



INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

Report Concerning the Police-Involved Death in
Howard County on March 1, 2026

July 1, 2026

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Declination Report Concerning the Officer-Involved Death of Alexander Lamorie on March 1, 2026

The Independent Investigations Division of the Maryland Office of the Attorney General (“IID”) is charged with investigating “police-involved incidents that result in the death of individuals or injuries likely to result in death.” If the Attorney General determines that the investigation provides sufficient grounds for prosecution, then the IID “shall have exclusive authority to prosecute the offense.”

I. Introduction

On February 28, 2026, at approximately 11:50 p.m., officers from the Howard County Police Department (“HCPD”) were dispatched to 6441 Freetown Road, Columbia, Maryland to respond to a 911 call. Dispatch advised the officers that Alexander Lamorie had called 911 to report that he was being harassed and blackmailed by an individual that he had interacted with on an instant messaging application. Officers spoke to Mr. Lamorie by phone prior to their arrival. The officers then advised dispatch that Mr. Lamorie had made suicidal statements during their phone conversation and that they would be initiating a petition for an emergency evaluation.¹

When HCPD officers arrived at the address, they attempted to make contact with Mr. Lamorie at his apartment. When there was no answer, officers went to the entrance to the apartment complex. As officers exited the building, Mr. Lamorie walked towards them from the parking lot with a knife in his right hand. Officers issued multiple commands for Mr. Lamorie to drop the knife. Mr. Lamorie continued to walk towards the officers with the knife in his right hand. Officers repeatedly ordered Mr. Lamorie to stop and to drop the knife. When Mr. Lamorie was within a few feet, three officers discharged their service weapons, striking Mr. Lamorie. Officers rendered medical aid until emergency medical services (“EMS”) arrived on scene. Mr. Lamorie was pronounced dead on the scene at 12:34 a.m. on March 1.

The incident was captured on body-worn cameras worn by HCPD police officers and by surveillance cameras from the Patuxent Commons apartment complex.

After completing its investigation, the Office of the Attorney General has determined that there is insufficient evidence to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the subject officers committed a crime under Maryland law. Accordingly, the Attorney General has declined to prosecute the subject officers in this case.

The IID’s investigation focused exclusively on potential criminal culpability relating to the subject officers’ conduct. By statute, the IID only has jurisdiction to investigate the actions of police officers, not those of any other individuals involved in the incident. Moreover, the IID’s analysis does not consider issues of civil liability or the department’s administrative review of the subject officers’ conduct. Compelled statements by subject officers may be considered in civil or administrative proceedings but may not be used in criminal investigations or prosecutions due to

¹ Under Maryland law, a peace officer may petition for an emergency evaluation of an individual if the peace officer has reason to believe that the individual has a mental disorder and presents a danger to the life or safety of themselves or others. A peace officer that makes a petition for an evaluation must take an emergency evaluatee to the nearest hospital for examination for involuntary admission to an appropriate facility. *See* Md. Code, Health – General §§ 10-622 and 10-624.

the subject officers' Fifth Amendment rights. If any compelled statements exist in this case, they have not been considered in the IID's investigation. The subject officers in this case chose not to make a statement to the IID; this choice had no impact on the prosecutorial decision.

This report contains a summary of the evidence followed by a legal analysis. The legal analysis explains why the IID will not bring charges under the relevant Maryland statutes.

This investigation involved one decedent and three subject officers:

- A. The decedent, Alexander Lamorie, was 25 years old at the time of the incident. He was a White male who lived in Columbia, Maryland.
- B. Police Officer Cody Bostic has been employed by HCPD since January 2024. He previously was employed as a police officer by the Baltimore County Police Department from 2020 until 2024. He is a White male who was 28 years old at the time of the incident.
- C. Police Officer First Class ("PFC") Joseph Riebau has been employed by HCPD since September 2015. He is a White male who was 35 years old at the time of the incident.
- D. Police Officer Joel Rodriguez has been employed by HCPD since June 2023. He is a Hispanic male who was 29 years old at the time of the incident.

