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August 17, 2022

To: Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, Chair
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From: Fesia A. Davenport *Mitchell*
 Chief Executive Officer *for*

ENHANCING ILLEGAL DRUG DETECTION IN THE JAILS AND COURTS (ITEM NO. 27, AGENDA OF DECEMBER 7, 2021, AND ITEM NO. 80A, AGENDA OF APRIL 19, 2022)

On December 7, 2021, the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Executive Office to provide an analysis of the potential to deploy narcotics mail scanners at the County jails. On April 19, 2022, the Board directed the Chief Executive Office, in collaboration with the Sheriff’s Department (LASD), the Office of Inspector General (OIG), the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission (COC), and the Department of Public Health’s Substance Abuse Prevention and Control, to report back with recommendations to prevent the presence of drugs in the County’s jail facilities, the patrol station jails and court lockups. A report in response to these directives is attached.

The Chief Executive Office and aforementioned partners, in collaboration with Department of Health Services’ Integrated Correctional Health Services (collectively the “workgroup”), have reviewed LASD’s proposals for narcotics detection staffing and technology, prioritized as follows:

Table 1: Narcotics Detection Options

LASD Proposal in Priority Order	OIG/COC Priority*	Staff	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	TOTAL
1. Scent detection canines	3	10	\$2,490,000	\$1,235,000	\$3,725,000
2. Narcotics investigators	8	3	\$755,000	\$45,000	\$795,000
3. Mail screening devices	4		\$26,000	\$412,000	\$438,000
4. Mobile trace spectrometer	7		\$0	\$182,000	\$182,000

LASD Proposal in Priority Order	OIG/COC Priority*	Staff	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	TOTAL
5. Drugloo Ranger	9		\$0	\$17,000	\$17,000
6. Bi-annual training refresher (4,084 custody staff split into two cohorts)	6		\$707,000	\$0	\$707,000
7. Grounds maintenance staffing	9	26	\$2,757,000	\$156,000	\$2,913,000
8. MERIT Master: SUD Program	10		\$50,000	\$21,000	\$71,000
9. Random personnel searches	2		Canine or spectrometer		
10. Body scanner replacement	5		\$ 9,000	\$4,181,000	\$4,190,000

* The OIG/COC's number one priority is to lower the inmate population which they state exacerbates existing problems with drugs being present in the jails. This recommendation is not included in the table as it is not directly responsive to the motion. Drugloo Ranger and the grounds maintenance staffing are tied as OIG/COC's ninth priority.

In general, there was consensus among the workgroup on the value of the narcotics detection proposals put forward by LASD. However, the OIG and COC did recommend prioritizing the proposals differently from that of LASD, as discussed in the attached report.

LASD has indicated several of the narcotics detection proposals will be submitted in their Supplemental Budget Priorities.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me or Sheila Williams at (213) 974-1155 or swilliams@ceo.lacounty.gov.

FAD:JMN:MM
 SW:RP:DT:cc

Attachment

- c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
- County Counsel
- Sheriff
- Health Services
- Public Health

REPORT: PROPOSED DRUG DETECTION STRATEGIES WITHIN THE JAILS
(as of July 2022)

On December 7, 2021, the Board of Supervisors directed the Chief Executive Office to provide an analysis of deploying narcotics mail scanners at the County jails. On April 19, 2022, the Board of Supervisors expanded the analysis to include recommendations of strategies that prevent the presence of drugs in the County's jail facilities, the patrol station jails and court lockups.

Background: Narcotics within the County Jails

The Sheriff's Department (LASD/Department) Custody Investigative Services Unit (CISU) is responsible for the health and safety of people in jail, including efforts to detect and mitigate narcotics from entering the County's court lockups and seven custody facilities. The CISU is comprised of Operation Safe Jails, Prison Gang Liaison, Custody K-9, Jail Liaison, Jail Investigative Unit, and Narcotics Unit. CISU conducts proactive investigations and compiles intelligence through informants, intercepting telephone calls, and jailhouse messages (a.k.a. kites). Other existing detection strategies include body scanners, drug scent canines, and visual and physical searches. All these strategies are staff intensive whether it is detective work, lining up people for the body scanners, training and escorting K-9s, or conducting the physical search of individuals or housing units.

