



July 9, 2026

CONTACT: Taylor Long, Public Information Officer
tlong@fresnocountyca.gov
559-600-4334

JAIRO MANCILLA SENTENCED TO LIFE WITHOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF PAROLE FOR THE 2017 MURDERS OF TWO ORANGE COVE MEN

Today, July 9, 2026, Jairo Mancilla (35, of Orange Cove) was sentenced to life without the possibility of parole for the murders of Orange Cove residents Javier Lizaola Jr. (24) and Alexander Esquibel (27). The sentence was imposed by the Honorable Brian Alvarez in Department 50 of the Fresno County Superior Court after a jury found Mancilla guilty during a retrial on June 10, 2026, of two counts of first-degree murder with special circumstances and firearm enhancements.

Evidence presented during the 11-day retrial established that on the evening of March 10, 2017, Lizaola and Esquibel had just left the Citrus Mini Mart in Orange Cove and were walking along a bicycle and pedestrian trail adjacent to Railroad Avenue. As they passed Mancilla, who was seated on a nearby park bench, a brief verbal exchange occurred before Mancilla drew a handgun and fatally shot both men.

The subsequent investigation, led by Fresno County Sheriff's Office Detective Jose Diaz, included interviews with eyewitnesses who identified Mancilla as the shooter. Following the investigation, Mancilla was arrested on April 21, 2017.

Today's sentencing concludes a case that has spanned more than nine years. After Mancilla's original conviction was overturned on appeal, the victims' families were required to endure a second trial, reliving the tragic events that claimed the lives of their loved ones. During sentencing, family members described the profound and lasting impact the murders have had on their lives and asked the Court to impose a sentence that would ensure the defendant could never again harm another family.

The Fresno County District Attorney's Office thanks the Fresno County Sheriff's Office, Orange Cove Police Department, and Orange Cove Fire Department for their dedication and investigative efforts throughout this lengthy case.

This case was successfully prosecuted by Senior Deputy District Attorney Adam Christopherson of the Fresno County District Attorney's Office Homicide Unit, with assistance from Senior District Attorney Investigator Danielle Isaac of the Bureau of Investigations.

[F24903536]