The IID reviewed all available departmental disciplinary records and criminal histories of these parties and, where they existed, determined none were relevant to this investigation.

II. Factual Summary

On February 28, 2026, Alexander Lamorie, a resident at the Patuxent Commons, a housing complex at 6441 Freetown Road in Howard County, called 911 to report that an individual who originally told him that she was a 19-year-old female was now claiming to be a 13-year-old child and was blackmailing him on social media if he did not send her a \$100 gift card. Mr. Lamorie said he had met the individual on the instant messaging application, Telegram. Police Officer First Class ("PFC") Joseph Riebau and his officer-trainee were dispatched to respond. PFC Riebau told the 911 dispatch operator that when he and his officer-trainee called Mr. Lamorie, he made suicidal statements. PFC Riebau stated that he and his officer-trainee were going to Mr. Lamorie's location to initiate a petition for an emergency evaluation. Officer Joel Rodriguez and Officer Cody Bostic were also assigned to the call; they arrived at the Patuxent Commons at the same time as PFC Riebau and his officer-trainee.

When PFC Riebau, the officer-trainee, Officer Bostic, and Officer Rodriguez arrived at Mr. Lamorie's third floor apartment, they knocked and identified themselves but did not receive an answer. The door was unlocked, so the officers went inside to locate Mr. Lamorie. When they did not find Mr. Lamorie inside, PFC Riebau radioed dispatch for more units. Officer Rodriguez and Officer Bostic looked for Mr. Lamorie in the nearby stairwells but could not find him. PFC Riebau and his officer-trainee went to the entrance while Officer Rodriguez and Officer Bostic waited at the apartment door.

When PFC Riebau and his officer-trainee exited the building, Mr. Lamorie was standing in the parking lot near the officers' patrol cars. PFC Riebau advised dispatch that Mr. Lamorie was approaching them with a knife in his hand. Inside the building, Officers Bostic and Rodriguez immediately ran towards the elevator. Officer Bostic asked Officer Rodriguez if he had a taser to which he replied "no."

Outside the apartment complex, PFC Riebau ordered Mr. Lamorie to drop the knife. Referring to their earlier phone conversation about the blackmail scheme, PFC Riebau told Mr. Lamorie that "it's a common scam" and asked him to "please drop the knife so we can talk about this." Mr. Lamorie stated that he did not "want to live anymore", and that he "want[ed] to be free of his pain." Mr. Lamorie held out both of his arms and said, "go ahead." PFC Riebau said, "nobody wants to hurt you" and "it'll get better." As Officers Bostic and Rodriguez arrived, Mr. Lamorie walked towards the officers with the knife still in his hand.

Officers gave additional commands to Mr. Lamorie to stop and to drop the knife. PFC Riebau, Officer Rodriguez, Officer Bostic, and the officer-trainee pointed their service weapons at Mr. Lamorie, but he continued to move towards them. The officers retreated backwards towards the door to the complex while still issuing commands. Mr. Lamorie shouted "no" at the officers while continuing to advance in their direction. One of the officers asked, "do we have less lethal?" Another officer warned, "we're getting cornered," immediately before PFC Riebau, Officer Rodriguez, and Officer Bostic discharged their service weapons. Mr. Lamorie was approximately twelve to sixteen feet from the subject officers when they fired. Multiple rounds struck Mr. Lamorie, who fell to the ground. The officer-trainee did not discharge his service weapon.



Image 1: Still image from PFC Riebau's body-worn camera.



Image 2: Still image from Ofc. Bostic's body-worn camera with a red circle around the knife.



Image 3: Still image from the Patuxent Commons surveillance camera.

Officers provided medical care until EMS reached the scene. Following their arrival, EMS pronounced Mr. Lamorie deceased at 12:34 a.m. on March 1.

