

# MEET THE PROBATION CARE TEAM

## PCT FOCUSES ON EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The Probation Care Team (PCT) was created during the COVID-19 pandemic to serve as wellness ambassadors on behalf of Chief Probation Officer Dr. Adolfo Gonzales. On July 13, 2021, Supervisor Janice Hahn made a Board Motion to create a countywide wellness unit in response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Supervisor Hahn's Board Motion further enhanced the importance and necessity of the PCT's roles, responsibilities, and duties. The Probation Care Team's mission is to help support probation employees throughout their healing process while recovering from injury.

The PCT offers in-person visits at the employees' residences with the primary focus on their recovery, health, and wellness. The four-person unit includes SDPO Regino "Reggie" Torres, Jr., SDPO Brett Sakoda, DPO Chad McMillan, and Transportation Deputy Luis Melendez. DPO II Monique Newson will be joining the Probation Care Team soon.

How it works: Members of the PCT will visit the employee at home and provide wellness resources centered on the employee and their recovery process. "We educate the employee on the Probation Support Services (PSS) program, Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Peer Support, and Chaplaincy programs," said team leader SDPO Torres. "An employee should return to work only when they are mentally and physically able."

The PCT provides referrals to Peer support to all employees they visit. Members of the PCT have successfully completed the 3-Day Peer Support Training. "We've worked throughout the halls, camps, and in the field," said SDPO Sakoda. "One of us has worked in every operation within the department so we have that experience, and we understand what people are going through because we have actually been there and done that job." The PCT will listen, assess, and refer employees to professional therapists when necessary. The PCT will follow up and ensure linkage of services was provided to the employee. Many of our Probation employees have been referred to the Probation Support Services (PSS) program on behalf of PCT Supervisors.

In addition, the PCT supports the Probation Department's Honor Guard by attending departmental funerals and offering comfort to the family during their time of grief. The PCT also attends funerals at our partner law enforcement agencies within Los Angeles County and throughout the state for support.



SDPO Regino "Reggie" Torres, Jr.



SDPO Brett Sakoda



DPO Chad McMillan



Transportation Deputy Luis Melendez

"As a recovering patient, the Probation Care Team has been great in term of Wellness Visits with me, keeping me updated on my leave donated time and county information. They have provided groceries to assist me and my family. They are quick to respond when contacted, and their overall kindness and professionalism has been greatly appreciated."

*-SDPO DG from RTSB*

"Safety, Staff care, and morale has to be a priority, which will allow us to renew our past culture of care and concern. It's good to see the Probation Department is trying to show they care about staff needs and safety, on and off the job to make in attempts to make a better future for our department."

*- GSN JL from CJH*

On the primary goal of the team, SDPO Torres said, "The PCT wears many hats, but we ultimately want to be known as a team that cares. We listen, we advise, we research, we teach, and answer employee concerns on and off the job when asked or called upon. Allowing the Probation Care Team to be a part of the linkage between employees and services offered through our department gives the PCT great satisfaction. The many smiles we see after visiting and informing employees how much they still matter, and how important they are to the department, lets the PCT also know we are carrying out Chief Dr. Adolfo Gonzales's vision by promoting wellness."

The Probation Care Team would like to thank Chief Probation Officer Dr. Adolfo Gonzales, Chief Deputy Karen Fletcher, Chief Deputy Adam Bettino, and Bureau Chief David Grkinich for their continuous support of the PCT program.