

OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

JOHN T. SAVRNOCH
District Attorney



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Amber Frost, Communications Specialist

CONTACT NAME

(805) 568-2308

CONTACT PHONE

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Jury Finds Two Guilty of Gang Motivated Double Murder in Santa Barbara Shooting

Re: *People v. Angel Varela & Oscar Trujillo-Gutierrez*
Santa Barbara County Superior Court 21CR02134

SANTA BARBARA, Calif., January 22, 2026 - Santa Barbara County District Attorney John Savrnoch announced today that on January 15, 2026, in Department 12 of the Santa Barbara Superior Court, a jury found Angel Varela and Oscar Trujillo-Gutierrez each guilty of two counts of first-degree murder and two counts of premeditated and deliberate attempted murder. The jury also found true the special circumstances that the defendants committed multiple acts of murder and the special allegation that defendant Varela discharged a firearm causing death.

On January 21, 2026, after a second, bifurcated trial regarding gang allegations, the jury found true the special circumstance that the defendants were active participants of the Carpas gang and committed the murders for the benefit of the Carpas gang as well as other gang-related special allegations.

On the evening of January 3, 2021, Varela, Trujillo-Gutierrez and a juvenile drove from Carpinteria to Santa Barbara and attacked a group of individuals on the 1200 block of Liberty Street, Santa Barbara, with a firearm, killing two males and injuring two other males. The Santa Barbara Police Department investigated the case.

The juvenile was prosecuted in Santa Barbara County Juvenile Court and after a trial in 2024, the court found true that he committed two counts of first-degree murder and two counts of premeditated and deliberate attempted murder for the benefit of the gang.

In addition to the crimes committed on January 3, 2021, the jury found both defendants guilty of assault likely to cause great bodily injury for an assault that occurred on September 19, 2022, in Santa Barbara County Jail while the defendants were in custody awaiting trial.

Sentencing has been set for March 24, 2026, at 1:30 p.m in Department 12 of the Santa Barbara Superior Court. Both defendants will remain in custody without bail pending sentencing. Each defendant faces life in prison without the possibility of parole.

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