



Office of Inspector General County of Los Angeles

Reform and Oversight Efforts: Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

July to September 2022

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of the Office of Inspector General's regular monitoring, auditing, and review of activities related to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department occurring between July 1, 2022, to September 30, 2022.¹

MONITORING SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT'S OPERATIONS

Deputy-Involved Shootings

The Office of Inspector General reports on all deputy-involved shootings in which a deputy intentionally fired a firearm at a human, or intentionally or unintentionally fired a firearm and a human was injured or killed as a result. This quarter there were six incidents in which people were shot or shot at by Sheriff's Department personnel. The Office of Inspector General staff responded to each of these deputy-involved shootings. Five people were struck by deputies' gunfire, two fatally.

The information in the following shooting summaries is based on the limited information provided by the Sheriff's Department and is preliminary in nature. While the Office of Inspector General receives information at the walk-through at the scene of the shooting, receiving preliminary memoranda with summaries, and by attending the Sheriff's Department Critical Incident Reviews, the statements of the deputies and witnesses are not provided until the investigation is complete. The Sheriff's Department does not permit the Office of Inspector General's staff to monitor the on-going investigations of deputy-involved shootings, does not provide access to the full body-worn camera videos of deputies involved in the incident, and does not comply with lawful requests for documentation of these investigations.

Lynwood: The Sheriff's Department reported that on July 26, 2022, at approximately 1:35 p.m., Narcotics Bureau deputies were preparing to serve a search warrant at a motel located in the city of Lynwood. A narcotics detective was sitting in an unmarked car with tinted windows waiting for the search warrant operation to begin. A Black man approached the vehicle and looked inside. The detective exited the vehicle. The man then pointed a gun at the detective, who fired several shots at the man but did not hit him. The man took off running with several deputies chasing him on foot. As he ran away, he discarded the gun. A search was initiated, and the man was found and taken into custody. A 9mm handgun was also recovered.

¹ The report will note if the data reflects something other than what was gathered between April 1, 2022, and June 30, 2022.

While the search for the suspect was underway, deputies from Compton Station were in a vehicle pursuit of another suspect on an unrelated incident. As that suspect was fleeing, he drove through the command post and crime scene of this deputy-involved shooting.

The Narcotics Bureau does not have body-worn cameras. Portions of surveillance videos that were captured by near-by businesses were shown at the Sheriff's Department's Critical Incident Review.

Areas for Further Inquiry

Was the foot pursuit of the armed suspect within policy? Did the detective consider the shooting backdrop? Why were personnel unaware that there was a vehicle pursuit of an unrelated suspect headed towards this crime scene? What, if any, systems are in place that could assure pursuit notifications are made?

Compton: The Sheriff's Department reported that on August 16, 2022, at approximately 12:29 a.m., deputies from Compton Station responded to a family disturbance call alleging a Hispanic man was causing a disturbance by throwing items. The caller stated the man was prohibited from being there due to an existing restraining order.

When deputies arrived at the scene, a Hispanic woman ran out of the home towards the deputies. The woman had the restraining order against the suspect. The suspect stood on the porch of the location, pointed his gun at the deputies, and fired once. Two deputies shot back a total of six times, hitting the suspect once on the right leg. The suspect was taken to the hospital and later released and booked into custody.

The shooting was captured on body-worn cameras. Portions of the video were shown at the Sheriff's Department's Critical Incident Review. The Sheriff's Department has not provided the Office of Inspector General with access to its body-worn camera videos; thus, the Office of Inspector General cannot opine on whether all cameras were activated and whether the cameras that were activated were done so as required by Sheriff's Department policy.

Areas for Further Inquiry

Were the body-worn cameras activated pursuant to department policy? Were the deputies aware of the backdrop as they shot at the suspect who was standing in front of a home?

Century: The Sheriff's Department reported that on August 31, 2022, at approximately 6:41 a.m., deputies from Century Station received a call that a Hispanic man in his forties was swinging a machete and threatening employees at a business. According to

the information received, there was no apparent connection between the man and the employees at the business.

The deputies were told the suspect was inside of a grey vehicle. The deputies observed a man, who matched the description in the call, in a white Nissan pickup truck parked adjacent to the railroad tracks near the location. The deputies approached the pickup truck, opened the car door, and attempted to pull the male out of the car. Based on the body-worn camera video shown at the Critical Incident Review, it did not appear the deputies engaged or tried to engage in any conversation with the suspect before they began to pull him out of the car. The suspect resisted and a physical altercation ensued. The man punched one of the deputies and kicked the other. The deputies requested assistance from additional units and observed the man enter the truck and retrieve a machete.

The deputies backed away from the man and by that time, backup arrived. The deputies ordered the man to drop the machete, but he did not. After the man exited the truck, the deputies tased him twice and shot him with a 40 mm less-lethal round and a less-lethal stun bag. The less-lethal uses of force did not have any apparent effect on the man.

The man then approached the deputies, still holding the machete, at which point four deputies fired approximately 60 rounds at the man striking him multiple times. The man was pronounced dead at the scene. One of the four deputies on the scene recovered the machete and placed it in their patrol car.

The shooting was captured on body-worn cameras. Portions of the video were shown at the Sheriff's Department's Critical Incident Review. The Sheriff's Department has not provided the Office of Inspector General with access to its body-worn camera videos; thus, the Office of Inspector General cannot opine on whether all cameras were activated and whether the cameras that were activated were done so as required by Sheriff's Department policy.

