

# Office of Inspector General County of Los Angeles



## Inmate Welfare Fund

Los Angeles County Civilian Oversight Commission

September 17, 2019

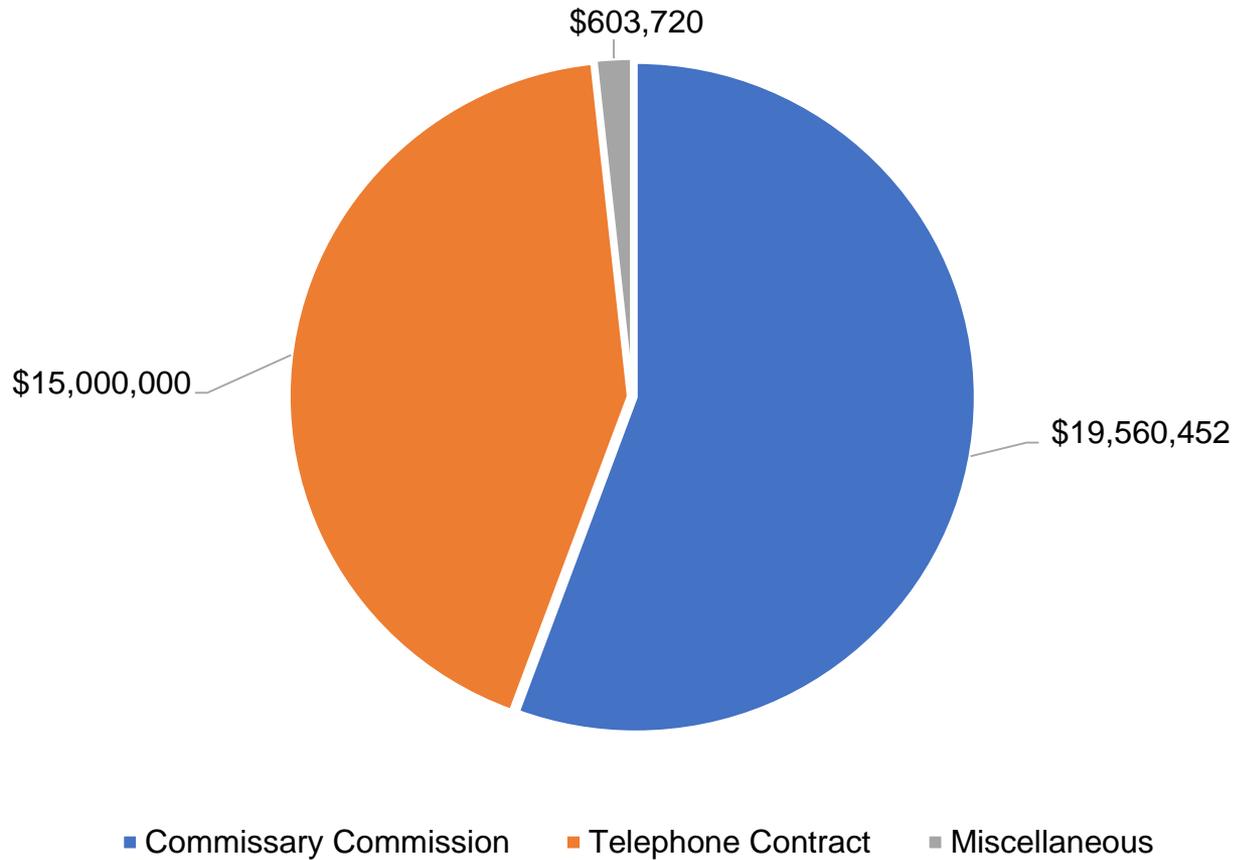
Noemi Zamacona, Monitor

# California Penal Code Section 4025

- Allows county sheriffs to operate stores/canteens/commissaries
- The sheriff is allowed to fix the sale prices of items
- Profits must be deposited into a fund that must be used “**primarily** for the benefit, education, and welfare of inmates.”
- The sheriff may use any funds “**not needed** for the welfare of the inmates” for the maintenance of jail facilities.
- Funds “shall not be used to pay for required county expenses of confining inmates, such as meals, clothing, housing and medical services or expenses, **except** that the sheriff may use money from the fund to **augment** required county expenses the sheriff determines’ to be in the inmates’ best interest.”

