



**Ohio Attorney General's Office  
Bureau of Criminal Investigation  
Investigative Report**



2024-1755

Officer Involved Critical Incident - 4500 Block of Sullivant  
Ave, Columbus, OH (L)

**Investigative Activity:** Processing of intersection  
**Involves:** Noel Cortaza  
**Activity Date:** 06/11/2024  
**Activity Location:** Sullivant Avenue at Industrial Mile Road, Columbus, OH  
**Authoring Agent:** Special Agent Aja Chung, #86

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the Columbus Police Department (CPD) requested the assistance of the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) regarding an officer involved critical incident. It was reported that CPD officers responded to a man with a knife causing a disturbance at the Turkey Hill Gas station and mini mart (950 Georgesville Road, Columbus, OH). CPD officers located the man, later identified as Noel Hernandez Cortaza (Cortaza), in his dark colored Honda Accord. Cortaza led CPD units on a slow speed pursuit until he exited his vehicle at the intersection of Sullivant Avenue (Ave.) and Industrial Mile Road. Body worn camera showed Cortaza acting erratically while he held a pointed object in his right hand. Officers ordered Cortaza to drop the knife and "show your hands/manos arriba" (English and Spanish dialects). Cortaza failed to comply with said orders and charged towards the officers. CPD units discharged their firearms, striking Cortaza. Officers also deployed a taser multiple times with negative results. Cortaza was transported to Doctors West Hospital and pronounced deceased. BCI Special Agent (S/A) Aja Chung and Crime Scene Technicians (CST) Amy Gill and Holly Ryzek were assigned to the assistance request. BCI Special Investigations Unit responded as well.

CST Gill and Ryzek processed the involved officers at CPD Substation 10 at the request of S/A Chung.

S/A Chung arrived at the main scene at approximately 0145 hours and met with CPD Lieutenant Truax, Sergeant McConnell, and Detective Anthony Johnson. There were no updates to what was initially reported and S/A Chung started to document the scene through photography. A 3D scanner was also used for further documentation. The intersection was cordoned off with yellow and red tape. The green Honda Accord (OH/JFX 8729) operated by Cortaza was parked, facing west, on Sullivant Avenue at Industrial Mile Road. CPD cruisers [REDACTED] were located behind the green Honda with the overhead lights activated. A large bloodstain was observed in the eastbound left turn lane of Sullivant Ave with evidentiary items that surrounded it.

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S/A Chung located and collected the following items from the roadway:

Item #	Description
1	Taser probe and wires
2	Two (2) 9mm casings with Speer head stamp
3	Six (6) .223 casings with REM head stamp
4	Three (3) .223 casings with REM head stamp
5	Five (5) 9mm casings with Speer head stamp
6	Decorative metal pieces held by Cortaza (four pieces)
7	Two (2) 9mm casings with Speer head stamp
8	Five (5) 9mm casings with Speer head stamp
9	Taser probe and wires
10	Projectile
11	Projectile
12	One (1) 9mm casing with Speer head stamp (fell from officer's external vest



*(Bloodstain with evidence items marked in eastbound left turn lane of Sullivant Ave.)*

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It was decided the green Honda Accord would be processed at a later date. S/A Chung placed tape/integrity seals on all four doors and trunk and it was towed to CPD's impound lot. For ease of documentation, the vehicle will be identified as scene 3.

S/A Chung collected two rifles that were discharged by CPD Officers. The rifle located in CPD cruiser [REDACTED] was a multi-caliber Daniel Defense, DDM4 with serial number [REDACTED] with a Larue optic scope. The seated magazine contained 26 cartridges. The rifle, magazine and cartridges were packaged together as item 13. The rifle located in CPD cruiser [REDACTED] was a multi-caliber Daniel Defense, DDM4 with a serial number [REDACTED]. One cartridge was removed from the chamber and the seated magazine contained 26 cartridges. The rifle, magazine and cartridges were packaged together as item 14.

BCI personnel concluded their investigation as no other evidentiary items were located. S/A Chung turned the collected items (1-14) over to CST Gill and cleared the scene at 0600 hours.

On June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, S/A Chung retrieved the items from the crime scene temporary locker and did the following:

- BCI Laboratory submission
  - Scene 1: items 2-5, 7-8, 10-14
  - Scene 2: items 1-3
- BCI Major Crimes temporary locker:
  - Scene 1: Items 1, 6, 9
  - Scene 2: item 4

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