

Videos show LAPD personnel beating handcuffed man before his death and fatally shooting another

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Newly released video shows Los Angeles Police Department custody personnel repeatedly striking and smothering a handcuffed man shortly before his death and an LAPD officer fatally shooting another man during a separate encounter.

Jose Carlos Hoyos-Munoz, 58, died on July 15 after three recorded uses of force inside the LAPD's Valley Jail Section in Van Nuys. Two weeks later, on July 29, an officer shot and killed 33-year-old Alejandro Luis Garcia beneath the Interstate 10 overpass on Normandie Avenue.

Hoyos-Munoz had been arrested on July 13 after police responded to reports that he had injured his mother and another family member with a knife. Following an eight-hour standoff, Special Weapons and Tactics officers used tear gas and took him into custody.

Police transported Hoyos-Munoz to a hospital for treatment following his exposure to the gas. He was subsequently released and taken to the Valley Jail Section for booking.

Video recorded early on July 15 shows Hoyos-Munoz initially walking calmly into the facility. Later, LAPD custody personnel entered his holding cell and pinned him to the floor after police said he resisted attempts to fingerprint him.

Personnel strapped Hoyos-Munoz into a five-point restraint chair and moved him to the fingerprinting area. During another struggle, they restrained him with their body weight and placed a "spit sock" over his head.

After returning Hoyos-Munoz to his cell, personnel entered again when he climbed onto a toilet while handcuffed. Video shows several of them forcing him face-down onto a bunk, kneeling on him and striking him with their knees and elbows while in handcuffs. After he was beaten unconscious, the police removed his handcuffs and he was then left lying in his cell for 20 minutes with

the "spit sock" covering his head.

Officers later returned to his cell to find him unresponsive and not breathing. He was then pronounced dead at the scene and authorities have not yet released a cause of death.

To date, none of the guards who beat and killed Hoyos-Munoz while he was handcuffed have been identified.

On July 29, officers responded to reports of a man swinging an aluminum baseball bat at pedestrians and occupied vehicles near Normandie Avenue and Washington Boulevard.

Body-camera footage shows Alejandro Luis Garcia walking toward two officers beneath the Interstate 10 overpass while carrying the bat. The officers repeatedly ordered him to drop it. As Garcia continued walking towards the cops with bat in hand, one officer fired two rounds.

Garcia fell following the shots, dropping the bat. Officers provided medical assistance before Garcia was transported to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

The officer, who has not been identified, fired two shots at Garcia while busy LA traffic was driving under the Interstate 10 freeway underpass, potentially placing other nearby commuters in harm's way as well.

The LAPD's Force Investigation Division is investigating both deaths. The Los Angeles County district attorney and other outside bodies are also reviewing the incidents. As of September 2, no officers or detention personnel had been criminally charged or disciplined.

Similar to other police precincts around the US, it is highly unlikely that the LAPD officers responsible for killing these two people will be held accountable for their actions.

Following the release of the footage Democratic Mayor

Karen Bass announced an executive directive authorizing an outside evaluation of LAPD deaths and serious injuries involving people experiencing possible mental health crises.

“What is the training? ... My impression is that it does not seem to be adequate,” Bass told the *New York Times*.

Her opponent in the November mayoral runoff, Democratic Socialists of America-backed City Councilmember Nithya Raman, issued a similar statement.

“What happened to Jose Carlos Hoyos-Munoz and Alejandro Garcia is disturbing and demands justice,” Raman said. “Both cases need a full, independent investigation with real accountability.”

Both politicians have nevertheless supported maintaining or expanding LAPD staffing. Bass signed the city’s 2026–27 budget, which authorizes the hiring of 510 additional officers. Raman was among the 12 council members who voted for the budget and has said the department should maintain its current force of approximately 8,600 officers.

Workers should see these self-serving statements as an attempt at damage control, especially since these statements were made only after the city released graphic video footage of LAPD officers killing the two men.

The newly released videos showing police forces killing two men experiencing mental health breakdowns have aroused popular anger among the working class population within LA and more broadly.

Workers are not ready to accept the police agencies’ version of events, which proclaim that a “necessary use of force” was needed to protect police officers and the general public.

Crime in capitalist society is overwhelmingly the product of poverty, inequality, unemployment and social desperation. The victims of police violence are overwhelmingly impoverished, mentally ill, homeless and unemployed.

Hoyos-Munoz’s brother, Jorge Hoyos, stated that his brother suffered from mental health illness that required medication, which he stopped taking last year after complaining that the medication was affecting his sleep.

On the day that Jorge Hoyos and his mother called the police, the family had hoped that officers would take Hoyos-Munoz to the hospital for help.

“He was not taking the medicine by himself and he refused to take it from me,” Jorge Hoyos said. “What he did was very small, but the police considered him like a criminal.”

Jorge Hoyos instructed police that he did not want to press charges but to get help for his brother who was suffering from mental illness.

Stopping police violence is a task which cannot be left up to the different representatives of the capitalist class, especially not the representatives of the DSA, which acts as a safety valve to redirect working class anger and militancy back into the dead end of the Democratic Party.

What is needed is something radically different. Only the seizure of political power by the working class, rooted in a socialist program to expropriate the wealth of the financial oligarchy, can redirect much-needed funds for welfare programs, such as housing and healthcare, and away from the police.

According to the Urban Institute, state and local governments spent \$135 billion on police in 2021, compared with \$65 billion on housing and community development.

The state is not spending money to make communities safe; it is building an apparatus of occupation against a population that it fears.

The police do not combat crime or keep communities safe. Their role is to manage and repress the consequences of poverty, inequality and unemployment, and to prevent the working class from encroaching on the private property relations that entrench that poverty.

Meanwhile, the greatest crime of present-day society is the systematic theft of the wealth produced by the working class through the wage system, followed by the looting of society by the financial oligarchy. This enormous social crime goes not only unpunished but is legal under the entire framework of capitalism—and the police are armed and trained to defend its very existence.

The only force capable of ending police violence is the independent political mobilization of the working class, nationally and internationally, to dismantle the capitalist state, expropriate the ruling oligarchy, and reorganize society on the basis of social need rather than private profit. In a socialist society, where the conditions breeding crime are eliminated, the need for a standing body of armed men to repress the population disappears along with them.



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