

Lawsuit Alleges LAPD Used Excessive Force at Dodgers WS Celebration

A new lawsuit alleges the LAPD used unlawful use of force during an impromptu celebration of the Dodgers' 2020 World Series Championship.

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, February 23, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A college student and professional esports athlete has filed a [personal injury lawsuit](#) accusing the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and Chief Michel Moore of unlawful use of force during an impromptu celebration of the Los Angeles Dodgers' 2020 World Series Championship in Downtown Los Angeles.

Plaintiff Isaac Castellanos, 23, was one of several hundred Dodger fans who gathered near the Crypto.com arena (formerly known as the Staples Center) on the night of October 27, 2020 to celebrate the team's clinching the 2020 World Series Championship title. According to the complaint, an LAPD officer shot Castellanos in

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Pedram Esfandiary, an attorney for Mr. Castellanos

the right eye with a “less lethal” munition during the Dodgers World Series celebration. Castellanos, who now suffers from permanent vision loss, was allegedly not warned or asked to disperse before officers fired at him.

Attorneys Pedram Esfandiary, Monique Alarcon, and Timothy Loranger from the law firm of Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman represent Castellanos in his case (U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, Case No.

2:22-cv-1165). The lawyers say their client's participation in the peaceful exercise of freedom of speech and assembly turned into a violent nightmare due to the LAPD's “escalatory and dangerous crowd control tactics,” which violated their client's rights under the U.S. and California Constitutions, as well as statutory and common law rights. The lawsuit further accuses LAPD of

LAPD Accused of Unlawful Use of Force at Dodgers World Series Celebration



Isaac Castellanos now suffers permanent vision loss.

Isaac Castellanos has sued the LAPD for causing his permanent loss of vision

negligence, assault, and battery.

“There is absolutely no reason for the police to fire rubber bullets at people peacefully celebrating,” says attorney Pedram Esfandiary. “Our client posed no threat to anyone, yet officers decided to indiscriminately shoot at him and others without giving any noticeable warning and without telling people to leave the area.



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“The City of Los Angeles has repeatedly failed to provide adequate training for crowd control and dispersal, including the use of rubber bullets and other ‘less-lethal’ munitions,” says attorney Monique Alarcon. “This failure placed our client at great risk of serious injury, and it will continue to put countless others at risk until the city takes long-overdue steps to correct the problem.”

Esports Athlete Shot in the Eye While Celebrating the Dodgers’ 2020 World Series Championship Victory

The following are allegations only. There has been no determination of liability in this case.

Just past midnight on October 28, 2020, at approximately 1:00 a.m., Isaac Castellanos and his friends were peacefully standing near the intersection of W. 11th Street and Hope Street, approximately two blocks east of Crypto.com arena.

Castellanos saw LAPD officers advance toward the crowd, then heard weapons being fired. Hundreds of people began screaming while running away from the LAPD officers. Castellanos turned back to account for his friends, then he noticed some of them were already running away from officers. As he turned in the direction of the officers to grab one of his other friends to leave the area, he was struck in his right eye by a “less lethal” munition (LLM) fired by an unidentified LAPD officer who was approximately 60-90 feet away.

Immediately after being shot in the eye, Castellanos felt excruciating pain and experienced a loss of vision. He and his friend immediately left the area, fearing that they would be hit by additional LLMs that the LAPD officers were indiscriminately shooting towards the crowd.

Castellanos never presented a threat of danger, violence, or self-harm. LAPD never issued an order to Castellanos to disperse or leave the area.

Immediately following the incident, Castellanos’s father transported him to the emergency room where he was treated for a traumatic injury to his eye with central loss of vision and persistent mydriasis (dilated pupils). After numerous follow-up visits with various specialists, Castellanos

was informed that his central loss of vision and persistent mydriasis were permanent.

At the time of the incident, Castellanos was 22 years old and in the process of completing his final year of college at California State University, Long Beach. He enjoyed a successful career as an esports athlete and streamer, and only a few weeks before the incident, Castellanos won a prominent gaming tournament, which was only the beginning of what would be a bright and lucrative future in e-gaming.

While Castellanos's injuries are still being evaluated by medical professionals and other experts, his permanent loss of central vision and persistent mydriasis continue to interfere with his day-to-day activities, including studying, working, cooking, and athletic activities.

According to the complaint, LAPD failed to follow established guidelines, rules, and procedures—including their own—for the use of LLMs and crowd control tactics. The lawsuit further accuses LAPD of:

- Failing to appropriately screen and train their employees.
- Failing to investigate and discipline their employees for misconduct.
- Negligently authorizing and ratifying the use of LLMs.
- Providing improper training that condoned the escalatory and dangerous tactics employed by LAPD officers.

About Baum Hedlund Aristei & Goldman

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