



**PUBLIC REQUEST TO ADDRESS  
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA**

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

HILDA L. SOLIS  
HOLLY J. MITCHELL  
LINDSEY P. HORVATH  
JANICE HAHN  
KATHRYN BARGER

**Correspondence Received**

Agenda #	Relate To	Position	Name	Comments
The following individuals submitted comments on agenda item:				
5.		<b>Favor</b>	Douglas D Rodriguez	We need more medical asistencia to help or community and those who need our help and I support item #5
			Eduardo Jr Herrera	Being a formerly reformed incarcerated person and experiencing 2 years of time in LA County Jail. I experienced and witnessed firsthand the effects of substances abuse. It is my hope that this motion passes and we have the support needed to change the process of overdoses while a person is incarcerated. Going to jail should not be a death sentence no matter what the reason a person is being detained for. Thank you BOS for your time in this item 5. Let's create positive change through compassion.
			Jack D McFadden	
			Jared M Villery	
			Kent Mendoza	The Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC) support this motion and urges that the BOS not only charge the Sheriff Department to do this on its own but to find a third party agency that already works with people with substance use issues and that are experts at seeing things and preventing the e use of it. LASD cannot lead this themselves and requires greater monitoring. We support this motion but it he county should look at other ways in other part of the state or country where they are already doing things around it. No one should be dying in our county jails, that should not be acceptable whatsoever.



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5.		<b>Favor</b>	Melissa Camacho	<p>I am in favor of the Board's proposal. (1) While I applaud the Board's desire to "strengthen existing policy on increasing and conducting more comprehensive searches of the belongings of staff and civilians," the Board must make clear to LASD that it will not support any drug-reduction program that does not mandate searches for all staff and civilians entering the facilities. Reputable studies have shown that nearly all illicit drugs enter local jails come through staff. Recently, a Riverside Sheriff's Deputy was arrested with over 100 pounds of fentanyl. Any move to prevent fentanyl from getting into the jails must center around searches of jail staff, including custodial staff. Any other efforts will only attack the issue at the margins. (2) The Board must do more than pay lip service to the OIG's number one recommendation for combatting illicit drugs in the jails: decarceration. For years the OIG has stated that the best way to combat in-custody deaths is by decreasing the number of people in the jails. Any future report or motion focused on reducing in-custody death - through overdose or any other means -- must start with a plan for decarceration. (3) Reporting on overdoses in in-custody death must also include any contributing factors. Yes, the death was by overdose, but was there also a missed safety check? Was the person trying to get into a MAT program? Overdoses may be causes of death, but in many cases, there are more factors that the Board and Custodial staff must consider when determining whether more could and should have been done to save the person's life. (4) Sheriff Luna's recent comment on stopping physical mail is ill informed, and the Board should not consider that possibility. Physical mail is a vital part of keeping people in custody connected with family and loved ones and is vital for people's mental health while in custody and their successful reentry into the community. Moreover, there is no evidence that LASD has been finding drugs coming in by mail or that the in-custody deaths can be attributed to paper laced with drugs. Again, the Board's first move must be to demand staff searches. If LASD will not agree to it, then they should not receive a penny for any other drug-reduction program.</p>
			Saul Campos	<p>Having been released from LA county jail on Nov. 1, 2023, I believe security measures must be enhanced by assuring housing modules/units are being monitored properly and rules are being enforced to prevent the possibility of overdoses. Prevention is key, when prevention is weak an increase in life saving measures should be taken. Narcans are available on the tiers, greater accessibility for the population will help them save lives.</p>



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5.		Favor	Stuart Slechta	<p>Good morning Board of Supervisors my name is Stuart Slechta; I work at Tarzana treatment centers as an operations supervisor for the SAMHSA overdose technical assistance program.</p> <p>I am before you this morning to ask for you to support the motion "addressing in custody overdose deaths in the LA county jails", authored by supervisor Solis.</p> <p>This motion is being brought at a time when we all are hearing about the impact overdoses are having in our communities on a far too frequent basis.</p> <p>TTC has been providing substance use disorder treatment in LA county for over 50 years. During this time, TTC has witnessed the potency and the wisdom provided when those with lived experiences are included in the treatment process. Peer support models of care provide powerful insights to those just beginning on their recovery journey.</p> <p>It is for this reason that TTC asks for you to support this motion. By working to provide proven rehabilitative services to some of our most vulnerable community members LA County can reaffirm its commitment to confronting this overdose epidemic.</p> <p>I hope that you will support this motion and thank you again for your time.</p>
			Tyler jesse Sandoval	<p>I am in favor, while formally incarcerated and having a second chance at life and my freedom. I give my dedication to make sure that everyone behind them walls has a fair chance to grow and make something out of this terrible situation! The first start to helping create a neighbor a community member is to start with care! A lot of individuals that are incarcerated have no support, having nothing to look forward to and most of all they have no reason to care! We need to give hope, a reason to not want the urge to find an outlet away from reality !</p>
			Tyrique Shipp	<p>The county jail is supposed to keep people away from the dangers of drugs but we still see people who have passed because our lack of urgency. This problem has been true for too long and overdoses have even spread to our children. We must push for our jails to serve the purpose that they were built for. People have come from prisons after years of addiction and came home clean because of their lack of access to drugs. If anyone can handle this task, this amazing board can. Thank you.</p>
		Oppose	Citizen V citizen	
			Michelle Parris	Please see attached PDF.
		Item Total		12

