



**Office of Inspector General
County of Los Angeles**

**Reform and Oversight Efforts:
Los Angeles County Sheriff's
Department**

**April to June
2022**

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of the Office of Inspector General's regular monitoring, auditing, and review of activities related to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department occurring between April 1, 2022, and June 30, 2022.¹

MONITORING SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT'S OPERATIONS

Deputy-Involved Shootings

The Office of Inspector General reports on all deputy-involved shootings in which a deputy intentionally fired a firearm at a human, or intentionally or unintentionally fired a firearm and a human was injured or killed as a result. This quarter there were six incidents in which people were shot or shot at by Sheriff's Department personnel. The Office of Inspector General staff responded to each of these deputy-involved shootings. Three people were struck by deputies' gunfire, one fatally.

The information in the following shooting summaries is based on the limited information provided by the Sheriff's Department and is preliminary in nature. While the Office of Inspector General receives information at the walk-through at the scene of the shooting, receiving preliminary memoranda with summaries, and by attending the Sheriff's Department Critical Incident Reviews, the statements of the deputies and witnesses are not provided until the investigation is complete. The Sheriff's Department does not permit the Office of Inspector General's staff to monitor the on-going investigations of deputy-involved shootings, does not provide access to the full body-worn camera videos of deputies involved in the incident, and does not comply with lawful requests for documentation of these investigations.

Industry: The Sheriff's Department reported that on April 1, 2022, at approximately 4:23 p.m., Industry Station deputies responded to a call of a possible arson. The caller, the suspect's sister, reported that her brother was inside a pickup truck parked in front of her home and was threatening to burn down the property with a bottle of gasoline he had in his possession. Earlier in the day, the sister had made two calls to report vandalism to her car and her belief that her brother was responsible. Upon arriving at the location, three deputies saw a lone male Hispanic seated in the driver's seat of the truck in front of the caller's location.

¹ The report will note if the data reflects something other than what was gathered between April 1, 2022, and June 30, 2022.

The deputies parked their patrol cars about twenty feet away from the man's truck and gave several verbal commands for the suspect to exit his vehicle. The man suddenly accelerated his truck toward the deputies and drove around the patrol vehicles, drove onto the sidewalk and fled.

Deputies initiated a short vehicle pursuit of the suspect, who made a U-turn and drove back onto the driveway of his sister's home. He then exited the vehicle and ran to the side of the garage while holding a pointed metal object.

Deputies gave him several commands to drop the weapon, but the suspect refused to comply. Deputies fired less lethal 40mm rounds at the suspect, which had no effect. While still holding the metal object, the suspect turned to advance toward one of the deputies, and a deputy fired three rounds at the suspect, striking him. The deputies approached him and rendered aid. The suspect was then transported to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. The metal object the suspect had was identified as a six-inch screwdriver.

The shooting was captured on body-worn cameras. Portions of the video were shown at the Sheriff's Department's Critical Incident Review. The Sheriff's Department has not provided the Office of Inspector General with access to its body-worn camera videos; thus, the Office of Inspector General does not know whether the cameras were properly activated as required by Sheriff's Department policy.

This is the third shooting for the involved deputy.

Areas for Further Inquiry

What did the man's sister tell the Department during the three calls for service that day? Was there any mention of mental illness or substance abuse? Did the deputies consider requesting the Mental Evaluation Team when the man refused to exit the truck? What was the shooting backdrop and were any persons in the line of fire?

East Los Angeles: The Sheriff's Department reported that on April 15, 2022, at approximately 11:30 p.m., two East Los Angeles Station deputies were on patrol, when they observed a vehicle driving in the opposite direction. They saw the front passenger, a male Hispanic, point a firearm at them. The deputies made a U-turn and attempted to conduct a traffic stop. The male Hispanic driver failed to yield resulting in a vehicle pursuit. Approximately four minutes later, with deputies still in pursuit, the driver drove up a ramp to a private business and rammed his vehicle into a chain link fence. The front passenger exited the vehicle and ran past the fallen fence, and out of view. The driver reversed his vehicle and collided with the front bumper of the deputies' patrol

vehicle. The deputy in the driver's seat, shot twice at the suspect's car from inside the patrol vehicle.

No one was hit. The driver and rear passenger, a Hispanic woman, remained inside the vehicle and were detained without further incident. A containment was established in an attempt to apprehend the front passenger. He was not located and remains outstanding at this time. A firearm was recovered from underneath the driver's seat of the vehicle.

The shooting was captured on body-worn cameras. Portions of the video were shown at the Sheriff's Department's Critical Incident Review. The Sheriff's Department has not provided the Office of Inspector General with access to its body-worn camera videos; thus, the Office of Inspector General does not know whether the cameras were properly activated as required by Sheriff's Department policy.

Areas for Further Inquiry

At the termination of the pursuit did the deputies position their car in a manner that provided them with a safe position of advantage, knowing that the occupants were armed? Was the pursuit managed properly, in compliance with Sheriff's Department policy? Was shooting from inside the vehicle consistent with Sheriff's Department training and law enforcement best practices? Did the deputy violate Sheriff's Department policy regarding shooting at vehicles?

Marina Del Rey: The Sheriff's Department reported that on May 8, 2022, at approximately 8:00 p.m., Marina Del Rey station deputies responded to a call regarding a naked Black man armed with a firearm. While units were enroute to the location, a home, the call was updated that the disturbing party was breaking windows at the residence.

Deputies approached the residence and saw what appeared to be bullet holes in an upper story window of the home. They could not see the suspect and decided to contain the location. A deputy used a public address system to direct the suspect to exit the location.

After several minutes, the man came out the front door wearing pants and no shirt. He sat down on the front steps of the house. Two deputies approached the man on foot with their firearms drawn and ordered the man to put his hands up and walk towards them. The man took a couple steps forward with his arms raised. He suddenly turned his body to the left and dropped his left arm towards his waistband. Fearing the man was going to retrieve a firearm, one of the deputies fired one round, which missed him.

The man ran back inside the location. Deputies made additional call outs. After several minutes, he exited the location. Initially, the man obeyed commands to crawl towards deputies; however, he soon got up and started to walk away from them. The deputies were able to take the suspect down to the ground, handcuff him, and take him into custody

During a subsequent search of the house, two shotguns, a pistol, and a handgun were recovered.

The shooting was captured on body-worn cameras. Portions of the video were shown at the Sheriff's Department's Critical Incident Review. The Sheriff's Department has not provided the Office of Inspector General with access to its body-worn camera videos; thus, the Office of Inspector General does not know whether the cameras were properly activated as required by Sheriff's Department policy.

