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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

**PATRICIA ORTIZ CHARGED WITH THREE COUNTS OF
MURDER**

On January 21, 2022, the Merced County District Attorney filed three counts of Murder, Penal Code Section 187(a), with special circumstances alleging multiple murder, Penal Code Section 190.2 (a)(3), and lying in wait, Penal Code Section 190.2 (a)(15). It is alleged Ms. Ortiz murdered her children Alexa R. Ortiz-Lara, age 3, Matteo Ortiz-Lara, age 5, and Anna Ortiz-Lara, age 8. Patricia Ortiz is currently in custody at Marie Green psychiatric center. At this time, no bail has been ordered.

During the arraignment hearing on Friday, Superior Court Judge Paul Lo appointed the Merced County Public Defender's Office to represent Ms. Ortiz. At the request of the Public Defender's Office, the arraignment was continued to Wednesday, January 26 at 8:30 am in Department 1 of the Merced County Superior Court. It is common for the Merced County Public Defender's Office to review a case for potential conflicts before accepting representation of a client. Deputy District Attorney Travis Colby is prosecuting this case.

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