III. Supplemental Information

A. Autopsy

On March 2, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) performed an autopsy of Mr. Lamorie. The medical examiner determined that multiple gunshot wounds were the cause of death for Mr. Lamorie. The medical examiner concluded that Mr. Lamorie's manner of death was "Homicide."²

B. Firearms Recovery and Ballistics Information

Maryland State Police ("MSP") Crime Scene technicians processed the scene and recovered 12 cartridge casings. Preliminary ballistics information indicates that PFC Riebau, Officer Rodriguez, and Officer Bostic each fired multiple rounds.

C. Department Policy

The HCPD General Orders contain written policies that provide regulations and guidance for their officers. General Order Ops-11 is the department's use of force policy. This policy allows officers to use only "the degree of force that, under the totality of the circumstances, is necessary and proportional to prevent the imminent threat of physical injury to a person or to effectuate a legitimate law enforcement objective." The use of force policy requires officers to "tak[e] into account the totality of the circumstances, and continuously evaluat[e] whether de-escalation would allow the officer to safely and effectively carry out a legitimate law enforcement objective." Officers are required to attempt to de-escalate situations "when it is deemed safe to do so." Officers are encouraged to "defuse rather than intensify confrontations with and between citizens." The de-escalation techniques suggested by the policy include "verbal persuasion, warnings, and tactical deescalation techniques, such as slowing down the pace of the incident, waiting out subjects, creating distance (and thus the reactionary gap) between the officer and the threat, and requesting additional resources (e.g., specialized units, mental health care providers, negotiators, etc.) to resolve the incident." Officers may only use deadly force "in self-defense or in the defense of others when an officer is confronted by what they have reason to believe is the imminent threat of death or serious physical injury."

General Order Ops-7 is the department's policy for dealing with persons experiencing a mental health crisis. The policy permits an officer to "take an individual into custody for an [emergency petition] if the officer believes the individual has a Mental Illness or is experiencing a Mental Health Crisis AND if the individual presents a danger to the life or safety of themselves or others." The officer must complete an emergency petition after taking the person into custody. The petition must describe the behavior and statements of the individual that led the officer to believe that the individual has a mental illness or is experiencing a mental health crisis.

² Manner of death is a classification used to define whether a death is from intentional causes, unintentional causes, natural causes, or undetermined causes. The Maryland OCME uses five categories of manner of death: natural, accident, suicide, homicide, and undetermined. These terms are not considered a legal determination; rather, they are largely used to assist in collecting public health statistics. *A Guide for Manner of Death Classification*, First Edition, National Association of Medical Examiners, February 2002.

IV. Legal Analysis

After a criminal investigation, prosecutors must determine whether to bring criminal charges against a person. When making that determination, prosecutors have a legal and ethical duty to only charge a person with a crime when they can meet the State’s burden of proof; that is, when the available evidence can prove each element of that crime beyond a reasonable doubt. Prosecutors also must determine whether the accused person could raise an affirmative defense. In those cases, prosecutors not only need to prove the crime, but they also must disprove the defense beyond a reasonable doubt. Ultimately, the decision to bring any charges rests on whether the available evidence is sufficient for prosecutors to meet those standards.

Based on the evidence in this case, three offenses were considered. First is a violation of Maryland’s Use of Force Statute, which makes it a crime for officers to intentionally use excessive force.³ The second and third offenses are homicide-related charges for the intentional killing of a person.

As set forth below, there is insufficient evidence to prove that the subject officers committed the aforementioned crimes. Accordingly, the IID will not pursue criminal charges against the subject officers. This report explains why, based on the evidence, the IID cannot prove beyond a reasonable doubt that any of the subject officers committed a crime.