Areas for Further Inquiry

Given that the caller reported that the man armed with a firearm was naked, was there a request for a Mental Evaluation team to respond? After the deputy-involved shooting when the suspect retreated into the house, was there any consideration of whether a Special Enforcement Bureau team should be requested? For both of the times that the deputies approached the man, was there a tactical plan in place and did they have appropriate cover?

Cudahy: The Sheriff's Department reported that on May 18, 2022, at approximately 8:04 a.m., a non-hit shooting occurred. The Sheriff's Department was conducting an investigation of a Hispanic man who was believed to have committed a murder in the city of South Gate. The suspect is a documented member of a criminal street gang. During the investigation, Operation Safe Streets Bureau's - Gang Surveillance Unit (GSU), developed information that the suspect was possibly at a shopping mall located in Cudahy.

A GSU detective positioned himself in the parking lot and began his surveillance. Shortly thereafter, the suspect emerged from a laundry mat located within the shopping mall and began walking along the sidewalk. According to the GSU detective, as the suspect walked closer to his car, the suspect began reaching towards his waistband with his right hand and appeared to be tugging on an object. The detective moved his car forward closer to the suspect and the suspect turned his body toward the detective.

The detective exited his vehicle, wearing civilian attire with a Sheriff's Department tactical vest. The suspect gave one final tug on the object partially concealed in his

pants. The detective gave commands for the suspect to stop, unholstered his gun, and fired one round at the suspect but did not hit him

After being shot at, the suspect placed his right hand in the air; his left hand was holding a clear plastic bag containing several bottles of hand sanitizer. Once he had dropped the items, the suspect raised both arms over his head.

During the subsequent detention, the suspect reportedly resisted and was taken to the ground by the detective and assisting detectives. Along with the team takedown, Sheriff's Department personnel utilized control holds and kicked the suspect once to subdue him. The detectives recovered a firearm from the suspect.

This is the third shooting for the GSU detective.

There was no body-worn camera video of this incident. As previously reported, the GSU is not equipped with body-worn cameras.² The Sheriff's Department reported that it was working to equip the GSU with body-worn cameras but that the required memorandum of understanding needed with the U.S. Marshals, which has deputized the deputies in this unit, has not been executed. It is of great concern that GSU deputies have been involved in two shootings in a span of three months and that neither shooting was captured on body-worn camera video. The nature of the work of the GSU, surveilling suspects, would seem to require that its deputies have these cameras.

Portions of the shooting were captured on a nearby business's CCTV and some of the that video was shown at the Sheriff's Department's Critical Incident Review.

Areas for Further Inquiry

Was there an operational plan in place at the time of this shooting? Was the intent to surveil or apprehend the suspect? If so, did the detective adhere to his role in the operational plan? Why didn't the detective wait for backup, when deputies were positioned nearby and is this consistent with department training? The location is a shopping mall with people present, if detectives believed the suspect was armed and dangerous, was it tactically sound to approach the suspect in the manner the detective chose to possibly endangering members of the public?

²"Office of Inspector General Quarterly Report, January to March 2022", <https://assets-us-01.kc-usercontent.com/0234f496-d2b7-00b6-17a4-b43e949b70a2/03fd5cfb-5434-461c-a4b1-7d5101c7d75a/Reform%20and%20Oversight%20Efforts%20-%20Los%20Angeles%20County%20Sheriff%27s%20Department%20-%20January%20to%20March%202022.pdf>

East Los Angeles: The Sheriff's Department reported that on May 24, 2022, at approximately 9:02 a.m., a California Highway Patrol (CHP) officer was driving in a marked patrol car in the East Los Angeles area. While driving, he saw two Hispanic men walking in a crosswalk. The younger of the two stopped in the middle of the street, produced a firearm, and suddenly started to fire rounds at the CHP officer. The CHP officer drove away from the men and called for assistance.

Near to where the shooting occurred, two Sheriff's Department's Transit Services Bureau deputies were interviewing a witness on an unrelated incident. The deputies heard the shots and responded to the area where the shots were fired. The Hispanic man then fired rounds at the deputies. The deputies were joined by four CHP officers. The two Sheriff's deputies fired a total of 19 rounds at the male. The CHP officers fired a total of 17 rounds at him.

The male sustained multiple gunshot wounds. He was transported to the hospital and was listed in fair condition. No officers were injured. A Glock 9mm semiautomatic firearm was recovered on the ground near the suspect.

The Transit Bureau deputies did have body-worn cameras but did not turn them on prior to the shooting. Portions of the shooting were captured by nearby CCTV cameras and were shown at the Sheriff's Department's Critical Incident Review of this shooting.

Areas for Further Inquiry

Why didn't the deputies have their body-worn cameras activated and already on when this shooting occurred given that they were responding to hearing shots fired and the cameras should have already been on while they were interviewing witnesses? Were the deputies and CHP officers able to communicate on a shared frequency?

Lancaster: The Sheriff's Department reported that on June 5, 2022, at approximately 1:40 p.m., Lancaster Station received a call from a man, who stated he was going to take his life. In the call, he gave his name and clothing description. He said that if the deputies did not hurry that he was going to go inside the restaurant located at the address. He called a second time and asked if he should walk into the restaurant and take people hostage. Deputies responded to the location and saw a Hispanic man outside the restaurant holding a knife. The man did not comply with the deputies' orders to drop the weapon.

A deputy at the scene called for a Mental Evaluation team and was told that a team was not available. Deputies were on-scene for approximately 15-minutes giving orders to the male. A deputy also went into the restaurant and evacuated the occupants.

As the suspect reached into his backpack, one of the deputies fired a less lethal 40mm round, striking the man in the upper torso. It had little to no impact. The man again reached into his backpack and retrieved a pistol gripped crossbow. The deputy fired at least one additional 40mm round striking the male in the upper torso, again with little impact. Deputies also employed a Taser, but as with the 40mm less lethal rounds, the Taser did not subdue the suspect. Following the less lethal use of force, the man raised the crossbow in the direction of deputy personnel. At that time, four deputies shot at the male, a total of 19 times.

The male sustained gunshot wounds to the lower and upper torso. Deputies approached and rendered aid to the man until the arrival of Los Angeles County Fire Department personnel. He was transported to the hospital, where he was pronounced deceased.

