ADOPTED

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

AGN. NO. **20**
September 15, 2026

Edward Yen

EDWARD YEN
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

REVISED MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL

Identifying Deputy Gangs within the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to Ensure Accountability and Risk Mitigation

For decades, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) has faced credible and documented allegations regarding the existence of deputy gangs and secret subgroups operating within its ranks. Deputy gangs have been linked to patterns of excessive force, criminal and administrative misconduct, a code of silence, and a culture of impunity that undermines public trust and compromises the safety of both residents and deputies.

Courts, independent oversight bodies, and investigative journalists have documented incidents in which membership in these deputy gangs were associated with unlawful uses of force, falsification of reports, witness intimidation, retaliation against whistleblowers, and targeted harassment of Black and Latino community members.

Over the years, the Los Angeles County (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) has acted decisively to end deputy gangs and restore dignity to the Department. The Board has also passed numerous motions aimed at eradicating deputy gangs that operate within LASD:

- March 2019: "Comprehensive Study of Secret Sheriff's Deputy Subgroups,"[1]
- July 2019: "Expanding Authority to Investigate Deputy Secret Societies,"[2]
- March 2023: "Deputy Gangs: Support for the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission's Recommendations to Eradicate Deputy Gangs in the Los

[1] https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/133802.pdf
[2] https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/138107.pdf

Angeles County Sheriff's Department,"[3]

Additionally, numerous news articles have been written about this issue. The existence of deputy gangs has been written about since the 1970s[4]:

- The 1992 Kolts Commission's report,[5]
- 2012 Citizens' Commission on Jail Violence,[6]
- 2021 Loyola Law School's "50 Years of Deputy Gangs in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department: Identifying Root Causes and Effects to Advocate for Meaningful Reform,"[7]
- 2021 Knock LA's investigative series, "A Tradition of Violence: The History of Deputy Gangs in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department,"[8]
- 2021 Rand study, "Understanding Subgroups Within the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department",[9] and
- 2023 "Report and Recommendations of the Special Counsel to Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission Regarding Deputy Gangs and Deputy Cliques in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.[10]

In July 2021, Congressmember Maxine Waters called on the United States Department of Justice to investigate the allegations about the Executioners, a deputy gang that operated out of the Compton Sheriff's station[11].

In 1973, the first deputy gang that LASD acknowledged was the "Little Devils," operating out of the East Los Angeles Sheriff's Station and documented in an internal memo. This deputy gang emerged in the aftermath of the Chicano Moratorium, during which three people died following interactions with LASD and LAPD. Deputies at the East Los Angeles Sheriff's Station have continued to be associated with deputy gangs such as the Banditos and are known to wear pins with the Fort Apache logo, a racist symbol

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[3] https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/178530.pdf
[4] https://coc.lacounty.gov/deputy-gangs/
[5] https://clearinghouse.net/doc/10910/
[6] https://ccjv.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/CCJV-Report.pdf
[7] https://www.lls.edu/academics/centers/centerforjuvenilelawpolicy/cjlpdeputygangreport/
[8] https://knock-la.com/tradition-of-violence-lasd-gang-history/
[9] https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA616-1.html
[10] 1138014_DeputyGangsSpecialCounselReporttoCOC3.2.2023.PDF.PDF
[11] https://waters.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/waters-demands-federal-investigation-los-angeles-sheriff-s-department

reflecting the violence inflicted during the Chicano Moratorium. Over time, the number of identified deputy gangs, active or not, has grown, increasing from six to eighteen, and now to twenty-seven :

- Banditos
- Buffalo Soldiers
- Cavemen
- Compton Executioners
- Cowboys
- Ghetto Birds
- Gladiators
- Grim Reapers
- Industry Indians
- IPA
- Jump Out Boys
- Little Devils
- Little Red Devils
- Lomita Lizards
- Lynwood Vikings
- Pirates
- Posse
- Rattlesnakes
- Regulators
- Spartans
- Tasmanian Devils
- The Leafs
- 4000 Boys
- 3000 Boys
- 2000 Boys
- Temple Station V-Boys
- Wayside Whities

The existence of deputy gangs within LASD is not a secret, but a well-known problem that has cost the County millions of dollars,[12] inflicted an enormous amount of harm and trauma on communities, and eroded decades of trust between LASD and impacted communities.

In 2024, the Los Angeles Times reported that LASD internal investigators learned that "a group of deputies at the Lakewood station shared a common tattoo: a spade, with the number 13."[13] At that time, Lakewood Sheriff's Station supervisors conducted a survey asking these deputies whether the tattoos were a sign of a new deputy gang. When the deputies surveyed concluded the tattoos were not indicative of a new deputy gang, the Department stopped its investigation. That same year, the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission (COC) raised concerns about a newly identified deputy gang

[12] https://www.cbsnews.com/losangeles/news/gangs-within-los-angeles-county-sheriffs-department-are-banned-with-new-policy/
[13] https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-03-01/station-tattoo-or-deputy-gang-sign

based out of the Norwalk station that used a logo featuring Nazi-like imagery and a symbol described as a "skull with blood-red eyes, pierced by a jagged lightning bolt."[14] This deputy gang is reportedly a subgroup of another Norwalk station subgroup identified by a Wile E. Coyote logo. Though the existence of this deputy gang was identified in late 2024, sources told the Los Angeles Times that these gangs have been around since the 1990s.

