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## **2 murdered in shootings at medical marijuana stores**

**LAPD says the L.A. dispensaries were the targets of attempted robberies.**

By Robert J. Lopez, Los Angeles Times

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Two people were killed and one wounded Thursday in two separate robbery attempts at Los Angeles medical marijuana clinics.

An employee was slain Thursday night about 9:15 p.m. at the Hollywood Holistic store in the 1600 block of North El Centro Avenue, the Los Angeles Police Department said.

Earlier in the day, a worker at a medical marijuana dispensary in Echo Park was killed and another was wounded in an apparent robbery, police said. In that incident, shots were fired after an unknown number of suspects stormed into the Higher Patch Holistic Care store at 1302 Sunset Blvd. shortly before 4:15 p.m., the Los Angeles Police Department said.

The shootings come as Los Angeles officials attempt to regulate hundreds of marijuana stores that have popped up amid California's dispensary boom.

Los Angeles became an epicenter of dispensary activity after the Obama administration announced in March 2009 that it would not prosecute medical marijuana stores that adhered to state law that allows selling and using medical marijuana in certain instances. Although the city had a moratorium on new dispensaries, officials failed to enforce the ban.

In March, LAPD detectives served search warrants at East Hollywood and Mid-Wilshire clinics and arrested three people. And in September, police arrested a suspect in connection with several robberies at marijuana dispensaries in the San Fernando Valley.

In the Echo Park shooting, LAPD Officer Rosario Herrera said investigators "believe it's a robbery" that led to the violence but had not determined what was taken. The suspects fled and had not been apprehended as of Thursday night.