Areas for Further Inquiry

Was the initial approach and suspect contact tactically sound and consistent with Sheriff's department training? Should this have been treated as a high risk stop? Were the number of rounds fired excessive? Why did a deputy remove the machete from the crime scene?

South Los Angeles: The Sheriff's Department reported that on September 2, 2022, at approximately 11:39 p.m., South Los Angeles station received a call from a woman that a Black man was standing outside on her patio claiming to be a gang member and

saying that he would kill anybody who came by. The caller also reported that she saw the man with a handgun.

Several deputies responded to the location and initially contacted the wrong man. The original caller contacted dispatch to inform them that the wrong man was detained. The deputies then contacted another unrelated man. The informant came outside of her house and told the deputies that they had again detained the wrong person and directed them towards the location of the suspect. When the deputies approached that location, the suspect exited the house and retrieved a firearm from underneath a chair cushion, at which point the deputies shot him. The suspect was pronounced deceased at the scene. A gun loaded with one live round was recovered at the scene.

The shooting was captured on body-worn cameras. Portions of the video were shown at the Sheriff's Department's Critical Incident Review. The Sheriff's Department has not provided the Office of Inspector General with access to its body-worn camera videos; thus, the Office of Inspector General cannot opine on whether all cameras were activated and whether the cameras that were activated were done so as required by Sheriff's Department policy.

Lancaster: The Sheriff's Department reported that on September 5, 2022, at approximately 8:58 a.m., deputies from Lancaster Station responded to a call for service that a vehicle had crashed into the gate at a train station. While enroute to the location, the deputies were notified that the vehicle in question had been taken in a carjacking. The responding deputies located the driver, a Black man, walking away from the car. The man's description closely resembled that of a suspect wanted in three armed robberies that had occurred just hours before. Deputies gave the man orders to stop walking, but he ignored them. As additional deputies arrived in the area, one deputy positioned a radio car in the suspect's path.

The suspect pulled a handgun from his waistband and pointed it at the deputies. Three deputies shot a total of 17 times at the suspect, striking him several times. He was taken to the hospital and treated for his injuries. A firearm was recovered from the scene.

The shooting was captured on body-worn cameras. Portions of the video were shown at the Sheriff's Department's Critical Incident Review. The Sheriff's Department has not provided the Office of Inspector General with access to its body-worn camera videos; thus, the Office of Inspector General cannot opine on whether all cameras were activated and whether the cameras that were activated were done so as required by Sheriff's Department policy.

Areas for Further Inquiry

Was placing a radio car in front of a potentially armed person consistent with training and department policy? Was there any potential crossfire at the time of the shooting? Did the deputies take the backdrop into consideration?

Century: The Sheriff's Department reported that on September 21, 2022, at approximately 11:33 p.m., deputies from Century Station responded to a call for service regarding an assault with a deadly weapon. The victim told dispatchers that a Black man wearing a black trench coat and a black hat pointed a gun at her. She told the dispatcher that she did not know him. While enroute to the call, deputies saw the suspect standing in the area of Imperial Highway and Compton Avenue. As the deputies stopped and exited their patrol car, the suspect pointed a black handgun at them and the passenger deputy shot four times. The driver deputy repositioned the car to provide cover, at which point the driver deputy did not consider the suspect to be a continuing threat and so did not discharge his firearm.

The suspect sustained gunshot wounds to his right thigh. He was transported to the hospital and treated for his injuries.

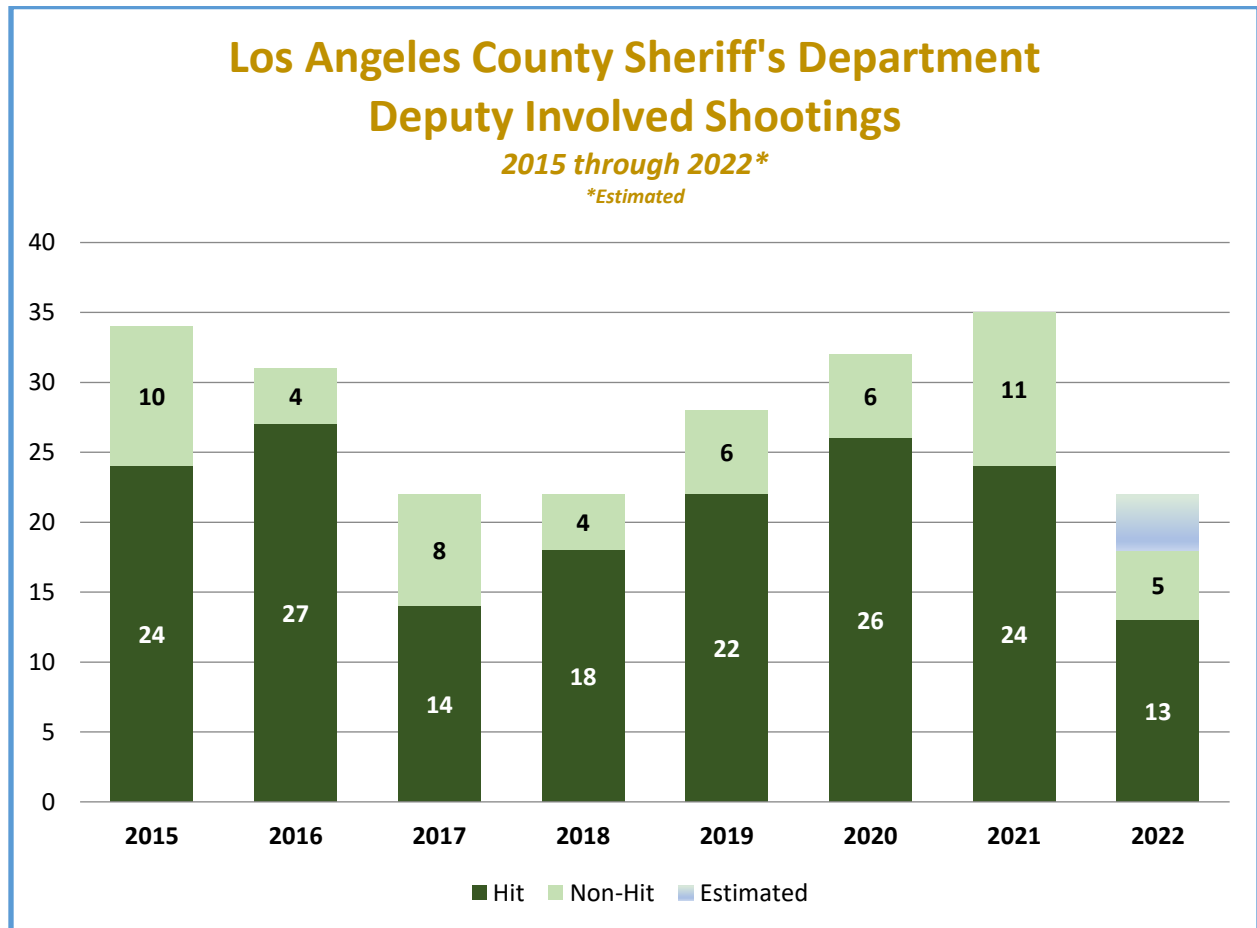
It was later determined that the gun in the man's possession was a replica black semiautomatic airsoft handgun.