Narcotics seizures inside the jails vary from month to month with drugs intercepted multiple times each day. Although drugs are smuggled in quantities of grams, the cumulative amount becomes significant, especially considering the scale of the County jail system with approximately 100,000 people processed in and out each year, the daily volume of visitors, volunteers, external organizations, staff, and the daily transport of people between the seven jail facilities, 24 court houses, medical treatment facilities, and State prisons. Between 2018 through the end of 2021, approximately 224.4 pounds of narcotics were recovered, including methamphetamine (50 percent), heroin (15 percent), marijuana (6 percent), pharmaceuticals (6 percent), cocaine (4 percent), and other drugs (ecstasy, ephedrine, fentanyl, hashish, LSD, etc.). The Department estimated the value of methamphetamine was between \$1 to \$3 million, which is approximately 10 to 20 times the street value and a motivating factor for criminal organizations' attempts to increase the narcotics flow into the jails to capitalize on this premium. Smuggling methods include but are not limited to:

- U.S. mail and phony legal correspondence laced with narcotics;
- People intentionally ingesting or inserting narcotics packages within their body for transport into the jails;
- Visitors dropping off medical devices with hidden compartments;
- Hidden narcotics in community medical facilities that are retrieved by people who are brought from jail for their scheduled treatment appointment;
- Hidden narcotics in station, jail, and court's public lobbies, visiting areas, trash collection, exterior landscaping, and within the facility perimeter (e.g., tossed over fences and drone drop offs); and
- Staff and volunteers smuggling contraband into custody facilities.

Despite the frequency and cumulative amount recovered, the Department acknowledges undetected smuggled narcotics remains a significant problem. During 2021, indicative of its prevalence and the impact on the health of incarcerated people, smuggled narcotics were responsible for 402 NARCAN deployments, 200 overdoses, and nine deaths.

LASD's Prioritized Narcotics Detection Proposals

The Department's revised Fiscal Year 2022-23 Budget Priorities added proposals for narcotics detection staffing and technology. Our office has reviewed the Department's narcotics detection budget proposals, in collaboration with the Office of Inspector General (OIG), the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission (COC), the Department of Public Health's Substance Abuse Prevention, and the Department of Health Services' Integrated Correctional Health Services (collectively the "workgroup"). The workgroup also discussed other proactive drug intervention strategies, including Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) and the Substance Treatment and Reentry Transition Program. MOUD is currently being reviewed as part of the Department of Justice compliance strategy, and the Substance Treatment and Reentry Transition Program is currently in operation within four custody facilities. The workgroup also discussed preventative strategies, such as peer-to-peer support, which is included in the list of proposals below. In general, the workgroup is in consensus with the narcotics detection proposals put forward by the Department; however, we have noted within each proposal where the OIG and the COC have a difference in priorities.

Additionally, the OIG conducted a review of research on current best practices which indicate increasing access to medication programs, specifically including MOUD, and providing therapeutic rehabilitation are the best ways to effectuate treatment for incarcerated people. Specifically, research suggests that MOUD decreases opioid use and reduces overdose mortality both during and after incarceration. Therapeutic rehabilitation includes counseling, family support, peer support/structured therapeutic communities, and cognitive behavioral therapy. Moreover, the American Society of Addiction Medicine has outlined that MOUD is the standard of care for people in custody with substance abuse disorders.

The following are the Department's prioritized proposed narcotics detection strategies:

1. Scent Detection Canines

Current Canine Budget	No.	Ongoing Cost
Canines	5	\$25,000
Deputy Sheriff, Bonus I	5	\$1,189,000
Vehicles (K-9 kit)	5	\$31,000
Total	5	\$1,245,000

CISU's Custody K-9 is currently comprised of five canine units (canine + handler) that provide scent detection services. The canine units are funded with Inmate Welfare Fund (three canine units) and net County cost (NCC) (two canine units).

The current five canine units are deployed as follows: two handlers are assigned to the Pitchess Detention Center facilities (PDC) and three handlers are assigned to the Los Angeles basin facilities, including Century Regional Detention Facility (CRDF). The canine units are available for incident response any day of the week, including nights, weekends, and holidays, and at the request of a facility following a major incident, such

as an overdose. Due to the large number of requests from all custody and criminal court facilities, the canine units are deployed to searches upon request. Pursuant to training and regulations, canines can only work five hours each day: active search limited to increments of 45 minutes followed by an hour-long break. Given this limitation and depending on the type of operation, multiple canine units may be deployed to conduct a search at a location. The canines are trained to detect cocaine, heroin, marijuana, methamphetamine, opium, pharmaceuticals, and pruno (jail alcohol).

