



**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

			The following individuals submitted comments on agenda item:	
Agenda #	Relate To	Position	Name	Comments
45.		Favor	Norma Palacios	Dear LA County Board of Supervisors, On behalf of the Drug Policy Alliance, I write to urge expansion of immediate access to Medication Assisted Treatment in jails to those who need and want the medication. The Drug Policy Alliance (DPA) is the leading organization in the U.S. working to enact health-centered approaches to drugs. We advocate for policies that prioritize health, equity, social support, and community well-being. We are extremely concerned that access to Medication Assisted Treatment for opioid use disorder is being limited in jails. These medications are the most effective in reducing drug use, overdose, and increase retention in treatment. It's troubling to know that people have to wait an average of 25 days to receive MAT treatment. Long wait times delay people's recovery and increase risk of overdose and death. Drug overdose deaths are increasing in jails, to 28% this year. Besides making evidence-based treatment readily available, it's critical to facilitate access to naloxone and improve the process to address requests for health care services. People who are in jail and have substance use disorder treatment needs must be able to easily access it voluntarily and on demand when they are ready. We urge you to increase the capacity for MAT treatment in jail to save lives and improve long term treatment outcomes for people. We also request that progress on the implementation of changes and eliminations of barriers is tracked, reported and made available to the public. Thank you for your attention to our position. Sincerely, Norma Palacios

			The following individuals submitted comments on agenda item:	
Agenda #	Relate To	Position	Name	Comments
45.		Favor	Shayla Wilson	I write regarding Agenda Item 45 to urge the expansion of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) in jails and ensure that everyone who needs and wants medication for addiction treatment is able to access it. MAT has been proven to be the most effective form of treatment for opioid use disorder and it's concerning to learn that it has been dramatically scaled back across the jails and that only some people can receive treatment putting lives at risk. As of October 31, there are 800 people waiting for treatment in jail, the average wait time is 25 days. Delaying treatment will worsen health, exacerbate withdrawal symptoms, and will significantly increase overdose risk potentially resulting in more lives lost. Los Angeles has taken significant measures to address the overdose crisis across the county and it's essential to take similar measures inside of jails and prioritize evidence- based approaches including diversion. I urge you to expand access to MAT by finding and eliminating barriers so more people can receive the support they need and improve their well-being. I also urge the board to continue to consider and pursue alternatives to incarceration given the constrained and deadly circumstances in LA County jails.
		Other	Andony Corleto	PDF of comment submitted. Please see attachment.
		Item Total	3	
Grand Total			3	

November 18, 2025

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors:
Supervisor Mitchell
Supervisor Solis
Supervisor Horvath
Supervisor Hahn
Supervisor Barger

Via email: executiveoffice@bos.lacounty.gov

Re: In Support of Board Agenda Item 45: Motion, Entitled, “Prioritizing Dignity and Life in the Los Angeles County Jails”

Dear Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors,

My name is Maria Jose (MJ) Vides. I am a senior program associate with Vera California, a local initiative of the Vera Institute of Justice, which is a national organization working to end mass incarceration, protect immigrants’ rights, and build safe, thriving communities. I am also a resident of District 2. **I write to encourage the board to address the tragedy of in-custody deaths by reducing the jail population and increasing access to data.**

Vera California has participated in numerous county workgroups to build safety, accountability, and justice in Los Angeles, including the Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) Workgroup, Men’s Central Jail (MCJ) Closure Workgroup, and Jail Population Review Council. Through this work, we have seen firsthand the need for Los Angeles County to remain committed to the “care first, jails last” vision so that every Angeleno has the safety they deserve and services they need.

Since the start of 2023, [117 people](#) have died inside LA County jails. Just over one week ago, another person died in custody—marking the [41st death this year](#) and putting 2025 on track to being one of the deadliest years in recent history. This rising death toll is not an anomaly, but the result of a system that has failed to address severe [overcrowding](#), provide [adequate care inside jails](#), or invest in real [alternatives to incarceration](#). As Prop 36 and other new policies increase penalties for low-level offenses, rising jail populations will only worsen this crisis.

To address this crisis, we first need timely, transparent information on why and where deaths in custody occur. It often takes months before cause-of-death information becomes public—to date, the Sheriff’s Department has yet to release the causes of several deaths dating back to August and September. Determining *where* deaths occur is also challenging: many are simply reported only as occurring at or en route to hospitals, without disclosing where the initial medical emergency took place. As a long-overdue first step, we need accurate and timely reporting on both the incident location and cause of each death.

Second, we know that reducing incarceration and investing in community-based treatment and services are the most effective ways to prevent in-custody deaths. Our jails are ill-equipped to provide incarcerated people with appropriate care, as shown by the

[Correctional Health Services' recent report](#) citing insufficient availability of medication assisted therapy (MAT) and jail-based clinicians. To reduce overcrowding and prevent further deaths, the county should do everything in its power to safely release people with serious health conditions, mental health needs, and addiction into community-based programs—which are both [more effective in reducing reoffending](#) and far [more cost-efficient](#) than [incarceration](#). To keep the jail population at a safe level, diversion programs should be used as often as possible, whether or not someone has a serious medical condition. Programs like the Justice Care and Opportunities Department's Rapid Diversion Program and Office of Diversion and Reentry's Let Everyone Advance with Dignity/ Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) already deliver successful outcomes and should be scaled. As we navigate budget constraints, we urge the county to protect—and where possible, expand—these critical and cost-saving programs.

We commend the Board of Supervisors for acknowledging the crisis of in-custody deaths and taking steps to address it. Despite the tens of millions of dollars already invested in improving jail conditions, the still-growing death toll makes one thing clear: we must invest in care first, or our communities will continue to bear the cost. Vera's experts and researchers would be glad to provide more information or answer questions; you can contact me at mvides@vera.org.

Sincerely,



Maria Jose (MJ) Vides
Senior Program Associate
Vera California