



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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Media Release

From: Denise M. Moloney
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Re: UPDATE 4 – Domestic Violence/Homicide - County Line Road

Date: August 2, 2019

Update #4

On today's date, the Grand Jury handed down an indictment for **First-Degree Murder** on Manuel Jesus Vega.

Update #3

Again, the victim is identified as **Viviana Sanchez H/F DOB/04-29-1966**.

The suspect is identified as **Manuel Jesus Vega H/M DOB/08-06-1968**. Vega is in custody and has been charged with **Murder in the First Degree and Kidnapping**. He is being held at the Hernando County Detention Center on a No Bond status.

Investigation revealed that Sanchez and Vega have been involved in ongoing domestic violence issues (in Pasco County) since at least May of this year. At that time, a Pasco County judge issued a no contact order between Vega and Sanchez after Vega was arrested for Domestic Battery by Strangulation (on Sanchez). Vega had since bonded out of jail and was due in court on 07-29-19 for arraignment. It is unknown if the two were still residing together or having regular contact.

On 07-14-19 at approximately 2 p.m., Sanchez contacted a Hernando County taxi company, requesting a taxi in 30 minutes to an address on Fieldpoint Way in Spring Hill (Pasco County). Sanchez told the taxi company that if she didn't answer the door when they arrived, they should call the police. Rather than respond to the residence, a representative from the taxi company immediately contacted the Pasco Sheriff's Office.

Deputies from the Pasco Sheriff's Office responded to the residence on Fieldpoint Way and found that no one was there. A Missing Person report was documented at that time by the Pasco Sheriff's Office, case # 2019-029037. The Pasco Sheriff's Office can provide information on the Missing Person investigation.

On 07-14-19 at approximately 8:44 p.m., 9-1-1 operators at the Hernando County Sheriff's Office received a 9-1-1 transfer call from the Pasco Sheriff's Office. The caller, a female with the taxi company, advised she had received a text from Sanchez earlier in the day that said Sanchez was with Vega and she was in fear for her life and to call the police. The text message also gave information about Vega's work, over-the-road trucking, and that he would be leaving Monday morning on a trip.

The caller advised Hernando County emergency operators that family members (of Sanchez) were able to track her cell phone to the area of the Dollar Tree on County Line Road. The caller drove to that area and spotted Vega's tractor-trailer parked behind the Dollar Tree. The caller did not see anyone around the tractor-trailer, and she did not approach it. She immediately called 9-1-1.

Hernando County Sheriff's deputies arrived and attempted to make contact with someone in the tractor-trailer, which was running at the time. The driver attempted to back up but was unable to do so due to being blocked by patrol vehicles. The driver pulled the truck forward then stopped. Believing the female was inside the truck, and in danger, deputies attempted to enter the truck. Deputies were unable to gain entry, as all the doors were locked and windows up.

Hernando County 9-1-1 operators received another transfer call from the Pasco Sheriff's Office. This time, the caller, a male, stated he was inside the truck and deputies should not try to enter. The male stated he wanted to wait for his mother to arrive, and he would surrender peacefully.

Pasco Sheriff's deputies arrived on scene and assisted with the investigation.

Vega continued to communicate with deputies but refused to exit the truck.

After a short time, Vega exited the truck.

Deputies entered the cab of the truck and located Sanchez; she was deceased.

Vega refused to speak with detectives about the incident or what led up to the death of Viviana Sanchez.

The case remains active.

Update #2

The death is now being classified as a Homicide.

The victim is identified as **Viviana Sanchez H/F DOB/04-29-1966.**

Preliminary investigation indicates that Sanchez was the victim of homicidal violence. An autopsy is being conducted to determine the exact cause of death.

Next of kin notifications have been made.

Detectives are interviewing a person of interest at this time.

Additional information will be provided as soon as possible.

Update #1

Detectives and Forensic Specialists worked diligently through the night sifting through information and processing physical evidence and continue to do so at this hour.

At this time, there is no new information to release.

Detectives believe that updated information should be available by midday.

Again, all parties are accounted for; there is no danger to the community.

We thank you for your patience.

Original Information – 07-14-19

Hernando County Sheriff's deputies are currently conducting a Death Investigation on the property of the Dollar Tree, located at 11155 County Line Road in Spring Hill.

The death is suspicious in nature.

All parties have been accounted for; there is **no** danger to the community.

Due to the investigation evolving so rapidly, no additional information will be provided until tomorrow morning, after 9 a.m.

When additional information is available it will be provided via Media Release/Media Alert.

The Office of Sheriff:

The Office of the Sheriff is established by the Florida Constitution. As a constitutional officer, the Sheriff has the exclusive authority to administer his or her agency and is responsible for preserving the peace throughout the entire county, carrying out the laws of the state, the orders of Florida courts, and the ordinances of the Board of County Commissioners. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement and correctional officer of the county.

Sheriff Al Nienhuis was initially appointed as the Sheriff of Hernando County by the Governor in January of 2011. He was then elected by the people of Hernando County in 2012, ran unopposed in 2016, and remains accountable to them.