The shooting was captured on body-worn cameras. Portions of the video were shown at the Sheriff's Department's Critical Incident Review. In the video shown, it appears that at least one deputy did not activate the body-worn camera in a timely fashion. The Sheriff's Department has not provided the Office of Inspector General with access to its body-worn camera videos; thus, the Office of Inspector General cannot state definitively if there was a delay in activation or not by the other deputies or whether all other deputies activated their cameras as required by Sheriff's Department policy.

Areas for Further Inquiry

Could the deputies have put themselves in a better position so they would have more appropriate cover? Was one of the deputy's close to being in the line of fire?

Comparison to Prior Years



*As noted in the chart, there were 18 deputy-involved shootings through September 30th of this year. As of October 27th, there have been no shootings for this (fourth) quarter. The shaded area in the bar graph for 2022 represents the possible number of deputy-involved shootings based on the shootings through the first ten months of the year. If the trend for deputy-involved shootings continues, one would expect that the number of shootings this year will be fewer than last year and for the previous two years.

Prior Notable Deputy Involved Shooting

On February 16, 2016, a deputy assigned to the Cerritos Sheriff's Station while on patrol began to conduct license plate checks of random vehicles. He found out that a white Acura had been recently stolen and found a car which matched the description at a nearby gas station. The deputy drove into the parking lot, parked his patrol car behind the Acura, activated his emergency lights, and exited the patrol vehicle.

The deputy observed a Hispanic man standing by a pump adjacent to the vehicle. The deputy approached the vehicle's front driver's side door, and then walked back toward the rear bumper as the man entered via the driver's door. The man began to drive the

car forward and the deputy ran toward the driver's side door. The man drove forward at approximately 5 mph, and then turned left. The Deputy began to run alongside the car and shot seven times at the man.

The man was struck by the bullets. The car then struck a planter and crashed into a concrete sign. The deputy removed the man from the vehicle and rendered first aid. The man was transported to the hospital where he was pronounced deceased.

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office filed charges of voluntary manslaughter against the deputy. The case was presented to a jury and the jury acquitted the deputy of all charges on November 19, 2021.

On September 29, 2022, the case was presented to the Sheriff's Department Executive Force Review Committee (EFRC) to decide if the deputy had violated any Sheriff's Department policies. The standard to be used in these proceedings is a preponderance of evidence, which is a lower threshold than that required in a criminal trial. As of this writing, the deputy is still employed with the Sheriff's Department. The Office of Inspector General will conduct a review of the Homicide Investigation, the Internal Affairs Bureau investigation, and the EFRC analysis.

District Attorney Review of Deputy-Involved Shootings

The Sheriff's Department's Homicide Bureau investigates all deputy-involved shootings in which a person is hit by a bullet. The Homicide Bureau submits the completed criminal investigation of each deputy-involved shooting that results in a person being struck by a bullet and which occurred in the County of Los Angeles to the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office (LADA) for review and possible filing of criminal charges.

Between July 1, 2022, and September 30, 2022, the LADA issued 5 findings on deputy-involved shooting cases involving the Sheriff's Department's employees.

- In the October 15, 2020, fatal shooting of Dana Mitchel Young, the District Attorney opined in a [memorandum dated July 20, 2022](#), that deputy Kevin Walker acted lawfully in self-defense, in defense of others, and/or in an attempt to arrest a person he believed to be a dangerous felon.
- In the June 12, 2020, fatal shooting of Tony Lugo and non-fatal shooting of Ranfere Pina, the District Attorney opined in a [memorandum dated July 26, 2022](#), deputies Joshua Mejia and Christopher McDonald acted lawfully in self-defense and in defense of others.