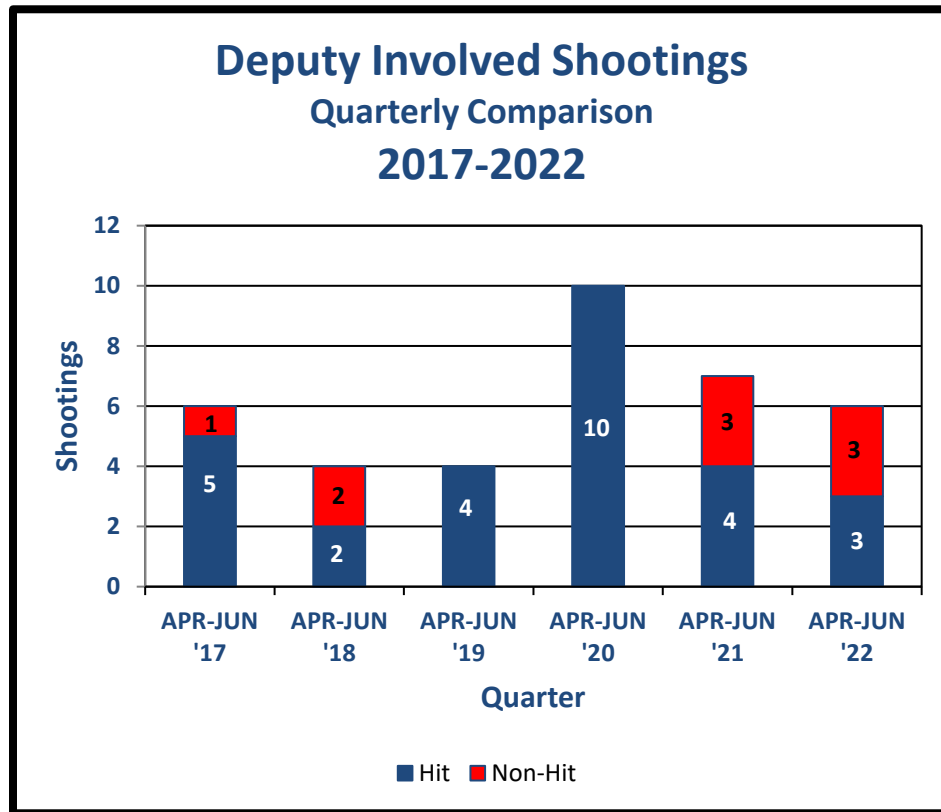
No deputies were injured during the incident. Near the male's body, the deputies recovered a knife and the crossbow. Near where the deputies had stood, detectives found what appeared to be an arrow.

The shooting was captured on body-worn cameras. Portions of the video were shown at the Sheriff's Department's Critical Incident Review. The Sheriff's Department has not provided the Office of Inspector General with access to its body-worn camera videos; thus, the Office of Inspector General does not know whether the cameras were properly activated as required by Sheriff's Department policy.

Areas for Further Inquiry

Why wasn't the Mental Evaluation Team requested upon receiving the first call? Why didn't the Sergeant respond to the first call? Was the call handled in compliance with Sheriff's Department Field Operations directives?

Comparison to Prior Years



District Attorney Review of Deputy-Involved Shootings

The Sheriff's Department's Homicide Bureau investigates all deputy-involved shootings in which a person is hit by a bullet. The Homicide Bureau submits the completed criminal investigation of each deputy-involved shooting that results in a person being struck by a bullet and which occurred in the County of Los Angeles to the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office (LADA) for review and possible filing of criminal charges.

Between April 1, 2022, and June 30, 2022, the LADA issued five findings on deputy-involved shooting cases involving the Sheriff's Department's employees.

- In the February 17, 2020, non-fatal shooting of Steven Lopez Jr., the District Attorney opined in a [memorandum dated April 13, 2022](#), that Sergeant Anthony Delia acted lawfully in self-defense.

- In the September 12, 2019, fatal shooting of Alvaro Venegas, the District Attorney opined in a [memorandum dated April 27, 2022](#), that deputy Michael Miller acted lawfully in self-defense.
- In the June 11, 2020, fatal shooting of Michael Thomas, the District Attorney opined in a [memorandum dated May 10, 2022](#), that there is insufficient evidence to prove deputy Ty Shelton did not act lawfully in self-defense and in defense of others.
- In the September 30, 2021, non-fatal shooting of Shane Whelchel, the District Attorney opined in a [memorandum dated May 17, 2022](#), that deputy Blake Corrigan acted lawfully in self-defense and in defense of others.
- In the September 30, 2021, non-fatal shooting of Abraham Esquivel, the District Attorney opined in a [memorandum dated May 18, 2022](#), that deputy Juan Bendezu acted lawfully in self-defense.

Homicide Bureau's Investigation of Deputy-Involved Shootings

For the present quarter, the Homicide Bureau reports that 16 shooting cases involving Sheriff's Department personnel are open and under investigation. The oldest case the Homicide Bureau is still actively investigating is a September 23, 2021, shooting which occurred in the jurisdiction of Lancaster. For further information as to that shooting, please refer to the Office of Inspector General's report *Reform and Oversight Effort: Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, July to September 2021*.³ The oldest case that the Bureau has open is a 2016 shooting in Compton, which is with the LADA's office awaiting a filing decision.

This quarter, the Sheriff's Department reported it sent five cases involving deputy-involved shootings to the LADA for filing consideration.

Internal Criminal Investigations Bureau

The Sheriff's Department's Internal Criminal Investigations Bureau (ICIB) reports directly to the Division Chief and the Commander of the Professional Standards Division. ICIB investigates allegations of criminal misconduct committed by Sheriff's Department personnel in Los Angeles County (misconduct alleged to have occurred in other

³*Reform and Oversight Effort: Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, July to September 2021*. <https://assets-us-01.kc-usercontent.com/0234f496-d2b7-00b6-17a4-b43e949b70a2/7334cd74-7248-432e-84f3-c59f56f000d6/Reform%20and%20Oversight%20Efforts%20-%20Los%20Angeles%20County%20Sheriffs%20Department%20-%20July%20to%20September%202021.pdf>

counties is investigated by the law enforcement agencies in the jurisdictions where the crimes are alleged to have occurred).

The Sheriff's Department reports ICIB has 83 active cases. This quarter, the Sheriff's Department reports sending 4 cases to the LADA for filing consideration. The LADA is still reviewing 23 cases for filing. The oldest open case that ICIB has submitted to the LADA for filing consideration is a 2018 case, which was presented to the LADA in 2018 and is still being reviewed.