# Revenue Sources, FY 2018-2019

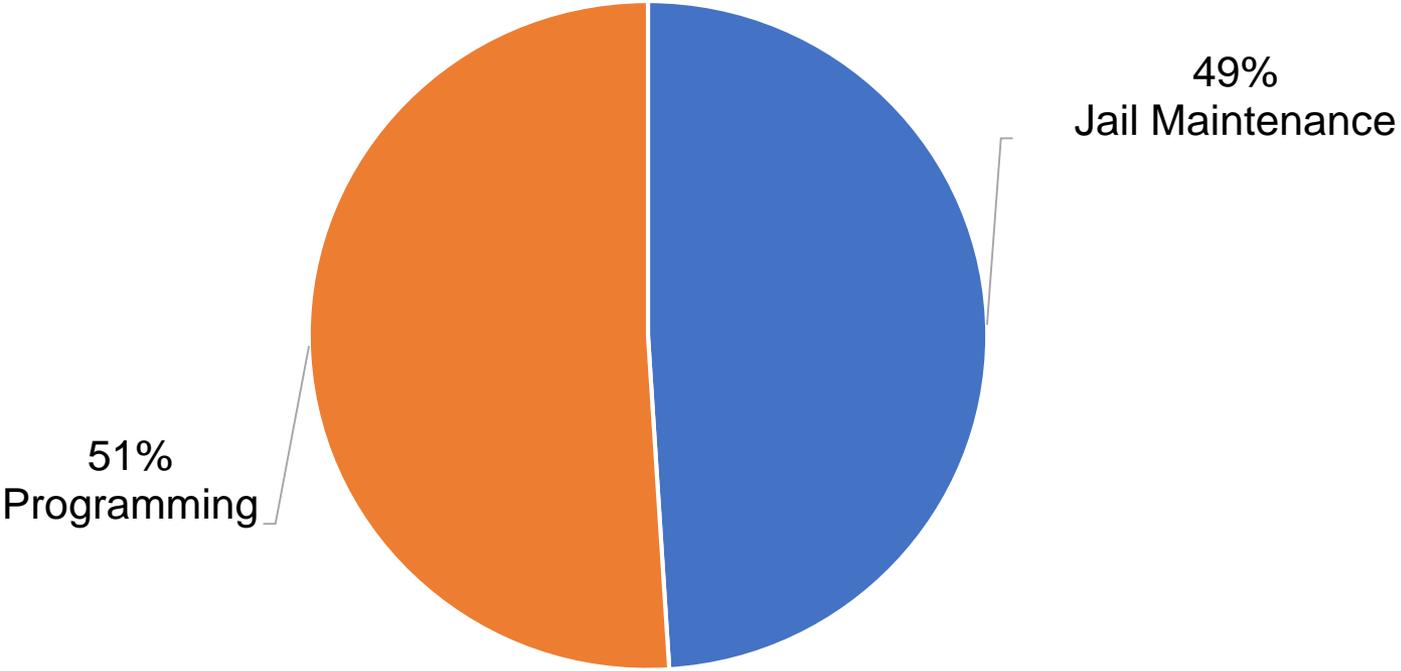
Total IWF Revenue: \$35,164,172\*



\*Includes \$2,130 of sales tax collected and transferred to Auditor-Controller

# Allocation of Revenue, FY 2018-2019

Allocation of Revenue



# LASD Inmate Welfare Funding Determinations and Allocation

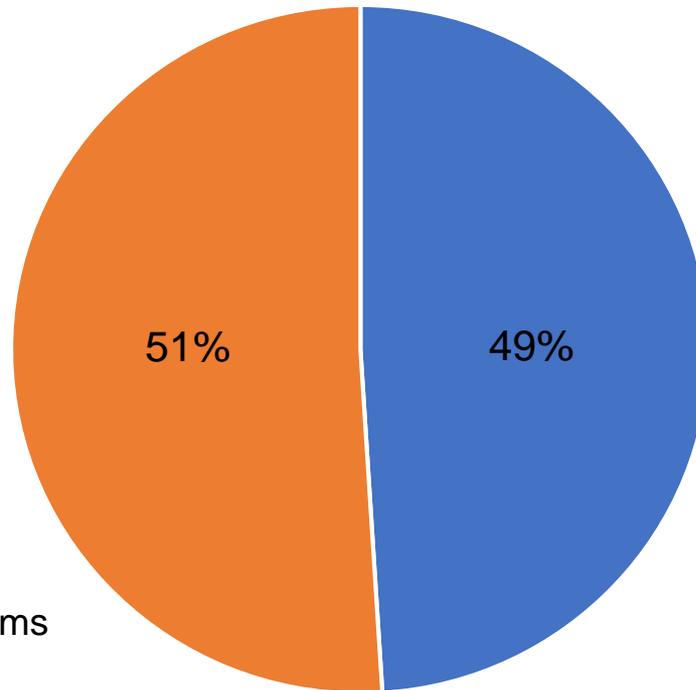
## Programming

### Inmate Welfare Commission

- Seven members
- Appointed by the Sheriff

### *Examples of Funded Items:*

- Tattoo Removal Program
- Dog Therapy
- Five Keys Schools and Programs
- Birth Certificate Program
- DMV ID Program
- Program Supplies
- Staff Salaries



