

LASD HARASSMENT OF GRIEVING FAMILIES



HISTORY OF LASD'S DISREGARD FOR DEPUTY HARASSMENT OF GRIEVING FAMILIES

- Families who have lost loved ones to LASD deputy violence report harassment by LASD for years.
- On November 19, 2019, the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission (COC) heard testimony from families who experienced LASD harassment.
 - The COC directed the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to investigate deputy harassment of surviving families. The OIG's report recommended LASD adopt a policy regarding memorial sites and vigils, and ensure thorough investigation of harassment complaints.
- On December 17, 2020, the COC adopted a motion for LASD to develop a policy prohibiting harassment and encouraging respect for family members whose loved ones have been killed by LASD.

CALIFORNIA

'It's like torture': Families report deputy harassment to sheriff watchdog



Members of the L.A. County Civilian Oversight Commission listen to a testimonial by Michael Twyman, foreground, who lost his nephew Ryan Twyman in a L.A. sheriff involved shooting. (Genaro Molina / Los Angeles Times)

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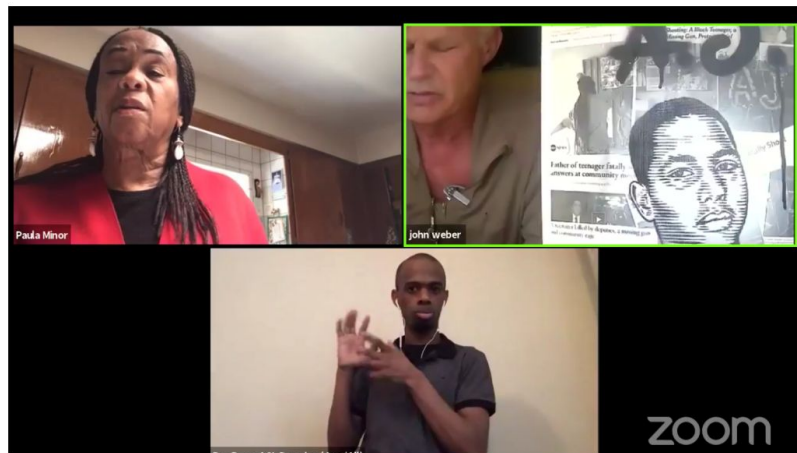
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HISTORY OF LASD'S DISREGARD FOR DEPUTY HARASSMENT OF GRIEVING FAMILIES

DEFENDING POLICE

Families of Those Killed by LASD Describe Ongoing Harassment by Deputies as Part of a "Triple Assault"

4:14 PM PDT on April 13, 2021



John Weber, the father of Anthony "A.J." Weber, the unarmed 16-year-old who was killed by sheriff's deputies in 2018, speaks on the ongoing harassment of his family during the recent "Stop L.A. Sheriff's Attacks" forum organized by BLM-LA and Centro CSO. BLM-LA's Paula Minor moderated the second half of the forum. Interpretation was provided by Pro Bono ASL.

- On March 27, 2021, Check the Sheriff, Black Lives Matter-LA, and Centro CSO hosted a virtual forum on family harassment to educate Supervisors Hilda Solis and Holly Mitchell on how LASD deputies have harassed grieving families and the impact this harassment has had on their lives.
- On May 4, 2021, Check the Sheriff, ACLU SoCal, and NLG-LA published a report documenting the harassment families who have lost loved ones experience at the hands of LASD.
- On July 27, 2021, the Board of Supervisors by motion requested LASD, "in collaboration with County Counsel, OIG, and the COC, to develop and adopt a policy regarding memorial sites and vigils involving victims of deputy-involved shootings and killings **within 90 days.**"

Yet, to this day, LASD has not adopted any policy which prohibits the harassment of surviving families.

WHAT LASD FAMILY HARASSMENT HAS LOOKED LIKE

“It’s like torture for you (LASD) to keep driving by us, and laughing or smirking or flicking us off and all that every single chance y’all get.”
- Davielle Johnson, girlfriend of Ryan Twyman, who was shot and killed by LASD deputies in 2019

- Idling, parking outside, or slowly driving by memorial sites, homes, and workplaces of grieving family members

- Following family members, including following them home after they make public comments at County meetings

- Taunting family members with rude comments, gestures, smirks, and laughter

- Taking pictures of or recording family members

- Intimidating family members of minor age

- Damaging items at memorial sites

- Surveilling memorials and vigils

- Showing up at funerals of community members killed by LASD

- Targeting family members for arrest and detention without probable cause

- Frequently pulling over family members and searching their vehicles on pretextual stops

- Commenting on family members social media pages

Currently, the only recourse for families who have experienced harassment by deputies is to report the incident to LASD or OIG. The OIG passes the investigation to LASD.