Internal Affairs Bureau

The Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) conducts administrative investigations of Department policy violations by Sheriff's Department employees. It is also responsible for responding to and investigating deputy-involved shootings and significant use-of-force cases. If the LADA declines to file a criminal action against the deputies involved in a shooting, IAB completes a force review to determine whether Sheriff's Department personnel violated any policies during the incident.

Administrative investigations are also conducted at the unit level. The subject's unit and IAB determine whether an incident is investigated by IAB or remains a unit-level investigation based on the severity of the alleged policy violation(s).

This quarter, the Sheriff's Department reported opening 129 new administrative investigations. Of these 129 cases, 44 were assigned to IAB, 52 were designated as unit-level investigations, and 33 were entered as criminal monitors. In the same period, IAB reports that 103 cases were closed by IAB or at the unit level. There are 416 pending administrative investigations. Of those 416 investigations, 287 are assigned to IAB and the remaining 129 are pending unit-level investigations.

Civil Service Commission Dispositions

There were three final decisions issued by the Civil Service Commission this quarter. Of those three, one sustained the Sheriff's Department's discipline and the other two reduced the Sheriff's Department's discipline.

The Sheriff's Department's Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems

The Sheriff's Department reports it deployed its Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) four times between April 1, 2022, and June 30, 2022.

The UAS was deployed on April 7, 2022, to assist Palmdale Station with an armed barricaded suspect. The UAS was utilized to clear the interior of the location and locate the suspect. The suspect was taken into custody.

The UAS was deployed on April 20, 2022, to assist Pico Rivera Station with an armed barricaded suspect. The UAS was utilized to clear the interior of the location and locate the suspect. The suspect was taken into custody.

The UAS was deployed on May 13, 2022, to assist Walnut Station with an armed barricaded suspect. The UAS was utilized to clear the interior of the location and locate the suspect. The suspect was taken into custody.

The UAS was deployed on May 15, 2022, to assist Norwalk Station regarding a possible hostage situation. The UAS was utilized to clear the interior of the location and locate the suspect. The suspect was taken into custody.

CUSTODY DIVISION

Programming Opportunities at Century Regional Detention Facility

The Office of Inspector General continues to monitor Century Regional Detention Facility's (CRDF) efforts to provide meaningful opportunities for people in custody to participate in educational and rehabilitative programming. The Office of Inspector General previously reported that preliminary data analyses⁴ indicated that there was inequitable representation of people in custody at CRDF engaged in time credit-earning programming based on race/ethnicity. People in custody housed at CRDF are able to earn time credit through participating in educational programming opportunities with Education Based Incarceration⁵ (EBI), or through securing jail employment offered through the Prisoner Personnel Office.

Previous analyses compared the percentage of people in custody at CRDF by race/ethnicity to the percentage of people in custody at CRDF by race/ethnicity engaged in credit-earning programming. These analyses indicated that there was racial/ethnic inequity in credit-earning programming at CRDF, specifically with regard to the lack of jobs at CRDF for Black people through the Prisoner Personnel Office (PPO).⁶

⁴ The data analyzed was provided by CRDF in mid-November 2021, mid-December, 2021, and mid-March, 2022.

⁵At CRDF, EBI is overseen by Gender Responsive Services (GRS).

⁶ See the Office of Inspector General's report *Reform and Oversight Efforts – Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department – October to December 2021*; the Office of Inspector General's report *Reform and Oversight Efforts – Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department – January to March 2022*.

Office of Inspector General reported that as of the first quarter of 2022, racial/ethnic representation in EBI was nearly equitable to the population at CRDF.⁷ Conversely, a percentage comparison of people in custody engaged in jail employment indicated there was inequitable representation based on race/ethnicity compared to the population at CRDF.⁸ Notably, the data suggested that Black people housed at CRDF were considerably underrepresented in jail employment, while Hispanic people housed at CRDF were overrepresented in jail employment.

A percentage comparison analysis of data provided by the Sheriff's Department as of July 5, 2022, displayed representation percentages similar to those reported in the first quarter of 2022. The data showed that racial/ethnic representation in EBI was nearly equitable to the population of CRDF. Specifically, the data showed:

- Approximately 14% of EBI participants were White, compared to approximately 17% of the CRDF population.
- Approximately 31% of EBI participants were Black, compared to approximately 31% of the CRDF population.
- Approximately 54% of EBI participants were Hispanic, compared to approximately 47% of the CRDF population.
- Approximately 1% of EBI participants were "Other" race/ethnicity, compared to approximately 4% of the CRDF population.

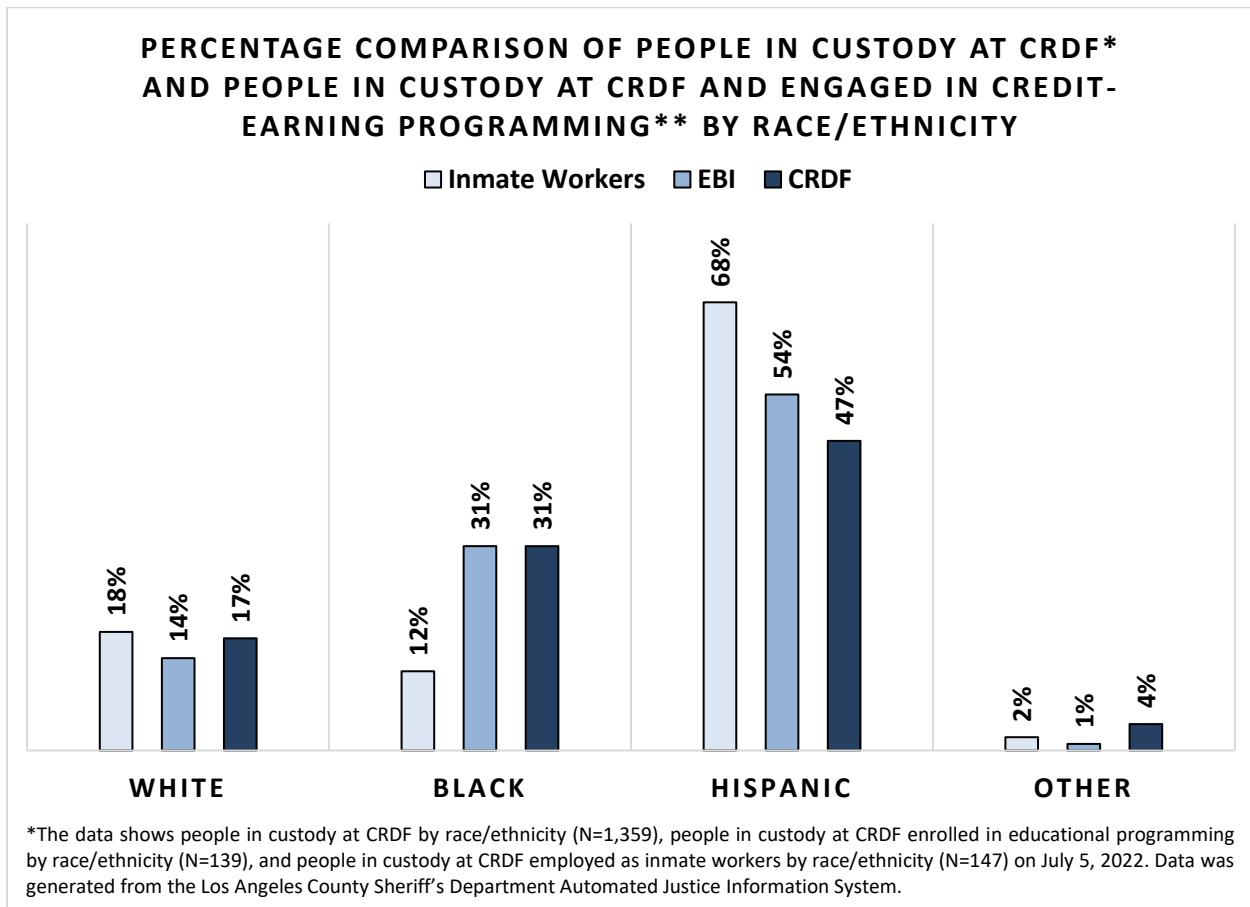
Conversely, a percentage comparison of people in custody engaged in jail employment indicated that inequitable representation based on race/ethnicity continues. Specifically, the data showed:

- Approximately 18% of Inmate Workers were White, compared to approximately 17% of the CRDF population.
- Approximately 12% of Inmate Workers were Black, compared to approximately 31% of the CRDF population.

⁷ Specifically, the data showed: approximately 18% of EBI participants were White, compared to approximately 17% of the CRDF population, approximately 32% of EBI participants were Black, compared to approximately 30% of the CRDF population, approximately 45% of EBI participants were Hispanic, compared to approximately 48% of the CRDF population and approximately 5% of EBI participants were "Other" race/ethnicity, compared to approximately 5% of the CRDF population.

⁸ Specifically, the data showed, approximately 17% of Inmate Workers were White, compared to approximately 17% of the CRDF population, approximately 8% of Inmate Workers were Black, compared to approximately 30% of the CRDF population, approximately 73% of Inmate Workers were Hispanic, compared to approximately 48% of the CRDF population, and approximately 2% of Inmate Workers were "Other" race/ethnicity, compared to approximately 5% of the CRDF population.

- Approximately 68% of Inmate Workers were Hispanic, compared to approximately 47% of the CRDF population.
- Approximately 2% of Inmate Workers were “Other” race/ethnicity, compared to approximately 4% of the CRDF population.



As reported for the first quarter of 2022, the racial and ethnic equity that appears to have been achieved in EBI may be attributed to the substantial efforts made by GRS to increase recruitment efforts throughout CRDF and expand therapeutic and educational class offerings. GRS staff reported that they have maintained these efforts. However, GRS staff also reported that they have encountered recent staffing and housing shortages that may limit programming offerings to people in custody at CRDF in the future. Specifically, GRS staff stated that they have recently lost two staff members, and thus may have to decrease class offerings. Additionally, due to rising COVID-19 numbers, the dorm that was dedicated to housing high school participants was used to house COVID-19 positive people in custody, thereby limiting EBI offerings at CRDF. While these changes are likely temporary, they may impact educational programming development at CRDF within the coming months.

In the previous quarter, Sheriff's Department staff indicated that the PPO would collect data to identify barriers preventing people in custody from being able to secure credit-earning jail employment and re-evaluate selection criteria that the PPO uses to determine eligibility for jail employment,⁹ yet, neither of these efforts have been accomplished during this quarter.

Sheriff's Department staff assert that presently it does not have the data infrastructure to allow for an analysis to identify racial/ethnic disparity in jail employment. Presently, people in custody are able to secure jail employment through submitting an inmate request form, or by working with line staff to determine transfer to an inmate worker dorm (the latter of which is not tracked). Thus, the Sheriff's Department reported that it faces systematic constraints in accurately tracking people in custody who are unable to participate in jail employment opportunities.

The Sheriff's Department reported that it intends to create a tracking mechanism to identify people in custody who are unable to participate as inmate workers to analyze barriers to jail employment, but it is unclear if the reported technological constraints will make this possible. Presently, the Sheriff's Department hypothesizes that, because CRDF houses people charged with high level offenses, many people in custody are ineligible for jail employment.¹⁰ Therefore, the Sheriff's Department has worked with command staff to modify charge eligibility to potentially allow for an increase in the selection pool of people in custody housed at CRDF who are eligible to engage in jail employment opportunities.

The Office of Inspector General will continue to work with CRDF and GRS leadership to monitor programming opportunities at CRDF. The Office of Inspector General will provide additional analysis on these and other Sheriff's Department efforts in subsequent reports.