## Jail Maintenance

### Sheriff

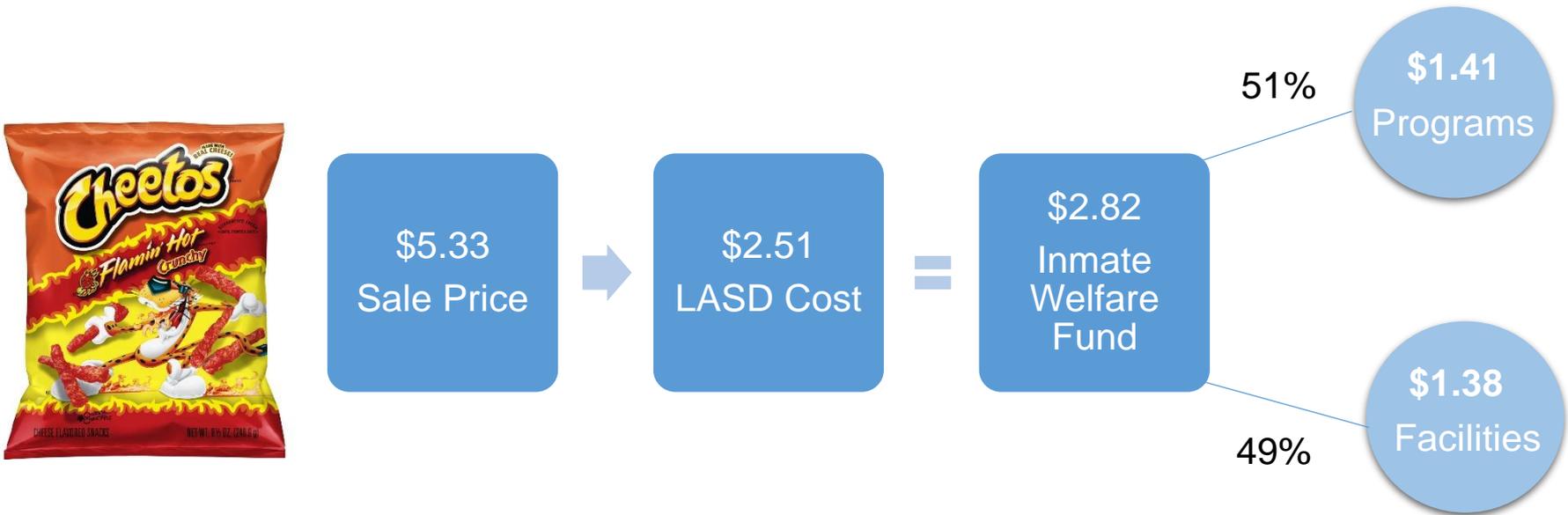
### *Examples of Funded Items:*

- Air Conditioner Repairs
- Security Cameras (repair)
- Toilet Replacements
- Lighting
- Classrooms
- Door Lock Replacements
- ADA Physical Plant Modifications
- Staff Salaries

# Costs of Personal Items, FY 2018-2019

Item	LASD Cost	Sale Price	Total # Ordered	Total
Irish Spring Soap 3.2oz	\$0.68	\$1.45	83,923	\$121,688.35
Roll-on Deodorant	\$1.88	\$4.00	21,390	\$85,560.00
Freshmint Toothpaste 2.75oz	\$1.02	\$2.16	36,082	\$77,937.12
Cocoa Butter Lotion 4oz	\$0.66	\$1.41	20,607	\$29,055.87
Tampons (10 pack)	\$1.27	\$2.70	1,399	\$3,777.30
				<b>\$318,018.64</b>

# Sale Price Distribution Example



*\*8oz bag of Flamin' Hot Cheetos*

# Telephone Rates and Service Charges

<b>CALL RATES</b>	Instate Calls	\$0.25 per minute
	Interstate Calls - Collect	\$0.25 per minute
	Interstate Calls - Advanced Pay	\$0.21 per minute
<b>SERVICE CHARGES</b>	Advanced Pay Deposit Fee	\$3.00 per deposit
	Advanced Pay One Call Fee	\$3.00 per call
	Live Agent Fee	\$5.95 per use
	Paper Billing Statement Fee	\$2.00 per paper billing statement
	Commissary Prepaid Card Fee	\$0.75 per card

# PC 4025 vs. SB 555

## California Penal Code Section 4025

- Inmate Welfare Fund
- The sheriff is allowed to fix the sale prices of items.
- The inmate welfare fund must be used “primarily for the benefit, education, and welfare of inmates.”
- The sheriff may use any funds “not needed for the welfare of the inmates” for the maintenance of jail facilities.

## Senate Bill 555

- Incarcerated Peoples’ Welfare Fund
- Prohibits jails and juvenile facilities from profiting from canteen sales.
- Items for sale must be offered at the cost paid to the vender supplying the items.
- Requires funds be spent solely for the benefit, education, and welfare of incarcerated individuals.
- Requires counties to award contracts for communication services that offer the lowest cost for incarcerated individuals.
- Requires counties to negotiate for low rates; refuse unnecessary extra services, and make contract decisions based on the total cost to the consumer, including fees.
- Prohibits companies from charging new fees to offset any lost revenue from rate reduction.

# Recommendations

- Identify ways to significantly reduce commissary and telephone costs for incarcerated people
- Increase the 51% currently allocated solely to programming
- Increase internal oversight of all inmate welfare allocations
- Provide more detailed information to the Commission about budgeted positions and all funded programs, so that the Commission can make the most informed decisions
- Any future contracts introducing technological media should ensure the lowest possible costs to incarcerated people

# LASD's Initial Progress

- Free and unrestricted access to tampons for women
- Begun to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of IWF programs
- LASD is beginning outreach to jurisdictions that offer low cost or free telephone calls for incarcerated people

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<https://oig.lacounty.gov>