- In the July 28, 2016, fatal shooting of Donnell Thompson Jr., the District Attorney opined in a [memorandum dated August 3, 2022](#), that there is insufficient evidence to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that deputy James Ponsford was not acting lawfully in self-defense and in defense of others.
- In the September 10, 2020, fatal shooting of Samuel Herrera, the District Attorney opined in a [memorandum dated August 9, 2022](#), that deputies Juan Bendezu, David Pantoja, Anthony Molina, Lionel Mejia, Michael Lopez, Daisy Rosales, and Michael McMorro, and in the related non-fatal shooting by Lieutenant Noe Garcia, involving two unnamed members of the Herrera family that there is insufficient evidence to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the deputies were not acting lawfully in self-defense when they fired their weapons.
- In the June 6, 2019, fatal shooting of Jose Meza, the District Attorney opined in a [memorandum dated August 29, 2022](#), that deputy Grant Roth acted lawfully in self-defense and in defense of others.

Homicide Bureau's Investigation of Deputy-Involved Shootings

For the present quarter, the Homicide Bureau reports that 17 shooting cases involving Sheriff's Department personnel are open and under investigation. The oldest case the Homicide Bureau is still actively investigating is a September 23, 2021, shooting which occurred in the jurisdiction of Lancaster. For further information as to that shooting, please refer to the Office of Inspector General's report [Reform and Oversight Effort: Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, July to September 2021](#).² The oldest case that the Bureau has open is a 2017 shooting in Century, which is with the LADA's office awaiting a filing decision.

This quarter, the Sheriff's Department reported it sent four cases involving deputy-involved shootings to the LADA for filing consideration.

Internal Criminal Investigations Bureau

The Sheriff's Department's Internal Criminal Investigations Bureau (ICIB) reports directly to the Division Chief and the Commander of the Professional Standards Division. ICIB investigates allegations of criminal misconduct committed by Sheriff's Department personnel in Los Angeles County (misconduct alleged to have occurred in other counties is investigated by the law enforcement agencies in the jurisdictions where the crimes are alleged to have occurred).

²[Reform and Oversight Effort: Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, July to September 2021](#).

The Sheriff's Department reports ICIB has 86 active cases. This quarter, the Sheriff's Department reports sending 6 cases to the LADA for filing consideration. The LADA is still reviewing 31 cases for filing. The oldest open case that ICIB has submitted to the LADA for filing consideration is a 2018 case, which was presented to the LADA in 2018 and is still being reviewed.

Internal Affairs Bureau

The Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) conducts administrative investigations of Department policy violations by Sheriff's Department employees. It is also responsible for responding to and investigating deputy-involved shootings and significant use-of-force cases. If the LADA declines to file a criminal action against the deputies involved in a shooting, IAB completes a force review to determine whether Sheriff's Department personnel violated any policies during the incident.

Administrative investigations are also conducted at the unit level. The subject's unit and IAB determine whether an incident is investigated by IAB or remains a unit-level investigation based on the severity of the alleged policy violation(s).

This quarter, the Sheriff's Department reported opening 126 new administrative investigations. Of these 126 cases 43 were assigned to IAB, 57 were designated as unit-level investigations, and 26 were entered as criminal monitors. In the same period, IAB reports that 88 cases were closed by IAB or at the unit level. There are 438 pending administrative investigations. Of those 438 investigations, 289 are assigned to IAB and the remaining 149 are pending unit-level investigations.

Civil Service Commission Dispositions

There were five final decisions issued by the Civil Service Commission this quarter. In four out of five of the decisions, the Commission sustained the Sheriff's Department's discipline and in one they reduced the discipline.

The Sheriff's Department's Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems

The Sheriff's Department reports it deployed its Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) four times between July 1, 2022, and September 30, 2022.

The UAS was deployed on July 10, 2022, to assist Pico Rivera Station with an armed barricaded suspect. The UAS was utilized to clear the interior of the location and locate the suspect. The suspect was taken into custody.

The UAS was deployed on August 9, 2022, to assist with an armed barricaded suspect in the city of Pasadena. The UAS was utilized to clear the interior of the location and render the premises safe for law enforcement officials to enter. Law enforcement entered the building and were able to locate the suspect and take the suspect into custody.

The UAS was deployed on September 1, 2022, to assist Lancaster Station with an armed barricaded suspect. The UAS was utilized to clear the interior of the location and render the premises safe for law enforcement officials to enter. The suspect was eventually found and taken into custody.

The UAS was deployed on September 3, 2022, to assist with locating a shooting suspect in East Los Angeles. The UAS was utilized to clear the interior of the location and locate the suspect. The suspect was not found.

Sheriff's Department's Unfulfilled Information Requests

On August 25, 2022, the verified Twitter account of Sheriff Villanueva tweeted that the Sheriff's Department fulfilled 573 out of a total of 592 requests for information from both the Office of Inspector General and the Civilian Oversight Commission. The numbers quoted in the tweet included the assertion that in the year 2019, every request for information was fulfilled. In fact, 2019 was the year in which the Sheriff's Department began aggressively refusing to fulfil information requests, including inquiries into Sheriff Villanueva's "Truth and Reconciliation Committee," the rehiring of a deputy who had been fired after being caught on tape using claimed law enforcement gang membership to intimidate another deputy, and the shutting off of general computer access to county records in violation of Government Code section 25303. Many of these failures to "fulfill" information requests were publicly documented. After a preliminary audit, the Office of Inspector General has found 21 unfulfilled requests for information sent to the Sheriff's Department in 2019 for which nothing was provided and found that in many cases, there was no response at all. There are another 42 unfulfilled requests from 2020-2022. The Los Angeles Sheriff's Department's "Audits and Accountability Bureau" continues to maintain a public website which it represents as a collection of public records purporting to support the false tweet.