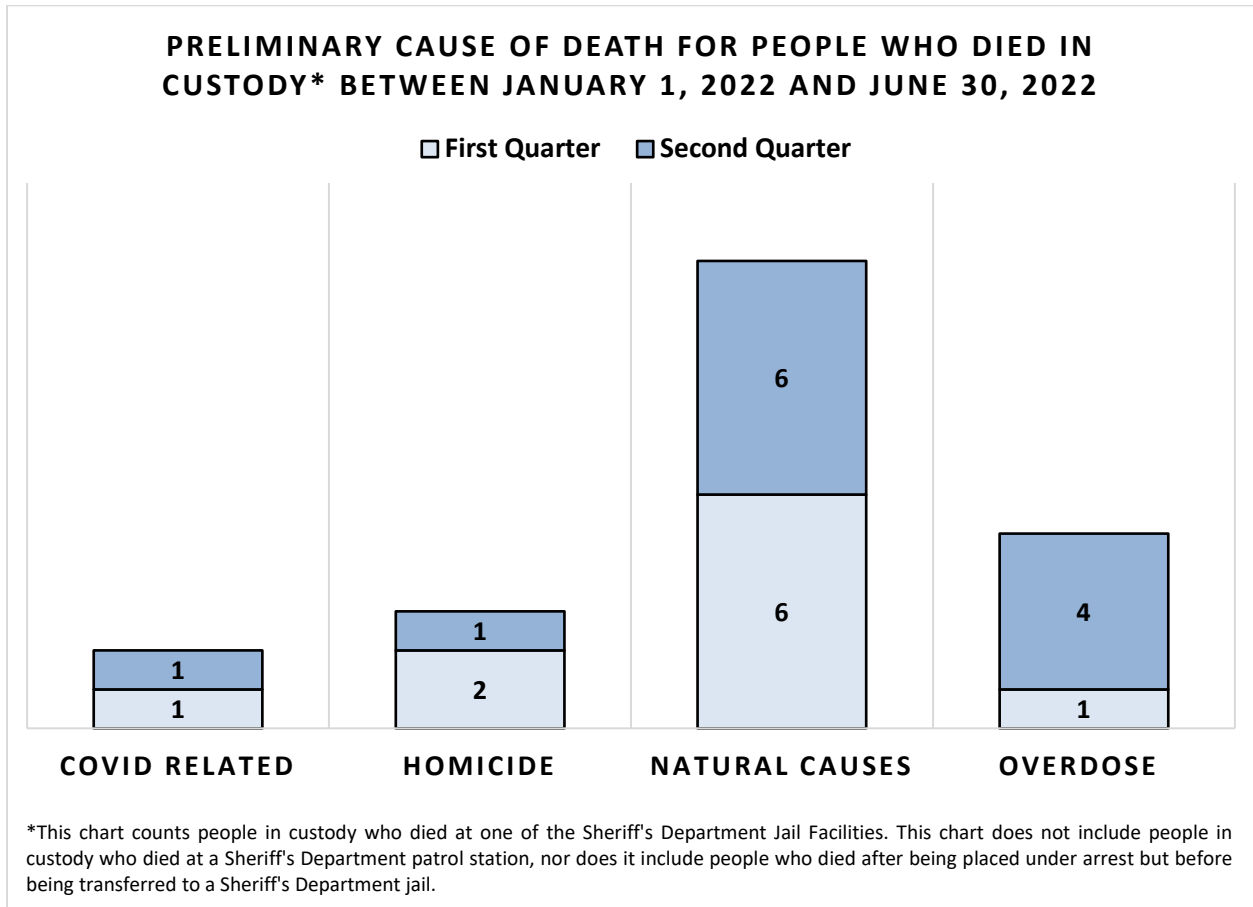
In-Custody Deaths

Between January 1, 2022 and June 30, 2022, 22 individuals died while in the care and custody of the Sheriff's Department. While many of these causes of deaths have not yet

⁹ The Sheriff's Department conducted an initial analysis of people in custody at CRDF by criminal charge which suggested that criminal charges that render people in custody ineligible for participation in credit-earning programming opportunities may drive inequity in credit-earning programming opportunities.

¹⁰ Presently, people who are housed at CRDF who have violent charges or convictions against an individual are ineligible to participate in the inmate worker program. Additionally, people in custody at CRDF who are classified with a heightened security level are ineligible to participate in the inmate worker program, although the Sheriff's Department routinely evaluates eligibility based on de-classification.

been determined by the Los Angeles County Coroner, preliminary findings suggest: 2 deaths were related to COVID-19, 3 deaths were homicides, 12 deaths were due to natural causes, and 5 deaths resulted from overdoses.



Between April 1, 2022, and June 30, 2022, 12 individuals died while in the care and custody of the Sheriff's Department. Of these 12 decedents, three died at Men's Central Jail (MCJ), one died at the Inmate Reception Center (IRC), one died at Century Regional Detention Center (CRDF), one died at Twin Towers Correctional Facility (TTCF), one died at North County Correctional Facility (NCCF) and five died in hospitals to which they had been transported.

Office of Inspector General staff attended the CSD Administrative Death Reviews for each of the 11 in-custody deaths.

The following summaries, arranged in chronological order, provide brief descriptions of each in-custody death:

On April 7, 2022, an individual at IRC was reportedly found unresponsive. Emergency aid was rendered by Sheriff's Department staff, paramedics provided aid, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On April 10, 2022, during pill call at MCJ, nursing staff was notified that an individual in the module was unresponsive. Emergency aid was rendered by Sheriff's Department staff, paramedics provided aid, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On April 10, 2022, at MCJ, an individual's cellmate notified custody personnel that the individual was in medical distress. Emergency aid was rendered by Sheriff's Department staff, paramedics provided aid, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On April 28, 2022, during vital checks at CRDF, an individual was found lying unresponsive in her cell. Emergency aid was rendered by Sheriff's Department staff, paramedics provided aid, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On April 30, 2022, an individual died at LAC+USC after being transported from the Correctional Treatment Center (CTC) on April 18, 2022, for a higher level of care.

On May 3, 2022, an individual died at LAC+USC after being transported from CTC on April 30, 2022, for a higher level of care.

On May 4, 2022, an individual died at LAC+USC after being transported from MCJ on May 3, 2022, for a higher level of care.

On May 6, 2022, an individual died at LAC+USC after being transported from CTC on April 27, 2022, for a higher level of care.

On May 9, 2022, an individual at MCJ was found unresponsive in a pool of blood during Title 15 Safety Check. Emergency aid was rendered by Sheriff's Department staff, paramedics provided aid, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On June 7, 2022, an individual died at LAC+USC after being transported from IRC on June 6, 2022, for a higher level of care.¹¹

On June 26, 2022, custody personnel responded to people in custody rendering aid to an unresponsive individual at NCCF. Emergency aid was rendered by Sheriff's

¹¹ This 72-year-old prisoner collapsed while awaiting intake at IRC for *two days* without being evaluated for housing by a medical professional.

Department staff, paramedics provided aid, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On June 29, 2022, an individual at TTCF was found unresponsive during Title 15 Safety Check. Emergency aid was rendered by Sheriff's Department staff, paramedics provided aid, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

Other Deaths

On June 8, 2022, while effectuating a search incident to an arrest, deputies found narcotics. Shortly after the search, the detained individual became unresponsive, was transported to the hospital, and pronounced deceased.

Office of Inspector General Site Visits

The Office of Inspector General regularly conducts site visits and inspections at Sheriff's Department custodial facilities to identify matters requiring attention. In the second quarter of 2022, Office of Inspector General personnel completed 83 site visits to IRC, CRDF, MCJ, TTCF, NCCF, Pitches Detention Center North Facility (PDC North), Lakewood Station Jail, and Marina Del Rey Station Jail.