Narcotics Interceptions by Five Canine Units*

Year	Number of Searches	Narcotics Seized (lbs)
2018	2,502	38
2019	3,231	63
2020	3,153	53
2021	2,957	71
2022**	1,277	23

* Narcotics seizure amounts may also reflect amounts claimed by other CISU and custody units that participated in the interdiction.

** Reflects January through May 2022.

Department Budget Request

Department Request	No.	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	TOTAL
Canine*	10	\$50,000	\$110,000	\$160,000
Deputy Sheriff, Bonus I	10	\$2,378,000	\$150,000	\$2,528,000
Vehicles (Canine Kit)	10	\$62,000	\$975,000	\$1,037,000
Total	10	\$2,490,000	\$1,235,000	\$3,725,000

* Includes the purchase of the canines and the training of the canines and handlers.

The Department is requesting to add ten canine units for a total cost of \$3.8 million. The current staffing levels only allow for reactive deployment, such as following an overdose and narcotics related deaths. The additional units would be designated to facilities/housing units with high narcotics trafficking, expand the hours of canine unit availability, including weekends, as well as respond to the high volume of requests for scent detection services by station jails and court lockups. The Department anticipates these proactive efforts would interrupt the trafficking within the jails, improve quality of care by reducing overdoses and deaths, subsequently reducing the Department's liability.

Note: The OIG and COC prioritize this proposal as number three (3).

2. Narcotics Investigators

Current Narcotics Unit Budget	No.	Ongoing Cost
Deputy Sheriff, Bonus I	5	\$1,189,000
Sergeant	1	\$275,000
Total	6	\$1,464,000

CISU's Narcotics Unit is currently comprised of six sworn staff funded with NCC.

The Narcotics Unit conducts investigations of smuggling, possession, and possession for sale within the custodial facilities, buses, and courthouses. Investigators perform intelligence gathering, surveillance, interdiction operations with other CISU units, file cases and attend the subsequent court hearings. As previously noted, many of these investigations involve criminal organizations.

Narcotics Interceptions by Narcotics Unit*

Year	Number of Searches	Narcotics Seized (lbs)
2018	19	13
2019	6	8
2020	21	17
2021	40	53
2022**	30	19

* Data reflect specific seizures made by Narcotics Unit search warrants from jail intelligence and investigations originating inside the jails. Narcotics seizure amounts may also reflect amounts claimed by other CISU and custody units that participated in the interdiction.
 ** Reflects January through May 2022

Department Budget Request

Department Request	No.	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	TOTAL
Sergeant	1	\$280,000	\$15,000	\$290,000
Deputy Sheriff, Bonus I	2	\$475,000	\$30,000	\$505,000
Total	3	\$755,000	\$45,000	\$795,000

The Department is requesting to add one sergeant and two narcotics detectives for a total cost of \$800,000. The additional personnel will assist with high-level narcotics smuggling involving organized criminal gang members who are incarcerated in the jails. The investigations are often extremely lengthy, requiring numerous hours of investigations, including interviewing witnesses, informants, and reviewing hours of video surveillance and recorded phones calls made from within jails. These investigations often expand into the community since incarcerated high ranking gang members work with individuals outside of custody to implement various drug smuggling strategies. The criminal organizations are well organized and have proven to be responsible for numerous recent drug induced overdoses and overdose deaths within the jails. As previously noted, narcotics trafficking within the jails is extremely lucrative and organized criminal gangs enforce collection. Investigations have found most of the significant assaults and some murders within the jails are a direct result of drug debts owed to members of organized criminal gangs.

Note: The OIG and COC prioritize this proposal as number eight (8).

3. Vero Vision Mail Screening Device

The Department currently conducts visual and physical inspection of U.S. mail to determine whether it contains drugs. Unfortunately, these inspections are unable to identify sophisticated drug smuggling techniques, including narcotics laced envelopes, paper, postage, marker ink, and crayons. The Vero Vision mail screening device is designed to detect narcotics within individual pieces of U.S. mail within 20 seconds and

identify the type of narcotic within 90 seconds. The device utilizes spectrometry technology that does not damage the mail; whereas, physical inspections require opening the mail and possibly sampling a piece at the lab, which is time consuming and damages the correspondence.

