



# PUBLIC STATEMENT

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## **GRAND JURY FINDS PATERSON OFFICER'S USE OF FATAL DEADLY FORCE TO BE JUSTIFIED**

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PATERSON, NEW JERSEY:

March 5, 2018

Passaic County Prosecutor Camelia M. Valdes issues a public statement regarding the outcome of an investigation into a police use-of-force incident that occurred in Paterson. This statement is issued in accordance with the July 28, 2015, Supplemental Law Enforcement Directive Amending Attorney General Law Enforcement Directive 2006-5.

On April 14, 2017, Paterson Police Officer Daniel Pent discharged his service weapon while on duty. An investigation by the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office Shooting Response Team commenced. A comprehensive conflicts inquiry required pursuant to section 3 of the Supplemental Law Enforcement Directive was conducted and no conflicts were detected. The matter was reviewed by the County Prosecutor and complied with all relevant provisions of the Supplemental Law Enforcement Directive.

The Passaic County Prosecutor's Office Shooting Response Team conducted an investigation that included neighborhood canvassing, civilian and police witness statements, review of 911 and radio transmissions, submission of ballistic evidence, examination of physical evidence, and review of medical records.

The results of the investigation were presented to a Grand Jury in Passaic County and the Grand Jury declined to issue an indictment regarding Officer Pent's use of force. The officer's use of force was found to be justified.

The use-of-force incident occurred in the area of Fulton Place and East 16th Street in the City of Paterson at approximately 1:40 p.m. on Friday, April 14, 2017. Police were dispatched to a residence in that location on a call of an unclothed man who had possibly fallen out a window. Information developed during the investigation revealed that the first officer on scene encountered a male party later

identified as Christian Valdes. The officer observed Mr. Valdes in possession of a handgun, waving it around. The officer requested assistance and Officer Daniel Pent of the Paterson Police Department was one of the officers who arrived as back-up. Officer Pent and other witnesses observed Mr. Valdes armed with a handgun, pointing it at the police. Mr. Valdes refused repeated police commands from officers to put down the weapon. During the course of the encounter, Officer Pent discharged his weapon multiple times while Mr. Valdes continued to point the handgun at officers and continued to refuse commands to put down the weapon even after Officer Pent fired. Mr. Valdes received immediate medical care but sustained fatal injuries during this incident. The handgun possessed by Mr. Valdes was recovered on scene. The handgun was unloaded at the time but a spent shell casing discharged in that handgun was also recovered on scene.

Further information on the July 28, 2015, Supplemental Law Enforcement Directive Amending Attorney General Law Enforcement Directive 2006-5 may be found at: [http://www.state.nj.us/lps/dcj/agguide/directives/2006-5\\_SRT\\_OIS.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/lps/dcj/agguide/directives/2006-5_SRT_OIS.pdf).