Office of Inspector General staff have been monitoring the Sheriff's Department's and CHS' response to the COVID-19 pandemic and following up on concerns raised by the public. As part of the Office of Inspector General's jail monitoring, Office of Inspector General staff attended 132 Custody Services Division (CSD) executive and administrative meetings and met with division executives for 144 monitoring hours related to COVID-19, uses of force, in-custody deaths, as well as general conditions of confinement.

Inmate Reception Center and Jail Overcrowding

IRC is responsible for receiving, searching, evaluating and classifying all incoming male prisoners to the Los Angeles County jails. In conducting IRC site visits, Inspector General Max Huntsman and Office of Inspector General staff have noted significant overcrowding in IRC as men wait to be searched, evaluated, and classified for housing. Monitoring wait times over the past quarter has shown that it is not uncommon for incoming prisoners to wait for days. Over the past quarter, assaults on deputies and uses of force by deputies have occurred in IRC, including the breaking of bones, which had been all but eliminated. As noted previously in this report, an in-custody death occurred at IRC as a man waited for over two days to be evaluated. The Office of Inspector General reported on the IRC intake process

in a report entitled [Review of the Inmate Reception Center Intake Evaluation Process](#)¹² in November 2019. In that report, the Office of Inspector General made 13 recommendations to alleviate IRC wait times and overcrowding, yet the problems have been allowed to worsen. Mentally ill prisoners are regularly chained to benches for long periods with only sporadic bathroom breaks. During the week this report is being finalized for review by LASD, some mentally ill prisoners have been chained for over *sixty hours* each.

The Los Angeles County jails have a Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) total rated capacity of 12,404.¹³ According to the Sheriff's Department Custody Division Daily COVID-19 Fact Sheet, as of June 30, 2022, the total population of prisoners in the jails was 13,232. As of August 11, 2022, the reported total population had been allowed to rise to 14,274.

The Constitution requires that deliberate indifference not be shown to the health and safety of prisoners and employment law provides greater protection to deputies charged with working in the jails. The Sheriff has a number of legal authorities to allow him to discharge his Constitutional duty not to mistreat prisoners in his care. These include the ability to cite and release prisoners on bail amounts below a level of his choosing and the ability to release prisoners after they have served a percentage of his choosing of their jail sentence. Both have been previously employed by LASD, the latter for decades.

Taser Use in Custody

The Office of Inspector General continues to compile the number of times the Sheriff's Department has employed a Taser in custodial settings. Below are the numbers from January 2021 through June 2022. The numbers below were gathered from the Sheriff's Department's *Monthly Force Synopsis*, which the Sheriff's Department produces and provides to the Office of Inspector General each month.¹⁴

¹² *Review of the Inmate Reception Center Intake Evaluation Process*, November 2019. <https://assets-us-01.kc-usercontent.com/0234f496-d2b7-00b6-17a4-b43e949b70a2/c2463bac-4aab-43b6-9824-7e8c9c10fdb8/Review%20of%20IRC%20Intake%20Evaluation%20Process.pdf>

¹³ The total rated capacity is arrived at by adding the rated capacity for each of the County jail facilities: MCJ 3512, TTCF 2432, CRDF 1708, PDC-East 926, PDC-North 830, PDC-South 782, and NCCF 2214. This rated capacity has not been recently updated and does not take into account the pandemic, understaffing, or the deteriorating physical plant of MCJ, meaning that the current safe capacity of the Los Angeles County jails is certainly substantially lower than the rated maximum.

¹⁴ The Office of Inspector General is not opining on whether the use of the Taser in each of these incidents was permissible under the Sheriff's Department's policies and/or if the Taser was employed lawfully.

Month	Number of Times a Taser was Employed
January 2021	4
February 2021	8
March 2021	3
April 2021	5
May 2021	3
June 2021	11
July 2021	5
August 2021	4
September 2021	3
October 2021	6
November 2021	3
December 2021	4
January 2022	2
February 2022	3
March 2022	6
April 2022	4
May 2022	6
June 2022	10

Use-of-Force Incidents in Custody

The Office of Inspector General monitors the Sheriff's Department's use of force incidents, institutional violence¹⁵, and assaults on Sheriff's Department or CHS personnel by people in custody. The Sheriff's Department reports the following numbers for the uses of force and assaultive conduct within its CSD (the Sheriff's Department is still verifying the accuracy of the reporting of incidents that occurred subsequent to December 30, 2021):

¹⁵ Institutional violence is defined as assaultive conduct by a person in custody upon another person in custody.

Use of Force Incidents:

1 st Quarter of 2018	546
2 nd Quarter of 2018	592
3 rd Quarter of 2018	530
4 th Quarter of 2018	452
1 st Quarter of 2019	501
2 nd Quarter of 2019	478
3 rd Quarter of 2019	525
4 th Quarter of 2019	431
1 st Quarter of 2020	386
2 nd Quarter of 2020	274
3 rd Quarter of 2020	333
4 th Quarter of 2020	390
1 st Quarter of 2021	373
2 nd Quarter of 2021	430
3 rd Quarter of 2021	450
4 th Quarter of 2021	428

Assaults on Personnel:

1 st Quarter of 2018	144
2 nd Quarter of 2018	173
3 rd Quarter of 2018	131
4 th Quarter of 2018	115
1 st Quarter of 2019	122
2 nd Quarter of 2019	132
3 rd Quarter of 2019	164
4 th Quarter of 2019	136
1 st Quarter of 2020	131
2 nd Quarter of 2020	91
3 rd Quarter of 2020	111
4 th Quarter of 2020	140
1 st Quarter of 2021	143
2 nd Quarter of 2021	145
3 rd Quarter of 2021	153
4 th Quarter of 2021	136

Incidents of Institutional Violence:

1 st Quarter of 2018	871
2 nd Quarter of 2018	905
3 rd Quarter of 2018	988

4 th Quarter of 2018	881
1 st Quarter of 2019	769
2 nd Quarter of 2019	794
3 rd Quarter of 2019	858
4 th Quarter of 2019	709
1 st Quarter of 2020	717
2 nd Quarter of 2020	496
3 rd Quarter of 2020	560
4 th Quarter of 2020	753
1 st Quarter of 2021	745
2 nd Quarter of 2021	698
3 rd Quarter of 2021	746
4 th Quarter of 2021	693

HANDLING OF GRIEVANCES AND COMMENTS

Office of Inspector General Handling of Comments Regarding Department Operations and Jails

The OIG received sixty-six new complaints in the second quarter of 2022 from members of the public, prisoners, prisoners' family members and friends, community organizations and County agencies. Each complaint was reviewed by OIG staff. Twenty-six of these complaints were related to conditions of confinement within the Department's custody facilities, as shown below:

Complaint/ Incident Classification	Totals
Personnel Issues	15
Living Condition	5
Medical	2
Mental	1
Food	1
Classification	1
Commissary	1
Property	1
Mail	1
Visiting	1
Other	7
Total	36

Thirty complaints were related to civilian contacts with Department personnel by persons who were not in custody.

