** UPDATE *****

The employee involved in the deputy involved shooting has been identified as Deputy David Vega.