The Sheriff's Department has recently begun responding to long overdue requests for information from the Office of Inspector General with a short form letter stating information will not be provided. Based upon the Sheriff's Department's tweet, it appears that a denial is considered by them to constitute a fulfilled request for purposes of their record keeping.

The failure to timely comply with requests for information from the Office of Inspector General is a violation of Government Code section 25303, Penal Code section 13510.8, and Los Angeles County Code section 6.44.190.

CUSTODY DIVISION

Programming Opportunities at Century Regional Detention Facility

The Office of Inspector General continues to monitor Century Regional Detention Facility's (CRDF) efforts to provide meaningful opportunities for people in custody to participate in educational and rehabilitative programming.

As previously reported, while participation in Education Based Incarceration (EBI) programming now appears to be equitable, racial/ethnic representation through employment with the Prison Personnel Office (PPO)³ remained inequitable during the third quarter of this year. The PPO has not made observable efforts to address racial/ethnic disparity for people in custody to be given the opportunity for jail employment as Inmate Workers. A percentage comparison analysis of data provided by the Sheriff's Department from October 5, 2022, displayed representation percentages for PPO similar to those reported in the Office of Inspector General reports covering the first and second quarters of 2022. Specifically, the data showed:

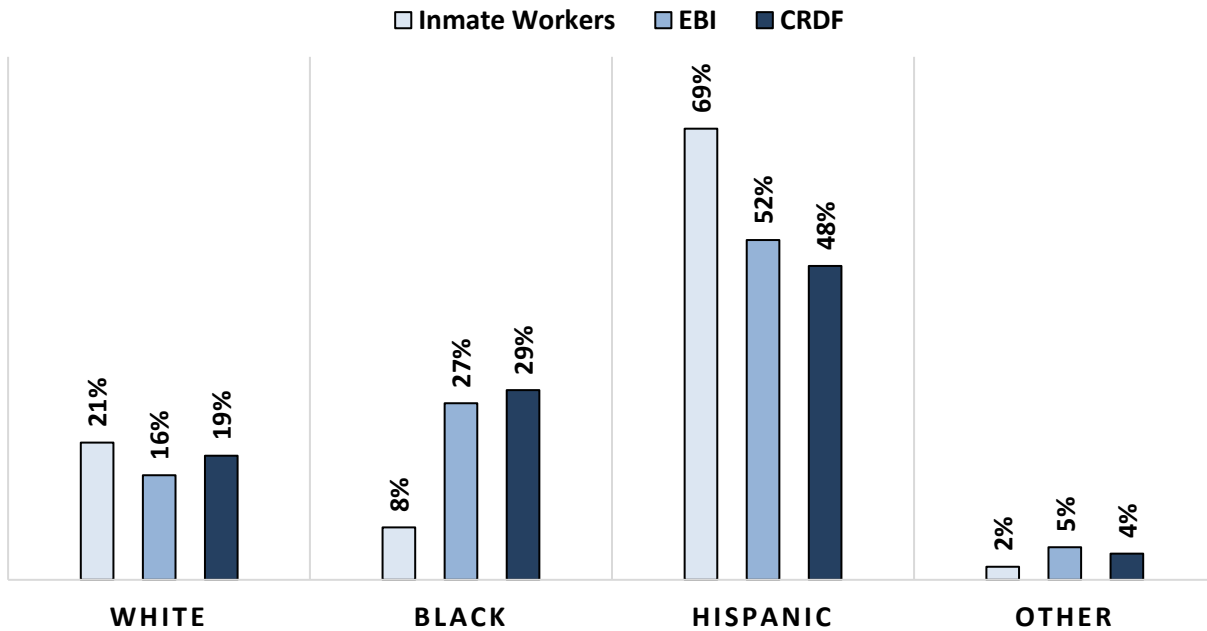
- Approximately 21% of Inmate Workers were White,⁴ compared to approximately 19% of the CRDF population.
- Approximately 8% of Inmate Workers were Black, compared to approximately 29% of the CRDF population.
- Approximately 69% of Inmate Workers were Hispanic, compared to approximately 48% of the CRDF population.
- Approximately 2% of Inmate Workers were "Other" race/ethnicity, compared to approximately 4% of the CRDF population.

The following chart shows the equitable representation based on race/ethnicity in EBI participation and the inequitable representation based on race/ethnicity for PPO participation.

³See [Reform and Oversight Efforts – Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department – January to March 2022](#); and [Reform and Oversight Efforts – Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department – April to June 2022](#).

⁴ Race/ethnicity categorizations reflect those utilized by the Sheriff's Department when reporting demographic data.

**PERCENTAGE COMPARISON OF PEOPLE IN CUSTODY AT CRDF
AND PEOPLE IN CUSTODY AT CRDF AND ENGAGED IN CREDIT-
EARNING PROGRAMMING BY RACE/ETHNICITY***



*The data shows people in custody at CRDF by race/ethnicity (N=1,547), people in custody at CRDF enrolled in educational programming by race/ethnicity (N=128), and people in custody at CRDF employed as inmate workers by race/ethnicity (N=130) on October 5, 2022. Data was generated from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Automated Justice Information System.