A. Use of Force Statute

Proving a violation of the Use of Force Statute requires a prosecutor to establish beyond a reasonable doubt that a subject officer:

- (1) used force that was not necessary and proportional to prevent an imminent threat of physical injury to themselves or another person, or to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement objective;
- (2) intended to use force that was excessive, *i.e.*, not necessary and proportional under the circumstances; and
- (3) used excessive force that resulted in serious bodily injury or death.⁴

Determining whether an officer’s use of force is “necessary and proportional” to prevent an imminent threat of physical injury to someone or to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement objective is a fact-specific inquiry. Generally speaking, a use of force is considered “necessary and proportional” when an officer has no reasonable alternative under the circumstances, the degree of force was appropriate in light of the officer’s legitimate law enforcement objective, and given the context, the force was not likely to result in harm that was out of proportion or too severe in relation to the officer’s law enforcement objective.⁵ When a factfinder – either a judge or a jury – conducts this analysis, they must consider the totality of the circumstances, including, but not limited to, the

³ See Md. Code, Public Safety § 3-524(d)(1).

⁴ MPJI-Cr 4:36 (3d ed. 2024).

⁵ For a more detailed discussion of the “necessary and proportional” standard, see [this opinion](#) written by the Office of the Attorney General. 107 Op. Atty. Gen. Md. 33 (2022).

nature of the call for service, what occurred in the moments before force was used, what the subject officer knew at the time force was used, and the time and distances involved.⁶

Based on the totality of the circumstances presented here, we cannot prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the subject officers used force beyond what was necessary and proportional to prevent Mr. Lamorie from seriously injuring or killing an officer. As an initial matter, based on Mr. Lamorie's reported intent to harm himself, officers had a legitimate law enforcement objective in seeking to speak with Mr. Lamorie and potentially detain him to initiate a petition for emergency evaluation.⁷ When officers ultimately located Mr. Lamorie, he was standing in a parking lot with a knife in his hand. Mr. Lamorie disregarded multiple commands from PFC Riebau to drop the knife. Instead, Mr. Lamorie walked towards the officers, even as they pointed their weapons at him and repeatedly commanded him to stop. As Mr. Lamorie – still armed with a knife – closed the distance between himself and the officers, the officers retreated backwards towards the apartment complex. Mr. Lamorie shouted “no” in response to commands to stop. After an officer warned that “we’re getting cornered”, the subject officers fired multiple rounds, striking Mr. Lamorie.

As to the first element, whether the use of force was necessary, Mr. Lamorie had a knife in his hand as he walked towards the officers. He refused to comply with the subject officers' commands to drop his weapon and, instead, moved closer to the officers with the knife still in his hand. Because Mr. Lamorie was armed with a knife and came within an estimated twelve to sixteen feet of the subject officers, the IID could not prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the use of deadly force was unnecessary. Second, with respect to whether the force used was proportional to the imminent threat of harm presented, the IID could not defeat a claim that the force used was proportional. Under the circumstances described above, Mr. Lamorie presented a threat of serious bodily injury or death as he moved toward the subject officers with a knife in his hand.

Based on the evidence presented here, the IID could not prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the subject officers' use of force was not necessary and proportional to prevent an imminent threat of physical injury. Further, the IID could not prove that the subject officers intended to use force that was excessive. Accordingly, the Office of the Attorney General will not charge the subject officers with a violation of the Use of Force Statute.

B. Homicide Offenses

There are four homicide charges that a prosecutor may consider in the State of Maryland:

- First Degree Murder: the willful, deliberate, and premeditated killing of another.⁸
- Second Degree Murder: when the defendant intended to kill or inflict such serious injury that death would be the likely result and there was no justification or mitigating circumstances.⁹
- Voluntary Manslaughter: an intentional killing that is not murder because the defendant acted in partial self-defense.¹⁰

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ See Md. Code, Health – General § 10-622.

⁸ MPJI-Cr 4:17 (3d ed. 2024).

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ MPJI-Cr 4:17.2 (3d ed. 2024).

