



Written Public Comment
Provided for the January 20, 2022 Meeting
of the Los Angeles County Sheriffs Civilian Oversight
Commission As of 01/20/2022 at 5:00pm.

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| Agenda Item | Public Comment | Name |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| | <p>I attended the East LA Neighborhood Watch meeting on January 4. I was concerned because Sheriff Villanueva made many statements that were political in nature, specifically lobbying voters to vote against AG Gascon and criticizing his policies. This was unambiguously in violation of CA State Government Codes (3206) that prohibit public employees from engaging in political activities while in uniform. The LASD comments at ELA neighborhood. meeting were only the most egregious of many examples of the Sheriff and Deputies engaging in political activity while in uniform and even on duty.</p> | |
| LASD political activity | | Deborah Aschheim |
| | <p>The extent to which prison is used reflects a range of factors including levels of inequality and investment in social policy as well as levels of crime. Reducing prison numbers is not simply a question of establishing measures which can act as direct alternatives to pre-trial detention or sentences, although these are important. It involves the development and use of a wide range of methods to prevent crime through social and situational measures and of ways to resolve harms and disputes without recourse to criminal law, for example by using informal and restorative justice approaches.</p> <p>The following plan focuses on ways of reducing overcrowding in prisons around the world. Overcrowding or congestion, as it is called in some countries, is the biggest single problem facing prison systems with consequences that can at worst be lifethreatening and at best prevent prisons from fulfilling their proper function.</p> <p>Reducing overcrowding requires an understanding of the extent of the problem and the reasons for which it has come about in a particular prison system. A census of the prison population can identify who is in prison and why, and point to priorities for relieving congestion.</p> | |
| L.A jails | | Desiree Robledo (1/4) |
| | <p>Timely and accurate information can also enable a more rational debate about the most effective use of prison and assist advocacy on behalf of policies which meet international standards. Information-gathering and analysis should be part of a regular routine and the public should be kept informed about measures which work best to reduce crime.</p> <p>Review and reform the criminal justice process as a whole from arrest to release and invest in crime prevention and reduction</p> <p>Imprisonment comes at the end of a long chain of decisions involving legislators and policymakers, the police, prosecutors and courts. The extent to which prison is used reflects a range of factors including levels of inequality and investment in social policy as well as levels of crime.</p> <p>Reducing prison numbers is not simply a question of establishing measures which can act as direct alternatives to pre-trial detention or sentences, although these are important. It involves the development and use of a wide range of methods to prevent crime through social and situational measures and of ways to resolve harms and disputes without recourse to criminal law, for example by using informal and restorative justice approaches.</p> <p>Divert minor cases out of the criminal justice system</p> <p>International standards and norms recommend that resorting to prosecution and incarceration be employed only where this is proportionate to the offence committed and there are no other appropriate options.</p> <p>To ensure that prisons play their proper role, including the role of rehabilitation, it is important that minor offences be processed in different ways. Many countries have systems of diversion, such as police warnings or cautions, restorative justice or mediation options, referral to mental health or drug treatment or prosecutorial fines. Others have centuries-old informal processes of traditional justice which can provide accessible and informal justice.</p> <p>As long as basic human rights are observed, such processes can have an important role to play.</p> <p>Improve access to justice and case management during pre-trial detention</p> | |
| L.A jails | | Desiree Robledo (2/4) |

Particular prisons or sections of prisons can be overcrowded even if the prison system as a whole is not. Moreover, in the absence of precise international standards, it is up to individual countries themselves to determine – and sometimes revise – the capacity of particular prisons. The data is therefore likely to understate the extent of the problem.

The plan builds on the relevant international instruments including the prison system that meets international standards is essential for the proper administration of criminal justice. Particular attention should be given to vulnerable groups who are often additionally adversely affected by the negative effects of overcrowding.

Women prisoners and children deprived of their liberty are a small percentage of a country's total prison population meaning that their specific needs tend to remain unacknowledged and unmet, which is exacerbated in overcrowded and overstretched prison systems.

In some countries chronic overcrowding is relieved only by the use of periodic amnesties and pardons which, while producing shortterm relief, do not provide a sustainable solution and can erode public confidence.

