

August 10, 2023

The Probation Oversight Commission requests that the Inspector General Investigate and Report Back on the Incident at Los Padrinos on July 28, 2023

On Friday, July 28, 2023, several news outlets reported that Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall in Downey was on lockdown after a “riot” involving several youth broke out that evening around 8:00 pm.

In the early morning of Saturday, July 29, 2023, Interim Chief Guillermo Viera Rosa shared information with the Probation Oversight Commission calling the incident a “major disturbance” in which “youth assaulted staff” and were able to exit the unit by breaking through a door. The statement also indicates that one youth climbed over a wall and exited the secure perimeter of the facility. His statement goes on to say that the one youth who attempted to escape was immediately apprehended by Probation’s Special Enforcement Operation officers on duty. The remaining youth inside the facility were subsequently detained and placed under additional supervision.

The Interim Chief indicated, that as a security measure, OC will be issued on a temporary basis to ensure the safety of staff and youth during the aftermath of this incident.

Subsequent news stories on Saturday, July 29, 2023 indicated the lockdown was lifted on Saturday evening. It was also reported that the Probation Department asked the Sheriff’s Department to book the 18-year-old youth who briefly escaped as an adult.

During this period, several news media outlets described the incident as a “brawl,” and “riot,” yet the Probation Department reported that all parties involved were examined by medical professionals and reported no serious injuries.

It is in the best interest the Probation Oversight Commission and the public to understand what happened at Los Padrinos on July 28, 2023, and to use the incident as a learning opportunity.

I, therefore move that the Probation Oversight Commission request that the Inspector General:

1. Conduct a thorough investigation of the disturbance at Los Padrinos on July 28, 2023, including:
 - a. Contextual information about the environment leading up to the disturbance and the environment in the days following
 - b. Verification that the alleged assault on staff occurred and of the seriousness of the assault
 - c. Verification of what the classification of the housing involved was
 - d. Interviews with staff and youth involved
 - e. A review of relevant CCTV footage

- f. An assessment of the staff to youth ratio, including how many Detention Services Officers and Supervisors were on duty in the impacted unit(s) that evening
 - i. Determination as to whether the unit involved housed youth identified as developmentally disabled, enhanced supervision, on “levels” or other youth requiring higher levels of care
 - g. An opinion as to whether or not a youth climbing a wall warrants adult charges
 - h. A review of what, if any programs were accessible to youth on that day and the days leading up to the event
 - i. An opinion as to whether the re-introduction of the use of OC spray is warranted given gravity of the incident
 - j. A review of the facilities’ physical condition and any deficiencies that may have contributed to the event in question
 - k. A review of whether building modifications or remodeling to address the deficiencies has been completed
 - l. Determination as to whether the department followed applicable protocols during and after the incident
2. Prepare a written and oral report back to the POC within 30 days with the investigative findings, which should include recommendations on how the Probation department can reduce the likelihood of a similar event from occurring in the future