

**News Release from
The Honorable Sandra Doorley
Monroe County District Attorney**

January 26, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR: Calli Marianetti
Monroe County District Attorney's Office
47 South Fitzhugh Street
Rochester, NY 14614
(585) 753-4532

**Luis Rios Morales Convicted of Murder in the 2nd Degree and Various
Weapons and Gun Charges**

Rochester, NY- Wednesday, January 26, 2022, a Monroe County Jury convicted 38-year-old Luis Rios Morales of Murder in the 2nd Degree, six counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2nd Degree, three counts of Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 3rd Degree, three counts of Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 4th Degree, two counts of Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 5th Degree, Conspiracy in the 4th Degree and two counts of Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia in the 2nd Degree.

On August 29, 2019, Rochester Police Officers arrived at a house on Bay Street in the City of Rochester for a report of shots fired. Once they arrived, the officers found Jose Ubiles Melendez, who had been shot in the back of the head. Mr. Ubiles Melendez died at the scene. Luis Rios Morales was identified as a suspect for the murder.

Following the death of Jose Ubiles Melendez, a long-term investigation began involving GRANET (Greater Rochester Area Narcotics Enforcement Team) and the Monroe County Heroin Task Force. The investigation ran from November 2019 – April 2020. From this investigation, evidence was collected charging Luis Rios Morales for the murder of Jose Ubiles Melendez, in addition to seventeen counts including Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2nd Degree, Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 3rd Degree, Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 4th Degree, Criminal Possessions of a Controlled Substance in the 5th Degree, Conspiracy in the 4th Degree and Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia in the 2nd Degree.

This investigation was led by the Monroe County Heroin Task Force Team, which is made up partner agencies including Monroe County District Attorney Investigators, and GRANET, which includes the Rochester Police Department, the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, and Border Patrol. Other agency collaborators on this long-term investigation included the Rochester Police Department's Major Crimes Unit and Special Investigations, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the United States Post Office and the Monroe County Jail Intelligence Bureau.

During the course of the long-term investigation, law enforcement seized six handguns, six shotguns, and five rifles. In addition to the firearms, law enforcement seized over 200 grams of suspected cocaine, over 10 pounds of suspected fentanyl, 53 grams of suspected heroin and approximately \$10,000 in cash. Nine other defendants were arrested on various weapon and drug charges. These cases have all been resolved.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Robin Catalano, Chief of the Special Investigations Bureau, and Special Assistant District Attorney Megan Hausner, of the Major Felony Bureau.

“Today’s conviction shows the impact that law enforcement collaboration can have,” said Assistant District Attorney Robin Catalano. “Mr. Rios Morales followed Jose Ubiles Melendez and killed him outside a house, firing eight rounds outdoors where he could have killed an innocent bystander. The excellent collaboration on this long-term investigation secured justice for Jose Ubiles Melendez while removing deadly weapons and large amounts of fentanyl, heroin, and cocaine from our community.”

“The result of this long-term investigation made our community safer, especially with the conviction of Luis Rios Morales,” said District Attorney Sandra Doorley. “Rios Morales is a ruthless killer who deserves to serve a life sentence in the New York State Department of Corrections. I am grateful for the months of hard work on this substantial investigation. During these violent times in our community, we must be able to find justice for victims of homicide and do our best to rid our streets of deadly narcotics that are poisoning our residents and fueling this behavior.”

Luis Rios Morales will be sentenced on February 23, 2022, in front of Monroe County Court Judge Dollinger.

###