Complaint/ Incident Classification	Totals
Personnel	
Improper Search, Detention, Arrest	6
Discourtesy	4
Neglect of Duty	3
Alleged Criminal Conduct	2
Dishonesty	2
Force	2
Discrimination	1
Harassment	1
Improper Tactics	1
Operation of Vehicles	1
Service	
Policy Procedures	2
Response Time	2
Other	3
Total	30

Handling of Grievances Filed by People in Custody

The Sheriff's Department has not fully implemented the use of tablet computers (tablets) in its jail facilities to capture information related to requests, and eventually grievances, filed by people in custody. Currently, there are a total of 165 installed iPads. There are 31 iPads at CRDF, 49 iPads at MCJ, and 85 iPads at TTCF. The Sheriff's Department reports that moving to Windows based tablets is under consideration in order to rectify compatibility issues and other connectivity concerns. The Sheriff's Department did not provide the data on the number of people in custody who accessed the iPads to obtain information for the period between April 1, 2022, and June 30, 2022. The Office of Inspector General continues to recommend that the Sheriff's Department pursue full implementation of tablets throughout the CSD.

As reported in the Office of Inspector General's January 2018 *Reform and Oversight Efforts: Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department* report, the Sheriff's Department implemented a policy restricting the filing of duplicate and excessive grievances filed by people in custody.¹⁶ The Sheriff's Department reports that between April 1, 2022, and June 30, 2022, three people in custody were restricted from filing 10 grievances under

¹⁶ [See Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Custody Division Manual, 8-04/050.00, Duplicate or Excessive Filings of Grievances and Appeals, and Restrictions of Filing Privileges.](#)

this policy. The Office of Inspector General continues to raise concerns about the quality of grievance investigations and responses, which likely increases duplication and may prevent individuals from receiving adequate care while in Sheriff’s Department custody.

Sheriff’s Department’s Service Comment Reports

Under Sheriff’s Department policies, the Sheriff’s Department accepts and reviews comments from members of the public about departmental service or employee performance.¹⁷ The Sheriff’s Department categorizes these comments into three categories:

- External Commendation: an external communication of appreciation for and/or approval of service provided by the Sheriff’s Department members;
- Service Complaint: an external communication of dissatisfaction with the Sheriff’s Department service, procedure or practice, not involving employee misconduct; and
- Personnel Complaint: an external allegation of misconduct, either a violation of law or Sheriff’s Department policy, against any member of the Sheriff’s Department.¹⁸

The following chart lists the number and types of comments reported for each station or unit.¹⁹

INVESTIGATING BUREAU/STATION/FACILITY	COMMENDATIONS	PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS	SERVICE COMPLAINTS
ADM : CW SRVS ADM HQ	1	0	0
ADM : NORTH PATROL ADM HQ	0	1	0
ADM : PROF STANDARDS ADM HQ	0	0	1
AER : AERO BUREAU	1	0	0
ALD : ALTADENA STN	3	2	1
CCS : COMMUNITY COLLEGE BUREAU	1	1	0
CCS : CUSTODY COMPL & SUSTAIN BUREAU	0	1	0
CEN : CENTURY STN	2	12	0
CER : CERRITOS STN	7	2	0

¹⁷ See [Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, Manual of Policy and Procedures, 3-04/010.00, “Department Service Reviews.”](#)

¹⁸ It is possible for an employee to get a Service Complaint and Personnel Complaint based on the same incident in question.

¹⁹ This data was provided by the Sheriff’s Department from its Performance Recording and Monitoring System on July 12, 2022, and reflects the data provided as of that date.

INVESTIGATING BUREAU/STATION/FACILITY	COMMENDATIONS	PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS	SERVICE COMPLAINTS
CMB : CIVIL MANAGEMENT BUREAU	1	7	1
CNT : COURT SERVICES CENTRAL	3	4	0
COM : COMPTON STN	0	9	0
CPB : COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP BUREAU	2	0	1
CRV : CRESCENTA VALLEY STN	3	2	0
CSB : COUNTY SERVICES BUREAU	5	8	0
CSN : CARSON STN	5	12	2
ELA : EAST LA STN	4	3	0
EOB : EMERGENCY OPER BUREAU	1	0	0
EST : COURT SERVICES EAST	1	6	1
FCC : FRAUD & CYBER CRIMES BUREAU	3	0	0
HOM : HOMICIDE BUREAU	0	1	1
IAB : INTERNAL AFFAIRS BUREAU	0	0	1
ICI : INTERNAL CRIME INV BUR	1	0	0
IND : INDUSTRY STN	2	4	1
IRC : INMATE RECEPTION CENTER	0	1	1
LCS : LANCASTER STN	28	22	9
LKD : LAKEWOOD STN	1	8	3
LMT : LOMITA STN	7	3	1
MAR : MARINA DEL REY STN	6	3	0
MCJ : MEN'S CENTRAL JAIL	2	2	1
MLH : MALIBU/LOST HILLS STN	7	10	3
MTL : METROLINK	0	2	0
NAR : NARCOTICS BUREAU	0	2	0
NCF : NORTH CO. CORRECTL FAC	0	1	0
NWK : NORWALK REGIONAL STN	9	8	5
PER : PERSONNEL ADMIN	1	1	0
PKB : PARKS BUREAU	1	1	0
PLM : PALMDALE STN	20	23	5
PRV : PICO RIVERA STN	3	6	0

INVESTIGATING BUREAU/STATION/FACILITY	COMMENDATIONS	PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS	SERVICE COMPLAINTS
SCV : SANTA CLARITA VALLEY STN	27	16	2
SDM : SAN DIMAS STN	16	7	2
SLA : SOUTH LOS ANGELES STATION	2	2	0
SSB : SCIENTIFIC SERV BUREAU	5	0	0
SVB : SPECIAL VICTIMS BUREAU	0	3	0
TB : TRAINING BUREAU	1	0	0
TEM : TEMPLE CITY STN	8	10	2
TSB : TRANSIT SERVICES BUREAU	6	1	0
TT : TWIN TOWERS	0	3	0
WAL : WALNUT/SAN DIMAS STN	9	2	3
WHD : WEST HOLLYWOOD STN	2	7	2
WST : COURT SERVICES WEST	5	3	0
Total :	212	222	49