L.A jails

Desiree Robledo (3/4)

In others, costly prison-building programmes are undertaken to meet a growing demand for prison places, which is sometimes stimulated further by private companies who make profits from prison construction and administration.

Given the disadvantages of these approaches, publishing this plan to assist policymakers and practitioners who wish to tackle overcrowding in a systematic and affordable way. The results should help to ensure that imprisonment is only used when proportionate to the offence committed and where there are no other appropriate options, and that the conditions of detention can meet the standards expected by the international community
Collect and use data to inform a rational, humane and cost-effective use of prison

Reducing overcrowding requires an understanding of the extent of the problem and the reasons for which it has come about in a particular prison system. A census of the prison population can identify who is in prison and why, and point to priorities for relieving congestion.

L.A jails

Desiree Robledo (3/4)

Timely and accurate information can also enable a more rational debate about the most effective use of prison and assist advocacy on behalf of policies which meet international standards. Information-gathering and analysis should be part of a regular routine and the public should be kept informed about measures which work best to reduce crime.

Review and reform the criminal justice process as a whole from arrest to release and invest in crime prevention and reduction

Imprisonment comes at the end of a long chain of decisions involving legislators and policymakers, the police, prosecutors and courts. The extent to which prison is used reflects a range of factors including levels of inequality and investment in social policy as well as levels of crime.

Reducing prison numbers is not simply a question of establishing measures which can act as direct alternatives to pre-trial detention or sentences, although these are important. It involves the development and use of a wide range of methods to prevent crime through social and situational measures and of ways to resolve harms and disputes without recourse to criminal law, for example by using informal and restorative justice approaches.

Divert minor cases out of the criminal justice system

International standards and norms recommend that resorting to prosecution and incarceration be employed only where this is proportionate to the offence committed and there are no other appropriate options.

To ensure that prisons play their proper role, including the role of rehabilitation, it is important that minor offences be processed in different ways. Many countries have systems of diversion, such as police warnings or cautions, restorative justice or mediation options, referral to mental health or drug treatment or prosecutorial fines.

L.A jails

Desiree Robledo (4/4)

For context, I am a 36-year-old male of native and Hispanic descent; born and raised in Los Angeles. I am a hardworking, generally law abiding, tax paying, voting, college educated, contributing member of society. I am far from perfect but even farther from being a criminal as my nearly spotless record reflects. It's March 2020 and the country is locking down as we began facing the reality of a global pandemic. In the months that followed, protests would erupt worldwide, calling to end police brutality in response to the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Daniel Prude, Rayshard Brooks, Manuel Ellis and more by police.

On March 27, 2020 a little after midnight, I was involved in an egregious & violent use of force incident perpetrated by 2 Norwalk Sheriff's deputies which ended in me being arrested and charged with battery of an officer (243(B) PC). Leading up to that, I was mocked, ridiculed, taunted, cursed at, sucker punched, choked out nearly to the point of unconsciousness with the infamous "knee in the neck" move and given numerous, unprotected, closed fist punches to the head while I lay face down and handcuffed screaming that I couldn't breathe. I did not at any point raise a hand in violence or attempt to intimidate the deputies in any way.

LASD use of force/ blue wall of silence/ transparency/ accountability/ public complaints/ investigation.

Richard I. Acevedo (1/2)

This took place inches from my own back yard in the alley behind the home my late grandparents bought in 1969. Since then, I filed a 6–7 page complaint going into great detail describing my experience with the LASD and addressing the many, many holes, contradictions and nonsense the deputies put in the police report. This will be the TLDR version but I'd be willing to share anything I have with this commission.

The two Lieutenants and the Seargent I've spoken to so far have maintained that the deputies have done nothing wrong insisting that all actions were "reasonable and within policy". It has been extremely disheartening (and infuriating) how LASD has been unable to take the least bit of accountability for their actions and instead provided lame excuses and claimed to have mountains of evidence against me. Despite being unwilling to show me this evidence when they denied my complaint and unable to produce this evidence during the discovery process in court. I suppose this is why I was able to get the charges against me dropped as of Jan. 10, 2022 and maintain my spotless criminal record. Even the limited evidence I was able to procure sheds light on the truth. For one, photographs of my injuries are not consistent with the deputies' stories. Second the deputies' stories aren't consistent with the deputies' stories. They contradict themselves and each other throughout, they have flimsy and vague descriptions of rather important details and are too detailed on inconsequential and irrelevant information. When I pointed these things out to the Seargent he said that it was written in "cop speak" and that's why I couldn't understand it. How is this transparency? How is this accountability? How is this reasonable and within policy? I know the deputies are lying, they know they're lying. At this point anyone with ½ a brain can surmise they're not being truthful. Yet they are able to hide behind the blue wall of silence.

