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TRAINING BULLETIN

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HIGH COURT UPHOLDS PUBLIC RIGHT TO KNOW SHOOTING OFFICERS' NAMES

Long Beach Police Officers Association v. City of Long Beach, filed May 29, 2014
Supreme Court of California, S200872

By
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and
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In a 6-1 decision, the Supreme Court of California rejected arguments made by the Long Beach Police Officers Association (LBPOA) and held there is a presumption that the public has a right to know the identities of officers involved in shooting incidents. While the justices indicated there may be circumstances that would permit the names to be withheld, particularly if an officer's safety might be jeopardized, departments do not have a right to withhold officers' identities in the aftermath of police shootings. "We reject

that blanket rule," Justice Joyce Kennard, who retired this spring with the case pending, wrote for the majority.

The case at issue before the court involved a December 2010 shooting by two Long Beach police officers who shot and killed an intoxicated man standing in his front yard after he pointed a garden hose spray nozzle at them. When a Los Angeles Times reporter sought the names of the officers involved, as well as those of all Long Beach officers involved in shootings

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