

\$22 Million Settlement Reached in Fatal Bakersfield Police Collision Lawsuit

Rodriguez & Associates Reaches \$22 Million Settlement in Lawsuit Over 2023 Police Crash That Killed Mario Lares and Seriously Injured Ana Hernandez

BAKERSFIELD, CA, UNITED STATES, February 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A \$22 million settlement was reached on February 23, 2026, in a civil lawsuit arising from a 2023 Bakersfield police collision that killed 31-year-old Mario Lares and severely injured passenger Ana Hernandez. After pre-trial hearings and two days of jury selection, the City of Bakersfield offered the settlement, which [Rodriguez & Associates](#) accepted on behalf of Hernandez and Lares's family.



Rodriguez & Associates Trial Team, L-R: Chantal Trujillo, Daniel Rodriguez, Alexis Paredez, Danay Gonzalez

The lawsuit alleged that then-Officer Ricardo Robles drove his police vehicle at nearly 80 mph through a stop sign at the intersection of South Vineland and Muller Roads without activating overhead lights or a siren, colliding with the 2013 Honda Accord carrying Lares and Hernandez. According to court filings and prior reporting, supervisors had called off the vehicle pursuit before the crash (case #BCV-23-101127).

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Daniel Rodriguez, Founder and President of Rodriguez & Associates

Filed in April 2023, [the complaint further alleged](#) that Robles failed to stop at a clearly marked stop sign at a poorly lit rural intersection and violated Code 3 policy governing the use of emergency lights and sirens when clearing intersections. The City of Bakersfield was alleged to be liable as his employer for acts committed within the scope of his employment.

In 2024, Robles pleaded no contest to vehicular

manslaughter in connection with the collision and was sentenced to two years of probation and

500 hours of community service.

“This case is about a life that was lost and a life that was permanently changed,” said [Daniel Rodriguez](#), founder and president of Rodriguez & Associates, who led the plaintiffs' trial team, “Mario should be here. Ana continues to live with the consequences of that night. While no amount can restore what was taken, this settlement provides meaningful support for both families and affirms that responsibility matters when public safety policies are ignored.”

Joining Rodriguez on the plaintiffs' trial team were Rodriguez & Associates partners Chantal Trujillo and Danay Gonzalez, along with associate Alexis Paredes. The City of Bakersfield was represented by attorney Mick Marderosian and co-counsel Heather Cohen. Former Officer Robles was represented by William A. Bruce of Clifford & Brown.

About Rodriguez & Associates

Rodriguez & Associates is a leading Kern County litigation firm dedicated to representing plaintiffs in catastrophic injury and wrongful death matters. With over \$1 billion recovered and multiple record-setting verdicts, the firm has built a reputation for challenging powerful defendants and delivering results in high-stakes cases throughout the Southern San Joaquin Valley. Its attorneys combine deep trial experience with a client-first approach rooted in accountability and justice. Learn more at <https://www.rodriquezlaw.net/>.

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