Likewise, in 2022, a group of LASD deputies allegedly flashed a handgun, mocked a group of teenagers, and called one of them a "monkey" and used the N-word, at a Montclair bowling alley. Two of the four deputies involved in the incident admitted to having an Industry Indians tattoo. When LASD's Internal Affairs (IA) Bureau began its investigation into the bowling alley incident, investigators did not ask the involved deputies for names of others who might share the same tattoo. IA told the Industry Sheriff's Station leaders about the tattoos but told the Office of Inspector General (OIG) that they had no plans to investigate who else at the station was a member of the station's deputy gang. Separately, two years prior, four deputies involved in the Montclair incident were reportedly involved in violence against Joseph Perez, a 22-year-old man, who was unarmed and experiencing a mental health crisis. The circumstances of that incident remain the subject of ongoing litigation.

In its quarterly report, "Reform and Oversight Efforts: Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department,"[15] covering the period from October through December 2025, the OIG reported that LASD was asked whether the Department had identified any group that meets the definition of a law enforcement gang under Penal Code section 13670. LASD responded that it did not identify any such group. The OIG then followed up by asking LASD to "confirm that the Department has not identified any group that qualifies as a law enforcement gang." In its response, LASD noted that while the Department has not shied away from conducting multiple large-scale investigations to determine whether there is evidence that employees have engaged in a pattern of prohibited conduct on behalf of a

[14] https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-10-05/oversight-officials-raise-concerns-about-nazi-symbolism-in-newly-discovered-deputy-subgroup-logo
[15] https://assets-us-01.kc-usercontent.com/0234f496-d2b7-00b6-17a4-b43e949b70a2/a1fed311-efc7-42b2-b6f5-68818877eb96/Reform%20and%20Oversight%20Efforts%20-%20Los%20Angeles%20County%20Sheriff_s%20Department%20-%20October%20to%20December%202025_Final%20_%20LASD.pdf

prohibited group, LASD still did not identify any group that it found to meet the definition of a law enforcement gang under Penal Code section 13670[16].

Deputy gangs are not a problem of the past, but a persistent issue that continues today. Notifications to LASD regarding alleged deputy gangs have been made as recently as June 2025, based on data provided to the OIG in December 2025. If the existence of deputy gangs is not adequately addressed and resolved, this problem will continue to plague the County. The County must serve as a better custodian of communities that have historically and systematically been harmed by law enforcement misconduct and must be better stewards of public resources by significantly reducing the millions of dollars paid out in settlements for cases involving misconduct by deputy gangs and secret subgroups.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

that the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Executive Office – Employee Relations, in collaboration with the Sheriff and County Counsel, to report back in writing withing 30 days with an analysis of whether any provision of this motion requires the County to meet and confer with respective Sheriff's Department employee associations. For any provision that does, they shall identify whether the bargaining is required over the directive itself, the effects of implementation, or both, the legal basis for the determination, and what may lawfully move forward while bargaining continues. The report shall include an analysis and matrix of all ongoing and unresolved meet-and-confer processes related to deputy gangs, cliques, and secret subgroups. For each process, identify:

1. The policy, directive, or issue subject to meet and confer, the date the process began, its current status, and the specific matters that remain unresolved;
2. The reason each matter remains unresolved, including any legal, procedural, or other barriers to resolution and the basis for that barrier;
3. Whether there is a legal requirement to refrain from implementing all or any portion of the policy or directive while meet and confer remains pending and, if so, the legal basis and scope of that limitation;
4. The reason for any process pending for more than six months remains unresolved and whether the circumstances support a declaration of impasse or

[16] California Code, PEN 13670

any other lawful means of concluding the County's bargaining obligations, and, if not, the specific steps or conditions that remain before the County to do so; and

5. The legal, procedural, and administrative, options available to the County to advance or conclude the process and proceed with implementation as expeditiously as permitted by the law.

# # #

(NR/DF)

After discussion, on motion of Supervisor Hahn, seconded by Supervisor Horvath, the continuance for 45 days on the remaining directives that were not bifurcated, was approved the following vote:

	MOTION
MITCHELL	NO
HORVATH	AYE
HAHN	AYE
BARGER	AYE
SOLIS	AYE

I hereby certify that the above action was taken by the Board of Supervisors at a duly noticed meeting held on **9/15/2026**

ATTEST: EDWARD YEN
EXECUTIVE OFFICER
CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

By _____, **Deputy**