WHAT CAN THE COC DO TO CURB THIS CRISIS?

- Pass a motion recommending LASD immediately adopt meaningful policies to stop and prevent the harassment of families, as well as the proactive measures necessary to implement these policies.
- Deputies should be reminded that they have a duty to intervene, and that if they witness this type of harassment and do not report it, they too can be disciplined.

The policies must include the following non-exhaustive list of protections:

- Preventing deputies from disrupting vigils and memorials and damaging memorial sites.
- Prohibiting surveillance, intimidation, and unnecessary interactions with surviving family members, either online or in person, including but not limited to following family members, parking, or idling vehicles outside of their homes or places of work, filming family members, interacting or observing family members' personal social media accounts or any social media pages created in memorial of their loved ones.
- Preventing interactions with minors in these families, so that children can feel safe in the community.

Deputy harassment of directly impacted families is a symptom of LASD's violent and adversarial culture. Below are broader recommendations for LASD Accountability:

- Create an independent office of law enforcement standards that would operate independently of LASD and would investigate all allegations of misconduct and impose discipline.
- Create a reporting mechanism outside of LASD for incidents of family harassment.
- Complete an independent investigation into LASD's practice of family harassment.
- Expand the Family Assistance Program to provide trauma-informed support to families who lose a loved one to LASD violence.
- Ensure that LASD adopts policies prohibiting harassing or intimidating conduct by LASD personnel towards families of people who have died in interactions with LASD and requiring sensitivity and respect when interacting with these families and when present at memorial sites.
- Ensure that LASD adopts a policy requiring the transferring of deputies involved in incidents of deadly force to different stations.
- Ensure compliance with state transparency laws.



LASD FAMILY HARASSMENT POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Check the Sheriff developed the following policy recommendations to stop and prevent LASD's harassment of families:

1. LASD deputies and personnel shall not in any way disrupt, interrupt, surveil, disturb, or distract from vigils and memorials for community members killed during interactions with LASD. Such vigils and memorials are events during which family, loved ones, or community gather in memory of the community member's passing. During such vigils and memorials, prohibited behavior for LASD deputies and personnel includes but is not limited to: surrounding the perimeter of vigil and memorial sites with law enforcement presence; slowly driving by these sites; taunting family and community members with gestures, smirks, or laughter, or in any way addressing them while at these sites.
2. LASD deputies and personnel shall not in any way remove, damage, destroy, or otherwise disturb memorial sites for community members killed during interactions with LASD. Memorial sites include any objects left at a particular site for the purpose of memorializing a loved one killed during interactions with LASD, including but not limited to plaques, memorial stones, candles, artwork, flowers, and photographs.
3. LASD deputies and personnel shall not in any way harass, surveil, or intimidate surviving families of community members killed during interactions with LASD. Prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to: slowly driving by, parking, or idling vehicles outside of the homes or places of work of surviving family members; taking pictures, recording, or filming family members; following family members; targeting, approaching, stopping, arresting, or searching family members absent sufficient legal basis. Consent searches of family members shall not be allowed.

LASD FAMILY HARASSMENT POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

4. LASD deputies and personnel shall act with sensitivity and respect when interacting with surviving families of community members killed during interactions with LASD. LASD deputies and personnel shall not seek out interactions with surviving family members unless necessary for a lawful law enforcement purpose.
5. LASD deputies and personnel shall not interact with minor surviving family members of community members killed during interactions with LASD outside of the presence of an adult family member and unless necessary for a lawful law enforcement purpose.
6. LASD deputies and personnel shall not surveil any surviving family members of community members killed during interactions with LASD, either in person or online. This prohibition includes interacting or observing family members' personal social media accounts or any social media pages created in memorial of their loved ones, either directly through personal social media accounts or through an account belonging to another person/entity.
7. Under section 3-01/030.14 of LASD's Manual of Policy and Procedures, LASD deputies and personnel are required to report any observation of their fellow deputies violating the above-mentioned policies. In the event LASD becomes aware that a deputy abstained from reporting such a violation, that deputy will be subject to discipline, including potential transfer and termination. Furthermore, per section 3-01/030.10 of LASD's Manual of Policy and Procedures, there will be zero tolerance for any violations of the above-mentioned policies.

**To the families who have put their
own safety on the line to draw attention to
this crisis: we see you and we stand with you.
You will never walk alone.**

**CHECK THE
SHERIFF**