Department Budget Request

Department Request	No.	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	TOTAL
Mail Screening Device	2	\$26,000	\$412,000	\$438,000
Total	2	\$26,000	\$412,000	\$438,000

The Department has recently purchased three mail screening devices for deployment to Men's Central Jail (MCJ), Inmate Reception Center (IRC), and CRDF. Two additional devices are requested for the North County Correctional Facility (NCCF) and the CISU. The NCCF device would screen mail for the approximately 2,950 people and an additional 1,900 people in the other PDC facilities. The CISU device would be transported to other facilities upon request.

Note: The OIG and COC prioritize this proposal as number four (4).

4. Mobile Trace Spectrometer

The Department currently conducts physical searches, utilizes body scanners, and uses drug scent detection canines – all of which have their role in narcotics detection, but also have limitations: physical searches are intrusive and have the potential for use of force; body scanners are at fixed locations and requires the consent of the person otherwise a physical search is performed; and there are a limited number of canine units available. Mobile trace spectrometers are handheld devices that can detect narcotics residue on a person's clothing which would then be the signal for a physical search.

Department Budget Request

Department Request	No.	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	TOTAL
Mobile Trace Spectrometer	7	\$0	\$182,000	\$182,000
Total	7	\$0	\$182,000	\$182,000

The Department is requesting mobile trace spectrometers to be assigned to MCJ, IRC, NCCF, and CRDF, respectively. Three additional devices would be assigned to CISU for deployment upon request by other facilities, including courthouses and station jails. As a handheld device that can detect narcotics from a distance, the mobile trace spectrometer can be deployed quickly, used throughout a facility, and scan a large number of people relative to the time needed to conduct physical searches or to process a line-up for body scanning. The latter would streamline court line which requires everyone returning to jail to line-up for a body scan or physical search (up to 1,200 people are transported daily between the jail facilities and courts).

Note: The OIG and COC prioritize this proposal as number seven (7).

5. Drugloo Ranger

The Department has stated that smuggling narcotics within the body is one of the major modes of transportation into the jails – people intentionally get arrested for the purpose of smuggling in narcotics. Currently, a person suspected of having ingested or inserted narcotics packages within themselves are placed in a designated cell where they are observed until the package is excreted in a bowel movement and, if the person attempts to dispose of the package by flushing, it is intercepted through the plumbing by a deputy who manually inspects the feces to recover the narcotics package. The Drugloo Ranger is a specially designed toilet with an attached screening device that facilitates hands-free sanitizing and recovery of narcotics packages.

Department Budget Request

Department Request	No.	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	TOTAL
Drugloo Ranger	1	\$0	\$17,000	\$17,000
Total	1	\$0	\$17,000	\$17,000

The Department has recently purchased two Drugloo Ranger devices for deployment at MCJ and NCCF. The Department is requesting another Drugloo Ranger to be deployed at CRDF. As one can imagine, recovering narcotics packages from feces is an unhygienic process and requires personal protection equipment to safeguard the deputy.

Note: The OIG and COC prioritize this proposal as number nine (9) (tied with grounds maintenance staffing).

6. Bi-Annual Training Refresher

Aside from the initial narcotics module presented at the Academy and a brief section during custody operations training, the Department currently does not provide formal narcotics training. With the prevalence of narcotics and its increasing potency and toxicity (e.g., fentanyl), custody personnel should be apprised of current narcotics, smuggling strategies, exposure risks, the detection, intervention, and recovery strategies, and safe handling practices.

Department Budget Request

Department Request	No.	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	TOTAL
Narcotics Training*				
Custody Assistant	496	\$110,000	\$0	\$110,000
Deputy	1,250	\$463,000	\$0	\$463,000
Deputy, Bonus I	106	\$41,000	\$0	\$41,000
Sergeant	145	\$68,000	\$0	\$68,000
Lieutenant	45	\$25,000	\$0	\$25,000
Total	2,042	\$707,000	\$0	\$707,000

* Backfill overtime for 4,084 staff, split between two cohorts trained in alternating years.

The Department's proposal provides a 4-hour bi-annual refresher training to 4,084 custody personnel who would be split between two cohorts scheduled on alternating years (half trained the first year and the other half the following year and so forth). Training would be provided by the Custody Training and Standards Bureau with existing staff.

Note: The OIG and COC prioritize this proposal as number six (6).

7. **Narcotic Suppression: Grounds Maintenance**

The Department intelligence indicates areas such as visiting, public lobbies, exterior landscaping, and trash collection are significant points of vulnerability for drug smuggling at all facilities. These locations are currently serviced by inmate workers who, despite the Department's vetting process, may potentially be part of a smuggling operation.

