

# Police shoot patient inside Southern California hospital

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A Simi Valley police officer shot a hospitalized patient inside Los Robles Regional Medical Center in Thousand Oaks, California on July 2, discharging his service weapon in a hospital where patients, nurses and medical staff were present.

The victim, a 46-year-old man who had been arrested on suspicion of attempted murder after an earlier domestic violence incident, survived and was later listed in stable condition. The officer was not injured. Los Robles stated afterward that “all patients, colleagues and visitors are safe” and that the hospital was “operating as normal.”

According to police accounts, officers responded shortly before 1:30 a.m. to a residence on Clover Street in Simi Valley, where they found the man and his wife suffering from stab wounds. Police allege that the man stabbed his wife before inflicting wounds on himself. The wife underwent surgery and is expected to survive. The man was taken to Los Robles for treatment and evaluation while remaining in police custody under the “constant supervision” of a Simi Valley police officer.

The shooting took place about 12:20 p.m. The officer guarding the patient reportedly believed the man needed medical attention and summoned hospital staff. Ventura County Sheriff’s Captain Rob Yoos told reporters that the shooting occurred during the medical assessment, adding that it remained “unclear” what led the officer to open fire.

That sequence is the central fact in the case. A wounded man hospitalized for medical treatment and psychiatric evaluation, was shot by the officer assigned to guard him after medical staff had been called into the room. There has been no public explanation of the medical condition that prompted the call for staff, whether the patient was restrained, whether body-camera or hospital footage exists, how many shots were

fired, where nurses and other staff were standing when the officer discharged his weapon, or why gunfire was considered necessary inside a clinical unit.

The Ventura County Sheriff’s Office has taken over the investigation of the shooting, while the Ventura County District Attorney’s Office is conducting a parallel review. This is the standard machinery of police self-review: one law enforcement agency investigates another, while prosecutors determine whether the officer’s conduct complied with the law.

The Los Robles shooting belongs to a documented pattern of police applying street-level compliance tactics—verbal commands, physical domination and lethal force—to patients suffering severe trauma, medical disorientation or acute psychiatric crises. In March 2023, Irvo Otieno, a 28-year-old Kenyan émigré experiencing a severe mental health crisis, was killed by seven Henrico County sheriff’s deputies and three hospital employees during intake at Central State Hospital in Virginia. Video footage showed as many as ten people piling onto a shackled and handcuffed Otieno for twelve minutes until he stopped breathing.

In October 2020, a Los Angeles County sheriff’s deputy fatally shot Nicholas Burgos, a 38-year-old patient under a temporary psychiatric hold at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. In June 2018, an LAPD officer shot Omar Magana inside a CT scan room at White Memorial Medical Center. In December 2015, an LAPD officer shot and killed Ruben Jose Herrera, a 26-year-old with bipolar disorder, inside the Harbor-UCLA emergency room.

Los Robles is operated by HCA Healthcare, the largest for-profit hospital chain in the United States. HCA reported \$75.6 billion in revenue in 2025 and \$6.784 billion in net income. In the fourth quarter alone, the company reported \$19.513 billion in revenue

and \$1.878 billion in net income. The company also announced a \$10 billion share repurchase authorization.

The conditions inside HCA hospitals have been the subject of repeated complaints from nurses and healthcare workers. At Los Robles itself, nurses fought HCA in 2023 over out-of-ratio assignments and unsafe staffing. SEIU Local 121RN reported at the time that nurses were demanding stronger contract language to prevent the hospital from placing nurses out of ratio and putting patients at risk. Rosanna Mendez, the union's executive director, said then that nurses had "sounded the alarm" over unsafe assignments that endangered patients and produced enormous stress.

In another Los Robles case, SEIU reported that former RN Jacqui Rum worked in HCA's StaRN program and faced "routine unsafe staffing" for 13 months, under conditions so intense that she resigned. HCA then sought to make her repay \$4,000 for what it called training. In 2025, SEIU reported that HCA agreed to pay penalties and restitution over its training repayment agreement program, including approximately \$83,000 in restitution to California nurses and more than \$1.16 million in penalties to the state.

This provides significant context to the Los Robles shooting. Nurses and hospital workers confront real danger in emergency departments and inpatient units. They are placed in unsafe conditions by understaffing, overcrowding, inadequate psychiatric resources, management pressure and the general collapse of social supports outside the hospital.

The response of SEIU Local 121RN to the Los Robles shooting has been to accept the "law and order" framework of the police. Mendez issued a statement blaming "a series of failures and missed protocols." She said Code Grey and Code Silver alarms were not activated, hospital security did not immediately respond and questions remained over whether the patient was properly restrained while in police custody.

The same logic underlies California Assembly Bill 2975, the "Secure Hospitals for All" Act, which Governor Gavin Newsom signed in 2024 after a campaign led by SEIU. The union celebrated the law as a measure to reduce or eliminate weapons in hospitals.

The law requires California's occupational safety standards board, by March 1, 2027, to amend hospital workplace violence standards to mandate weapons-

detection screening policies. The law requires screening devices that automatically scan people at specified hospital entrances, including the main public entrance, the emergency department entrance and a separately accessible labor-and-delivery entrance. It also requires trained personnel to operate the screening system and protocols for alternative searches and responses when a weapon is detected.

But the gun fired inside Los Robles did not enter through the emergency department waiting room in the hands of a visitor. It was brought into the hospital by the police.

The response of the Democratic Party and hospital management is to treat the most vulnerable patients—those in mental health crisis, police custody, withdrawal, homelessness or medical disorientation—as security problems. Clinical encounters become custody encounters. Medical assessments take place under the shadow of armed force. Nurses are told that safety will come from more alarms, more searches and more restraints, while the corporate conditions that make hospitals dangerous remain in place.

Los Robles shows where this leads. The state's weapon was already past the metal detector. It was already in the patient's room.



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