

CALIFORNIA COURT OF APPEAL, SECOND APPELLATE DISTRICT,
DIVISION SIX

People v. Lara

Lara · No. B341682 · Decided October 22, 2025

SUMMARY

The California Court of Appeal reverses an order granting Isaac Daniel Lara’s petition to recall and resentence his juvenile-offender sentence under Penal Code section 1170, subdivision (d)(1)(A). The court holds that Lara, who received a sentence of 79 years to life with the possibility of parole, did not qualify for statutory relief applicable to offenders sentenced to life without parole. The court further concludes that a subsequent youth offender parole hearing under Penal Code section 3051 mooted the functional-equivalent-of-LWOP rationale recognized in *People v. Heard*.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	California Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Division Six
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Yegan, J.; Gilbert, P. J.; Baltodano, J.
JURISDICTION	California Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Division Six
DECIDED	October 22, 2025
DOCKET	B341682
DISPOSITION	reversed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The People appealed orders granting Lara's petition to recall his sentence under Penal Code section 1170, subdivision (d)(1)(A), conditionally reversing his conviction and sentence, and certifying the matter to juvenile court for Proposition 57 proceedings.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Not expressly stated; the Court of Appeal reviewed the trial court's statutory eligibility and mootness determinations on appeal.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	published and certified for publication
PARTIES	The People v. Isaac Daniel Lara

TOPICS

- post-conviction relief
- sentencing
- mootness
- criminal procedure
- appellate procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Penal Code section 1170, subdivision (d)(1)(A), authorizes recall and resentencing for a juvenile offender sentenced to 79 years to life with the possibility of parole rather than life without parole.
2. Whether Lara's receipt of a youth offender parole hearing under Penal Code section 3051 mooted the appeal and the claim that his sentence was the functional equivalent of life without parole.
3. Whether the trial court erred by recalling Lara's sentence, conditionally reversing his conviction and sentence, and certifying the matter to juvenile court.

HOLDINGS

1. Section 1170, subdivision (d)(1)(A), provides relief to juvenile offenders sentenced to life without the possibility of parole; Lara was sentenced to 79 years to life with the possibility of parole and therefore did not qualify under the statute.
2. The appeal was moot because Lara had received a youth offender parole hearing under Penal Code section 3051 and therefore was not presently serving the functional equivalent of a life-without-parole sentence.
3. The trial court's orders were erroneous and were reversed.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“When the reason of a rule ceases, so should the rule itself.” (p. 1)

“We agree with the People that the “Heard” rule has been mooted by the Legislature.” (p. 5)

“Here, appellant has been given a parole hearing and so it is plain to see that he is not presently serving the functional equivalent of LWOP.” (p. 5)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Lara committed the offenses in 2000 at age 17. A jury convicted him of first degree murder, attempted murder, shooting at people in an occupied motor vehicle, and assault with a semiautomatic firearm, with firearm enhancements. In 2002, the trial court imposed a determinate term of 29 years and a consecutive indeterminate term of 50 years to life, for a total sentence of 79 years to life with the possibility of parole. In October 2024, Lara received a youth offender parole hearing under Penal Code section 3051 and was found unsuitable for parole.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Lara was convicted in 2002 of first degree murder, attempted murder, shooting at people in an occupied motor vehicle, and assault with a semiautomatic firearm for crimes committed when he was 17. He received a sentence of 79 years to life with the possibility of parole. In 2024, the trial court granted his petition to recall the sentence, finding the sentence functionally equivalent to life without parole, and certified the matter to juvenile court.

While the appeal was pending, Lara received a youth offender parole hearing under Penal Code section 3051 and was found unsuitable for parole. The Court of Appeal reversed the trial court's orders.

DISPOSITION

reversed

CASES CITED

- People v. Lara (July 7, 2004, B161266)
- People v. Heard (2022) 83 Cal.App.5th 608
- Graham v. Florida, Graham v. Florida (2010) 560 U.S. 48, 82
- People v. Lopez (2016) 4 Cal.App.5th 649, 653
- People v. Sorto (2024) 104 Cal.App.5th 435
- People v. Superior Court (Lara) (2018) 4 Cal.5th 299, 303, 309-310, 313
- People v. Isayev (2025) 113 Cal.App.5th 1117
- People v. Ortega (2025) 111 Cal.5th 1252
- People v. Neal (1944) 65 Cal.App.2d 160, 166