- Involuntary Manslaughter: when the defendant acted with gross negligence and that conduct caused the death of another.¹¹

First Degree Murder was not considered in this case because there is no evidence that the shooting of Mr. Lamorie was premeditated. Premeditation requires a prosecutor to prove that “the design to kill must have preceded the killing by an appreciable length of time, that is, time enough to be deliberate.”¹² As the shooting of Mr. Lamorie was intentional, but not premeditated, Second-Degree Murder and Voluntary Manslaughter remain for consideration. Involuntary manslaughter applies only to grossly negligent or reckless acts that result in death, as opposed to the intentional act of killing another; as such, the offense is inapplicable in this case.

A factfinder should consider the totality of the circumstances, including whether an individual is defending themselves against deadly force.¹³ If there is a legal justification for an officer’s use of force, such as a valid self-defense claim, then a prosecutor cannot prove the remaining homicide offenses. A police officer’s use of deadly force is legally justified if it is in complete self-defense, defense of others, or in furtherance of law enforcement-related duties.¹⁴ Complete self-defense, also known as perfect self-defense, exists when the accused: (1) was not the initial aggressor (or did not raise the level of force to deadly force); (2) had the subjective belief that they were in immediate or imminent danger of serious harm or death; (3) that belief was objectively reasonable; and (4) used force that was not more than what was reasonably necessary in light of the threat.¹⁵ Complete self-defense is an affirmative defense, which means that a prosecutor must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that one of the elements of self-defense is not applicable.

When an officer has probable cause to believe that a person poses a “threat of serious physical harm,” the officer may use deadly force.¹⁶ The reasonableness of that decision must be viewed from “the perspective of a reasonable police officer similarly situated.”¹⁷ In practice, this means that a factfinder must consider that police officers often work under rapidly changing circumstances and that what constitutes a reasonable use of force may change from moment to moment.¹⁸

Here, Mr. Lamorie expressed an intent to harm himself when he spoke with officers prior to their arrival. At the scene, Mr. Lamorie advanced towards the officer with a knife in his hand despite multiple commands to stop and to drop the knife. The officers were not the initial aggressors and attempted to deescalate through verbal persuasion, warnings, and by creating distance between themselves and Mr. Lamorie as required by the HCPD policy. Under the circumstances, the IID cannot disprove a claim by the subject officers that they reasonably believed that Mr. Lamorie presented an immediate danger of serious harm or death. Further, we cannot prove beyond a reasonable doubt that this belief was objectively unreasonable.

¹¹ MPJI-Cr 4:17.9 (3d ed. 2024).

¹² *Tichnell v. State*, 287 Md. 695, 717 (1980).

¹³ See *Purnell v. State*, 250 Md. App 703, 714-715 (2021).

¹⁴ *Wilson v. State*, 87 Md. App. 512 (1991); MPJI-Cr 4:17.3 (3d ed. 2024).

¹⁵ *Porter v. State*, 455 Md. 220, 234-36 (2017); MPJI-Cr 4:17.2, *supra*.

¹⁶ *Estate of Blair v. Austin*, 469 Md. 1, 24 (2020) (quoting *Tennessee v. Garner*, 471 U.S. 1, 11 (1985)).

¹⁷ *State v. Albrecht*, 336 Md. 475, 501 (1994); *State v. Pagotto*, 361 Md. 528, 555-556 (2000) (quoting *Graham v. Connor*, 490 U.S. 386, 397 (1989)).

¹⁸ *Id.*

Based on the investigation, the actions of the subject officers do not constitute the crime of second-degree murder or voluntary manslaughter. The IID would not be able to disprove a self-defense claim beyond a reasonable doubt. Accordingly, the Office of the Attorney General will not charge the subject officers with a homicide offense.

VI. Conclusion

This report has presented factual findings, legal analysis, and conclusions relevant to the March 1, 2026, officer-involved death of Alexander Lamorie in Howard County, Maryland. The Office of the Attorney General has declined to pursue charges in this case because, based on the evidence obtained in the IID's investigation, the subject officers did not commit a crime.