While the Sheriff's Department staff has previously indicated that the PPO would collect data to identify barriers preventing people in custody from securing credit-earning jail employment and re-evaluate selection criteria used to determine eligibility for jail employment, neither of these efforts appear to have been adequately undertaken.

The Sheriff's Department reported that CRDF houses people charged with high level offenses, making many of the people in custody ineligible for jail employment.⁵ The Sheriff's Department provided the Office of Inspector General data from October 5, 2022, showing that Black people in custody at CRDF are disproportionately charged with assaultive charges.⁶ But the type of charge alone does not explain the

⁵ According to the Sheriff's Department, people who are housed at CRDF who have charges or convictions for violence are ineligible to participate in the Inmate Worker Program. Additionally, people in custody at CRDF who are classified with a heightened security level are ineligible to participate in the Inmate Worker Program, although the Sheriff's Department reports that it routinely evaluates eligibility based on de-classification.

⁶ Specifically, data showed: approximately 38% of White people in custody at CRDF were held on assaultive charges, approximately 58% of Black people in custody at CRDF were held on assaultive charges, approximately 43% of Hispanic people in custody at CRDF were held on assaultive charges, and approximately 42% of people in custody at CRDF with any "Other race/ethnicity" were held on assaultive charges.

underrepresentation of Black persons in custody participating in PPO. On October 5th, the date for which the Sheriff's Department provided the data, there were 196 Black persons in custody who were charged with non-assaultive crimes yet only 11 Black persons in custody were participating in PPO.⁷ The Sheriff's Department reported that it does not know why only 11 out of these 196 persons were participating in PPO.⁸ Because the Sheriff's Department is responsible for providing PPO as an opportunity, it is imperative that the reasons why persons are excluded or declined to participate is documented and that the analysis for opportunity for participation is equitably applied.

The Sheriff's Department has stated that it will continue to examine potential barriers preventing people in custody from securing credit-earning jail employment, and specifically identify reasons that people in custody who are eligible to serve as Inmate Workers are unable to secure credit-earning jail employment. The Office of Inspector General recommends that the Sheriff's Department implement a system that documents reasons for denial of PPO participation, documents reasons for elective non-participation, explore ways to promote PPO participation for eligible persons, and explore alternative ways of evaluating persons for PPO to provide equitable opportunity for participation. Prior to the repurposing of the "Audits and Accountability Bureau" to its current function limiting compliance with public and oversight information demands, it was tasked with conducting such audits.

In-Custody Deaths

Between the beginning of this calendar year and September 30, 2022, 31 individuals died while in the care and custody of the Sheriff's Department. While many of these causes of deaths have not yet been determined by the Los Angeles County Coroner, preliminary findings suggest: 3 deaths were related to COVID-19, 4 deaths were homicides, 18 deaths were due to natural causes, and 6 deaths resulted from overdoses.⁹

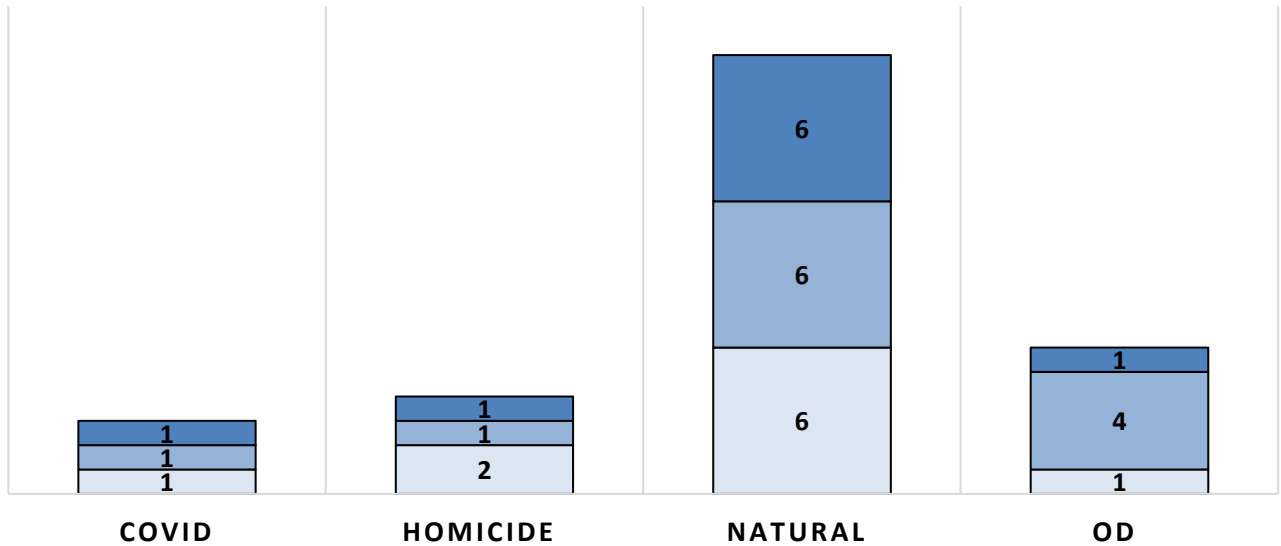
⁷ There may be persons in custody of other races/ethnicities who are also eligible and are not participating in PPO. The Office of Inspector General is not suggesting that the analysis of persons in custody who are not charged with assaultive charges and are not in PPO be limited to only Black persons in custody.