Department Budget Request

Department Request	No.	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	TOTAL
Grounds Maintenance Worker I	13	\$1,376,000	\$78,000	\$1,454,000
Grounds Maintenance Worker II	6	\$683,000	\$36,000	\$719,000
Custodian	7	\$698,000	\$42,000	\$740,000
Total	26	\$2,757,000	\$156,000	\$2,913,000

The Department's proposal would assign 16 staff to the basin facilities, four to PDC North, and six to NCCF. The additional personnel would be used to stop the introduction of narcotics into our jails by replacing inmate workers with grounds maintenance and custodial staff. These positions would serve as work crews, responsible for the maintenance of public areas such as visiting, public lobbies, and all landscaping maintenance. This will assist in combatting the narcotic smuggling into our facilities and allow the department to fully concentrate on vulnerable areas of access.

Note: The OIG and COC prioritize this proposal as number nine (9) (tied with Drugloo Ranger).

8. **Maximizing Education Reaching Individual Transformation (MERIT) Master: Substance Use Disorder Program**

The Department operates a peer-to-peer support program known as the MERIT program. People who have completed 360 hours of education-based incarceration classes, possess leadership qualities, desire to help others, and display genuine transformation are eligible to become a Merit Master. Upon selection, education-based incarceration staff and credentialed instructors lead people through the MERIT curriculum, including reflecting critically on their lives, relationships, and actions, challenge negative beliefs about themselves, and change dysfunctional behaviors. The MERIT curriculum includes training on peer-to-peer support for specific at-risk and/or vulnerable populations.

Department Budget Request

Department Request	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	TOTAL
Furniture and Supplies	\$0	\$21,000	\$21,000
Food Incentives	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000
Total	\$50,000	\$21,000	\$71,000

The Department and Integrated Correctional Health Services propose establishing a MERIT Master program designed to provide peer education and support about the associated risk with drug use and the benefits of drug treatment that is available in custody facilities. The proposal would add the peer-to-peer component in two modules within the Twin Towers Correctional Facility and CRDF where both clinical/custody staff already perform similar step-down treatment programming. The primary expenses would consist of module furniture, educational supplies/material, and food items which are used and proven to incentivize greater participation.

Note: The OIG and COC prioritize this proposal as number ten (10).

9. Random Personnel Search (OIG proposal)

Establish randomized staff and volunteer searches through use of scent detection canines and/or mobile trace spectrometers to deter and detect staff and volunteer narcotic smuggling. Per OIG, staff and volunteer searches are not currently effectuated and the extent of precautionary steps is limited to requiring staff and volunteers to transport their belongings into custody in transparent bags.

Note: The OIG and COC prioritize this proposal as number two (2).

10. Body Scanner Replacement

Pursuant to the 2013 Citizens' Commission on Jail Violence report, the Department installed 17 body scanners within the various custody facilities between April 2014 through July 2019. In addition to detecting contraband, the body scanners were intended to reduce the number of strip searches. The body scanners are at fixed locations where there is a high volume of people arriving or returning to the custody facilities:

- 1 - MCJ
- 6 - IRC
- 4 - NCCF
- 2 - CRDF
- 2 - PDC North
- 2 - PDC South

On December 7, 2018, the Department reported that body scanners were ineffective with a low number of contrabands recovered; specifically, during September 2018 there were 29,802 scans performed, but zero contraband detected. A Department workgroup identified two primary fixes: 1) advanced imaging training for staff and 2) increasing the imaging resolution of the machines. The Department indicated, that despite additional staff training, people have learned how to defeat the body scanners with small movements that skew the low-resolution imaging of the existing machines. The Department has stated

the manufacturer cannot provide hardware or software upgrades to improve image resolution.

Department Budget Request

Department Request	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	TOTAL
17 Body Scanners		\$3,264,000	\$3,264,000
Virtual Machine Server		\$67,000	\$67,000
5-year Warranty (maintenance and support)		850,000	\$850,000
Permits (\$512/machine)	\$9,000		\$9,000
Total	\$9,000	\$4,181,000	\$4,190,000

The Department proposes to replace the existing body scanners with high-resolution machines which include software that adjusts the imaging to counter any movement a person makes during the scan. These updated scanners will be able to detect the smuggling of weapons, narcotics, and other types of contraband into the custody facilities. The Department noted that in lieu of purchase, there are manufacturers that would provide lease options that include upgrades as technology improvements are made.

Note: The OIG and COC prioritize this proposal as number five (5).