



PRESS RELEASE

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**JUSTICE DEPARTMENT LAUNCHES INVESTIGATION OF THE
ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S USE OF FORCE**

ALBUQUERQUE – The Justice Department announced today that it has opened a civil investigation into use of force by the Albuquerque Police Department (APD). The investigation will focus on allegations that APD officers engage in use of excessive force, including use of unreasonable deadly force, in their encounters with civilians.

Through the investigation the department will seek to determine whether APD engages in a pattern or practice of use of excessive force in violation of the Constitution and federal law. The investigation will include a comprehensive review of the police department's policies, training, and systems of accountability. The investigation will also examine the police department's engagement with the community and external oversight of officer-involved shootings and other force incidents.

Prior to the announcement department officials met with Albuquerque Mayor Richard Berry and APD Chief Ray Schultz, who pledged their full cooperation with the investigation.

"Police officers are entrusted with extraordinary power, including the power to use deadly force, and police departments have a responsibility to ensure that officers exercise that power within the law," said Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. "Our investigation will include a thorough review of APD's policies and practices, as well as outreach to the community and other stakeholders, to identify root causes of misconduct if we discover that there have been systemic violations of the law."

"The shared goal of this endeavor is a safer community and a police department that has the full confidence of the community it serves," said Kenneth J. Gonzales, the U.S. Attorney for the District of New Mexico. "We commend the Mayor and APD Chief for pledging their cooperation as we determine the facts surrounding officers' use of force and identify measures that will strengthen the community's confidence in APD."

The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 prohibits state and local governments from engaging in a pattern or practice of misconduct by law enforcement officers that deprives individuals of federally-protected rights. The department has conducted similar

investigations into use of force by law enforcement agencies, both large and small, across the country.

Attorneys and staff from the Special Litigation Section of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Mexico will jointly conduct the investigation. Individuals who may have relevant information are encouraged to contact the department via email at Community.Albuquerque@usdoj.gov or by telephone at (855) 544-5134.

Additional information about the Civil Rights Division is available on its website at www.justice.gov/crt. Additional information about the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Mexico is available on its website at www.justice.gov/usao/nm.

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