⁸ The Office of Inspector General is making the assumption that these 11 women are not charged with assaultive charges based on the Sheriff's Department representation that an assaultive charge leads to ineligibility for PPO.

⁹ In some instances, more than one preliminary cause of death may be attributable to a single in-custody death. The Sheriff's Department also reports 31 in-custody deaths year to date but has a slightly different break-down for the causes of death. That there may be multiple causes of death is a possible contributor to the discrepancy. We will continue to work with the Sheriff's Department to ensure that the data reported is accurate.

PRELIMINARY CAUSE OF DEATH FOR PEOPLE WHO DIED IN CUSTODY* BETWEEN JANUARY 1, 2022 AND SEPTEMBER 30, 2022

□ First Quarter □ Second Quarter □ Third Quarter



*This chart counts people in custody who died at one of the Sheriff's Department Jail Facilities. This chart does not include people in custody who died at a Sheriff's Department patrol station, nor does it include people who died after being placed under arrest but before being transferred to a Sheriff's Department jail. In some instances, more than one preliminary cause of death may be attributable to a single in-custody death.

For this past quarter, between July 1, 2022 and September 30, 2022, nine individuals died while in the care and custody of the Sheriff's Department. Of these nine decedents, two died at Men's Central Jail (MCJ), one died at Century Regional Detention Facility (CRDF), two died at Twin Towers Correctional Facility (TTCF), one died at North County Correctional Facility (NCCF), one died at Pico Rivera Station Jail and two died in hospitals to which they had been transported.

Office of Inspector General staff attended the CSD Administrative Death Reviews for each of the nine in-custody deaths.

The following summaries, arranged in chronological order, provide brief descriptions of each in-custody death:

On July 6, 2022, an individual at Pico Rivera Sheriff's Station was found unresponsive. Emergency aid was rendered by Sheriff's Department staff and Los Angeles County Fire Department paramedics, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On July 4, 2022, an individual was found unresponsive at MCJ after custody personnel were alerted of a "man-down." Custody personnel rendered emergency aid, and

paramedics arrived on scene and transported the individual to LAC+USC Medical Center. On July 13, 2022, the individual was pronounced dead.

On July 23, 2022, an individual housed at NCCF was found unresponsive by persons housed with him in the dorm, with reports that those individuals attempted to administer emergency aid. Custody staff became aware of the situation during a Title 15 check and after noting that Narcan cartridges had been removed from the storage location in the dorm. (These cartridges are stored there for the incarcerated persons to use on a person in medical distress.). Emergency aid was rendered by Sheriff's Department staff and paramedics, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On July 16, 2022, an individual appeared to have a medical emergency upon booking at Lakewood Sheriff's Station. Los Angeles County Fire transported the individual to Coast Plaza Hospital, where the individual was pronounced dead on July 29, 2022.

On August 12, 2022, an individual was discovered unresponsive in his cell at MCJ during pill call. Emergency aid was rendered by Sheriff's Department staff and paramedics, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene. There were some reports that persons housed near the deceased had been calling "man down" for hours prior to the check when the deceased was found unresponsive.

On August 30, 2022, an individual housed at MCJ was found unresponsive during pill call. Emergency aid was rendered by Sheriff's Department staff and paramedics, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene. There is information that the emergency aid to the deceased may have been delayed due to personnel being unsure if he was truly in medical distress.

On September 3, 2022, an individual housed at Correctional Treatment Center (CTC) was found unresponsive by a nurse conducting close observation rounds. Emergency aid was rendered by nursing staff, Sheriff's Department staff, and paramedics, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene. There are reports that there was a seven-minute delay in Sheriff's Department personnel arriving.

On September 9, 2022, an individual housed at CRDF was found unresponsive by a nurse conducting a detox assessment. Emergency aid was rendered by nursing staff and paramedics, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On September 23, 2022, an individual housed at TTCF was seen being assaulted by his cellmate during a Title 15 check. Emergency aid was rendered by Sheriff's Department

staff, nursing staff and paramedics, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

Office of Inspector General Site Visits

The Office of Inspector General regularly conducts site visits and inspections at Sheriff's Department custodial facilities to identify matters requiring attention. In the second quarter of 2022, Office of Inspector General personnel completed 61 site visits to IRC, CRDF, MCJ, TTCF, NCCF, Pitches Detention Center (PDC), Pitches Detention Center North Facility (PDC North) and Pitches Detention Center East (PDC East).

As part of the Office of Inspector General's jail monitoring, Office of Inspector General staff attended 101 Custody Services Division (CSD) executive and administrative meetings and met with division executives for 108.5 monitoring hours related to uses of force, in-custody deaths, COVID-19 policies and protocols, and as general conditions of confinement.

Jail Overcrowding

As previously reported by the Office of Inspector General, overcrowding in the Los Angeles County jails continues to jeopardize the ability of the Sheriff's Department to provide humane conditions of confinement as required by the Eight and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. (See *Fischer v. Winter* (1983) 564 F. Supp. 281, 299, which notes that while overcrowding may not be unconstitutional in and of itself, overcrowding is a root cause of deficiencies in basic living conditions, such as providing sufficient shelter, clothing, food, medical care, sanitation and personal safety.)

