



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
JACKSON COUNTY, OREGON

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DISTRICT ATTORNEY
CRIMINAL DIVISION

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MEDIA RELEASE
For immediate release

The Jackson County District Attorney's Office announced today that Justin Daniel Lopez (DOB 01/14/96) entered a plea of guilty to Unlawful Use of a Weapon in Jackson County Circuit Court. Mr. Lopez was sentenced by Judge Timothy Barnack to 24 months in the custody of the Oregon Department of Corrections and two years of post-prison supervision.

The Jackson County Grand Jury indicted Mr. Lopez on March 3, 2017. The indictment was a result of Mr. Lopez's actions from February 19, 2017.

On February 19, 2017, at approximately 2:57 a.m., a Central Point Police Officer was sitting at a red-light eastbound at the intersection of East Pine Street and I-5 northbound off-ramp. A red Camaro, being driven by Justin Daniel Lopez stopped at the red-light next to the officer. After a few seconds, the Camaro started spinning its tires and drove through the red-light, eastbound on East Pine Street. The officer turned on his lights and sirens and pursued the Camaro, with speeds exceeding 70 miles per hour. Mr. Lopez turned northbound onto Hamrick Road, and traveled an extended distance in the southbound lane of Hamrick Road. The officer continued his pursuit on Hamrick Road, until Mr. Lopez turned into Don Jones Memorial Park. Mr. Lopez stopped his car, and the officer stopped several car lengths behind the Camaro.

Before the officer could get out of his vehicle, Mr. Lopez stepped out of the driver's side of the Camaro and pointed a long-gun at Officer Brown. At this point, the officer feared for his life believing that Mr. Lopez had a rifle and the officer was in a position in the vehicle with no cover for his safety. Mr. Lopez started walking toward the police vehicle, and the officer quickly exited and made his way to the rear of his police vehicle in order to have the cover from the engine block in case Mr. Lopez started firing shots. The officer saw Mr. Lopez approximately fifteen feet away and recognized that Mr. Lopez was racking a shotgun in an attempt to chamber a round. The officer knew that his bullet proof vest would not stop a shotgun blast at that close of range, and believed his life was in danger. Mr. Lopez was given a command to drop the gun, however, Mr. Lopez continued to approach. The officer fired six shots and one struck Mr. Lopez in the pelvic region. Other officers arrived on scene and Mr. Lopez was taken into custody. During this time, Mr. Lopez was screaming at those officers to just kill him. The majority of the encounter was recorded on the police vehicle's camera.

After the shooting the investigation was led by Oregon State Police with the help of Jackson County Major Assault and Death Investigations Unit (MADIU), consisting of individuals from Medford Police, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Central Point Police, Ashland Police, and the Jackson County District Attorney's Office. The investigation revealed that Mr. Lopez's shotgun was empty, and he was in the midst of a mental health crisis. Mr. Lopez had texted family members that night stating he loved them and that he was sorry. The essence of the messages and comments made by Mr. Lopez to officers after being shot implied he was attempting to end his own life that early morning.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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