

Jackie Lacey
District Attorney
<http://da.lacounty.gov>



NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact:

Paul Eakins
Public Information Officer
213-257-2000
PEakins@da.lacounty.gov
Twitter: @LADAOffice

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Man Convicted of Murder in East Los Angeles Bus Stabbing

A 28-year-old Montebello man has been convicted of first-degree murder for fatally stabbing a passenger on a bus in East Los Angeles last year, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced today.

A jury deliberated for less than an hour yesterday before finding Manuel Ortiz Jr. guilty and finding true an allegation that he used a deadly and dangerous weapon, a knife.

Sentencing is scheduled on Oct. 4 in Department 131 of the Foltz Criminal Justice Center. Ortiz faces 27 years to life in state prison.

Deputy District Attorneys Christina Lutz and Marlene Martinez prosecuted case BA467237.

On April 9, 2018, Ortiz boarded a Montebello Bus Lines bus at Montebello and Whittier boulevards. After riding the bus for several blocks to Whittier Boulevard and Gerhart Avenue, the defendant stabbed 22-year-old Austin Zavala multiple times in the neck and head in an apparently random attack, according to court testimony.

Ortiz exited the bus and fled but was later arrested.

The victim, a college student from Whittier, was taken to a local hospital and died on June 10.

The case was investigated by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.