LASD use of force/ blue wall of silence/ transparency/ accountability/ public complaints/ investigation.

Richard I. Acevedo (2/2)

As this commission is aware, LASD has been under a Settlement Agreement with the Department of Justice since 2015 that covers its Antelope Valley stations. Part of that agreement lays out findings and recommendations in regards to its Use of Force. In February of last year, IG Huntsman stated the LASD discipline process is non-functional. This is evidence that LASD has no intention of abiding by the settlement and will continue to harm the Black and Brown communities in the Antelope Valley. I am asking this commission to use every tool available to ensure LASD finally comes into compliance with the 2015 Settlement Agreement so that Black and Brown folk can stop living in fear of the police.

LASD Use of Force

Raquel Derfler

Regarding 3b: People are dying in the LA County jails. By the beginning of December 2021, 51 people died in custody. That is a rate of one death per week. We don't even know the exact number of deaths for all of 2021 yet because the LA Sheriff's Department does not tell the public when people die on its watch. The Commission needs to require greater transparency from LASD on the fact and cause of death. The public and oversight bodies cannot effectively address the issues leading to death in custody without knowing that people are dying and why. COVID deaths have been reported publicly as they occur; other deaths and cause of death can be reported in the same way while protecting the privacy of the individual and families impacted. The OIG has identified serious flaws in LASD's investigation of in-custody deaths, including Homicide's failure to disclose details surrounding in-custody deaths during LASD's confidential Death Reviews. Independent oversight of in-custody deaths is necessary so that deficiencies in in-custody practices and any misconduct can be brought to light and addressed. The most effective way to respond to people dying in jails is to drastically reduce the number of people in custody. People are dying of medical crises, drug overdose, COVID-19, and by suicide, all of which can be directly attributed to overcrowding in the jails. More staffing is not the answer. Getting people out of jail is the answer.

3b, 3c, 3d & General Public Comments

Maraky

Regarding 3c: The Commission needs to do more than what the Staff Report recommends to protect LA families affected by mental health crises from Sheriff's deputy violence. The COC should look into whether LASD is sufficiently supporting County efforts to shift crisis response from law enforcement to community-based organizations and mental health workers, or whether LASD representatives are standing in the way. The Commission itself needs to actively support that shift and the County's commitment to Alternatives to Incarceration, rather than merely focusing on MET. MET existed when LASD deputies shot David Ordaz Jr. and Isaias Cervantes. The Commission needs to take a hard look at LASD dispatch and the role it played in enabling that tragic violence. An LASD designated subject matter expert will only provide self-serving testimony to the Commission about LASD's current approach.

Regarding 3d: The COC should pass a resolution instructing the Board of Supervisors to Reinvest the \$35 million annually spent on LASD substations at our county hospitals towards hospitals based community safety strategies.

We must reiterate the Frontline Wellness Network demand that COC adopt the position that LASD in our safety-net hospitals is unnecessary, poses significant risks to public safety. In the wake of the murder of a patient in mental in health crisis, Nicholas Burgos, inside Harbor-UCLA at the hands of LASD last October and the rampant corruption and violence within the department, it is clear that the continued investment in sheriff presence in our hospitals is a danger to patients. The Department of Health Services already spends \$32 million for private security at its facilities. The money spent on Sheriffs would be better utilized by investing in dedicated non-law enforcement crisis response teams in DHS facilities, scaling up code-gold teams, increasing clinical staff to more effectively meet patient address needs, and system navigators within the hospital setting. Additionally these funds can be used to position our emergency department and psychiatrist emergency rooms as hubs for necessary service linkage, violence prevention services, and upstream solutions to harm that benefit the wellbeing of Black and Brown communities. Funding Sheriff presence in hospitals is inconsistent with the county's Care First mission.

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