<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>12</b>	
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December 19, 2023

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors:  
Supervisor Mitchell  
Supervisor Solis  
Supervisor Horvath  
Supervisor Hahn  
Supervisor Barger  
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Via email: [executiveoffice@bos.lacounty.gov](mailto:executiveoffice@bos.lacounty.gov)

Re: Board Agenda Item 5: Motion, Entitled, 'Addressing In-Custody Overdose Deaths in the Los Angeles County Jails'

Dear Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors,

My name is Michelle Parris. I am the director of Vera California, an initiative of the Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) launched in 2019 to advance policies and practices that will make California a model for ending mass incarceration, centering community health, and advancing racial justice. Vera is a national organization working to end mass incarceration, protect immigrants' rights, ensure dignity for people behind bars, and build safe, thriving communities. I am a resident of District 1.

Vera California has been involved in numerous county workgroups developing plans to depopulate and decarcerate Los Angeles County's jails, including the Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) Workgroup, the Men's Central Jail (MCJ) Closure Workgroup, and the Jail Population Review Council. We are deeply invested in seeing the county actualize its "care first" vision and finally close the inhumane MCJ. Vera also has national staff researching how jurisdictions are addressing overdose deaths and jail incarceration.

We strongly agree that Los Angeles County must urgently end the crisis of fatal overdoses in its jails. However, we are concerned that the deliverables of this motion, introduced on short notice and thus limiting input from experts, stray from best practices for substance use treatment and the county's "care first" principles. As a result, we believe this motion will fall short of effectively solving this deadly crisis. We urge the Board of Supervisors to hold the motion until January and implement key refinements.

Any motion seeking to address these preventable deaths should align with the Board's longstanding commitment to offer care first and use jail as a last resort. The solutions should center the Office of the Inspector General's [2022 recommendation](#) to reduce drugs in the county's jails by decreasing the overall population and searching staff for

these substances, as [data shows](#) that custody staff, not incarcerated individuals or their families, are likely the largest source of drugs in jail.

Much of the proposed motion looks inside the jails when it should instead prioritize decarceration and an increase in funding to the kinds of community-based services that prevent overdose upon release, provide access to care, and are necessary for the success of the motion's call for coordinating reentry. The Board should prioritize releasing people with drug dependencies to community care programs rather than anchoring the county's response to drug use in the jail system. While peer programs can help promote dignity while incarcerated and improving access to [Medication Assisted Treatment \(MAT\)](#) in jail is important, research [shows](#) that incarceration is associated with increased risk of overdose death, limited access to harm reduction and treatment services, and disruptions in health care and social support during and after periods of incarceration. By contrast, community care allows elements of treatment and harm reduction that matter for positive outcomes, including [the support of loved ones](#) and better, [longer-term](#) access to effective responses like [group therapy](#) or [cognitive behavioral therapy](#).

We understand the Board's concerns about drugs coming into county jails, but the primary response should focus on accountability for the Sheriff's Department, not creating new burdens on incarcerated people and their loved ones. Data has shown the likely source of drugs in jails are staff; oversight should be directed accordingly and tracked. Sheriff Luna's plans to further scrutinize visitors and mail are [wrongly focused](#) and will only disconnect incarcerated people from the support networks that save lives and [improve the outcomes](#) of those with drug dependencies.

Lastly, we strongly support improving data collection on substance use and recovery in jail to ensure effective approaches. Any effort at tracking should direct the Sheriff's Department (LASD) to report on [missed welfare checks](#) and the reason Narcan was not administered for any incident. Moreover, given Sheriff Luna's controversial plan to end the use of physical mail as a tactic to stem the inflow of drugs—a practice challenged in [many other jurisdictions](#)—data should be collected on how frequently these substances are recovered from the mail, and there should be thorough tracking of custody staff searches (e.g., number of searches conducted, outcomes and disciplinary actions resulting from searches, categories of contraband found during said searches).

We commend the county for acknowledging the crisis of in-custody deaths. However, if we blame the wrong causes, we miss the right solutions. With \$74 million already invested in improving the conditions in our jails and a mounting death toll, we must invest in care first, or our communities will continue paying the price.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'MP' followed by a horizontal line that extends to the right and then curves slightly upwards at the end.

Michelle Parris  
Program Director  
Vera California