

VALENCIA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Valencia County Sheriff's Office Arrests Suspect Following Stolen Vehicle, Shooting, and Pursuit

Valencia County, NM – A Belen man is facing multiple felony charges after stealing a pickup truck containing a firearm, being involved in an exchange of gunfire with individuals attempting to locate the stolen vehicle, and leading law enforcement officers and deputies on a dangerous pursuit through Bosque Farms, Los Lunas, and Valencia County.

On the morning of September 1, 2026, the Valencia County Sheriff's Office received a report that a black Ram 3500 dually pickup truck had been stolen from the area of La Ladera Road and Hi Line Drive. The vehicle owner reported that a firearm had been left inside the truck. Shortly after the theft was reported, the stolen vehicle was located traveling on New Mexico Highway 47. During the incident, gunfire was exchanged involving the stolen vehicle and individuals attempting to locate it. Investigators later located evidence of gunfire, including a bullet impact on a vehicle involved in the incident.

Officers with the Bosque Farms Police Department located the stolen vehicle and attempted to conduct a traffic stop. The driver refused to stop, leading multiple law enforcement agencies on a dangerous pursuit through Valencia County. During the pursuit, deputies deployed multiple tire deflation devices, several of which were successful. Law enforcement personnel also attempted multiple Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT) maneuvers as the driver continued fleeing through portions of Bosque Farms and Los Lunas before continuing southbound on New Mexico Highway 47.

The pursuit ultimately ended near New Mexico Highway 47 and Oakhurst Boulevard after the stolen vehicle became disabled and stuck off the roadway. The driver continued attempting to flee and repeatedly failed to comply with commands to exit the vehicle. Deputies utilized less lethal beanbag rounds in an effort to gain compliance. The driver was subsequently taken into custody and evaluated by medical personnel.

The suspect was identified as 36-year-old, Belen Resident, Michael Sanchez.



Sanchez has been charged with the following offenses:

- Unlawful Taking of a Motor Vehicle
- Three counts of Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon
- Shooting at or From a Motor Vehicle
- Aggravated Fleeing of a Law Enforcement Officer
- Aggravated Battery Upon a Peace Officer
- Resisting, Evading, or Obstructing an Officer
- Accidents Involving Damage to a Vehicle
- Possession of Drug Paraphernalia



Despite the gunfire and dangerous pursuit through heavily traveled areas of Valencia County, no innocent bystanders or emergency response personnel were injured during this incident. After being taken into custody, Mr. Sanchez was transported to a Albuquerque hospital for medical clearance. He was later medically cleared, discharged, and booked into the Valencia County Detention Center.

The Valencia County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division is continuing the investigation. Additional charges may be filed as investigators continue to review evidence and witness statements. The Valencia County Sheriff's Office recognizes the coordinated response of Valencia County Sheriff's Office personnel, the Bosque Farms Police Department, and all assisting law enforcement and emergency personnel.

For press only:

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