



**OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF KERN**

CIVIC CENTER JUSTICE BUILDING
1215 TRUXTUN AVENUE
BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA 93301
(661) 868-2340, FAX: (661) 868-2700

CYNTHIA J. ZIMMER
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

JOSEPH A. KINZEL
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

KENNETH M. RUSSELL
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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MEDIA ADVISORY

CONTACT:
DDA Cyrus Shahbazian
(661) 868-2755

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Tovar Found Guilty of Murdering Man on Panama Street
People v. Christopher Tovar: Kern County Superior Court Case #BF201495A

(Bakersfield) – Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced a significant murder conviction today. On January 23, 2026, in a case prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Cyrus Shahbazian, a Kern County jury found Defendant Christopher Tovar guilty of First-Degree Murder with a Special Circumstance of Murder by Discharging a Firearm from a Motor Vehicle.

Victim Rudy Herrera had recently begun seeing Tovar’s then ex-girlfriend. Just after noon on October 4, 2024, Tovar messaged Lacey Guerra, a close acquaintance, telling her that he needed help. After the two figured out where the victim was staying with a friend on Panama Street, Guerra drove Tovar to the residence. Once at the house, Tovar fired two rounds from the passenger seat of the vehicle at Rudy Herrera, who was standing in the front yard. The two rounds missed as Rudy Herrera ran to the back of the house. Three minutes later, Tovar returned and fired two additional rounds at Rudy, who was standing in the middle of the yard on his cell phone. The two rounds struck Rudy, one entering his left chest and striking his heart, and another hitting him in the lower pelvis that exited his lower back. Despite medical aid, Rudy was pronounced dead on scene.

Officers with the Bakersfield Police Department responded to calls of shots fired. Several neighbors reported what they had witnessed and provided police with the name of a suspect. Officers canvassed the neighborhood and located video surveillance from a residence which showed a black Ford Edge fleeing the scene. Officers were able to identify Lacey Guerra as the driver and Tovar as the passenger and shooter.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented; “Tovar tracked down the victim and fired at him from a vehicle. When he missed, he returned and carried out his heinous murder. These actions are inexcusable and demonstrate the serious threat he poses to public safety. Accordingly, he faces a sentence that ensures he is never released back into the community.”

Sentencing is scheduled for February 24, 2026, in front of the Honorable Judge Charles Brehmer in Department 4 of the Kern County Superior Court. Christopher Tovar is facing a prison term of life without

the possibility of parole.

Co-defendant Lacey Guerra entered a no contest plea on October 23, 2025, to one count of Voluntary Manslaughter. Guerra's sentencing date is pending, where she faces 11 years in prison.

Christopher Tovar:

