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## NEWS RELEASE

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Chris Magnus  
Chief of Police

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**Date:** 09/04/2020  
**TDD:** 791-2639

### **OFFICER-INVOLVED SHOOTING SOUTH MIDVALE PARK ROAD AND SOUTH HEADLEY ROAD**

The Tucson Police Department is investigating an officer-involved shooting that occurred yesterday evening on Tucson's South Side.

On September 3, 2020 officers from Operations Division South were attempting to locate **15-year-old Elmer Virgen**, who is gang affiliated and wanted on several violent felony charges that include: armed robbery, aggravated robbery and aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. Those charges stemmed from an armed robbery that occurred at a local Quik Mart on July 31, 2020. On the night of the armed robbery, Virgen was with 17-year-old Simon Pancho and two other suspects. On August 26, 2020, officers located Pancho and attempted to take him into custody. During the attempted arrest, Pancho pulled out a semi-automatic handgun and was shot by one of the officers. Pancho was treated on scene but succumbed to his injuries. Virgen was also considered armed and dangerous, so members of the TPD SWAT Team assisted with last night's search.

At approximately 11:00 p.m., officers located Virgen in the area of South Midvale Park Road and South Headley Road. When officers attempted to take him into custody, he ran down a residential street away from the officers. A TPD K9 was released and helped capture Virgen in the street. While Virgen was running, he pulled out a semi-automatic handgun and fired multiple rounds toward the officers. One of the officers returned fire and struck Virgen. Officers and Tactical Emergency Medical Support (TEMS) personnel moved in to treat Virgen for his gunshot wounds. TEMS is comprised of Tucson Fire personnel who train with the SWAT Team and respond to callouts with the team to assist with immediate medical treatment. Tucson Fire then transported Virgen to a local hospital where he is currently receiving treatment for non-life-threatening injuries.

During the incident, TPD K9 "Tango" was injured by gunfire. He was transported to Valley Animal Hospital where, thankfully, he is recovering from his injuries. No officers were injured.

Detectives with the Violent Crimes Unit responded and are conducting the criminal portion of this investigation, while sergeants with the Office of Professional Standards (OPS) are conducting a separate, but parallel, administrative investigation to examine the actions of department personnel. This is standard protocol in all officer-involved shootings.

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For accommodations; materials in accessible formats; foreign language interpreters; and/or materials in a language other than English, please contact the Tucson Police Department Public Information Office at (520) 791-4852 or (520) 791-2639 for TDD at least five (5) business days in advance. Para arreglos; materiales en formatos accesibles; interpretes de idioma extranjero; y/o materiales en otro idioma que no sea inglés, por favor comunicarse al Departamento de la Policía de Tucson a la sección de Información Pública al (520) 791-4852 o (520) 791-2639 para TDD por lo menos con cinco (5) días hábiles de anticipación.

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Upon release from the hospital, Virgen will be booked into the Pima County Jail on the charges listed above and will face additional felony charges related to last night's shooting incident. Virgen also has a felony warrant for a recent parole violation.

The department remains committed to meeting the public's need for immediate transparency and will continue to release information concerning officer-involved shootings and in-custody deaths even though it may be preliminary and incomplete. However, we will have some situations in which exceptional circumstances involving constitutional rights, statutory prohibitions, or other legal requirements prevent the release of body-worn camera footage within 72 hours. This officer-involved shooting presents such a circumstance and we will be providing Virgen and his family time to review the video footage before it is released to the public.

Details are limited at this time. Additional details will be released as they become available. Anyone with additional information about this incident is asked to call 88-CRIME.

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