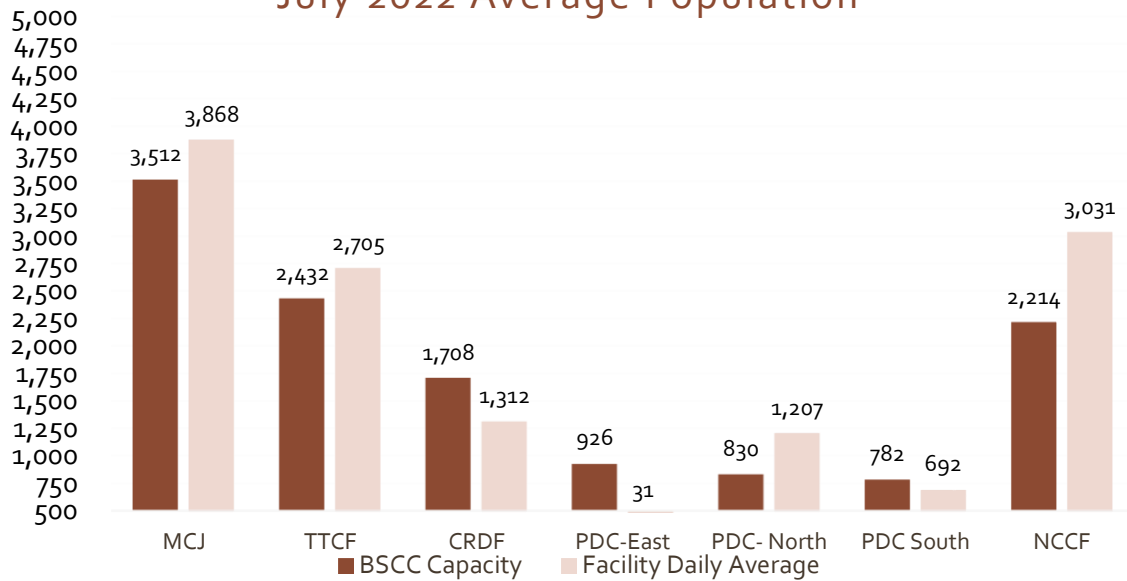
The Los Angeles County jails have a Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) total rated capacity of 12,404.¹⁰ According to the Sheriff's Department Custody Division Daily COVID-19 Fact Sheet, as of September 30, 2022, the total population of prisoners in the Los Angeles County jails was 14,819.

From July 1, 2022, to September 30, 2022, five Los Angeles County jail facilities operated over the BSCC rated capacity. The graphs below show that the overall daily average of prisoners housed in the Mens Central Jail, Twin Towers Correction Facility,

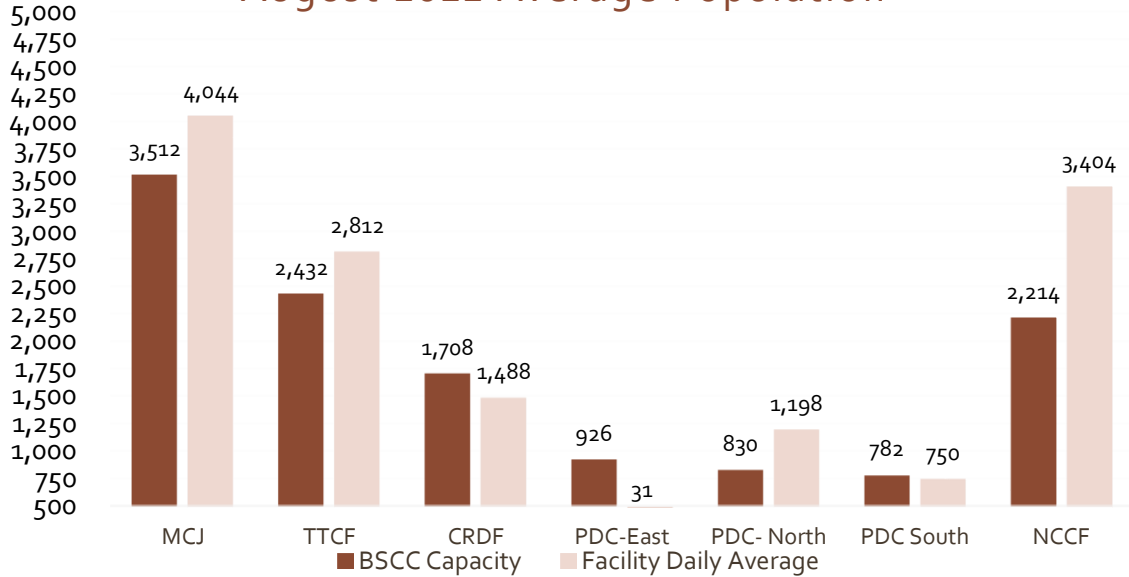
¹⁰ The total rated capacity is arrived at by adding the rated capacity for each of the County jail facilities: MCJ 3512, TTCF 2432, CRDF 1708, PDC-East 926, PDC-North 830, PDC-South 782, and NCCF 2214. This rated capacity has not been recently updated and does not take into account the pandemic, understaffing, or the deteriorating physical plant of MCJ, meaning that the current safe capacity of the Los Angeles County jails is certainly substantially lower than the rated maximum.

North County Correction Facility, Pitchess Detention Facility North, and Pitchess Detention Facility South, exceeded the state rated capacity for each facility. The total daily average of prisoners in four of these facilities was above the BSCC rated capacity the entirety of the third quarter of this year. The three graphs below list the facilities, the BSCC capacity limits and the daily average population of persons in custody for each facility for the months of July, August, and September.

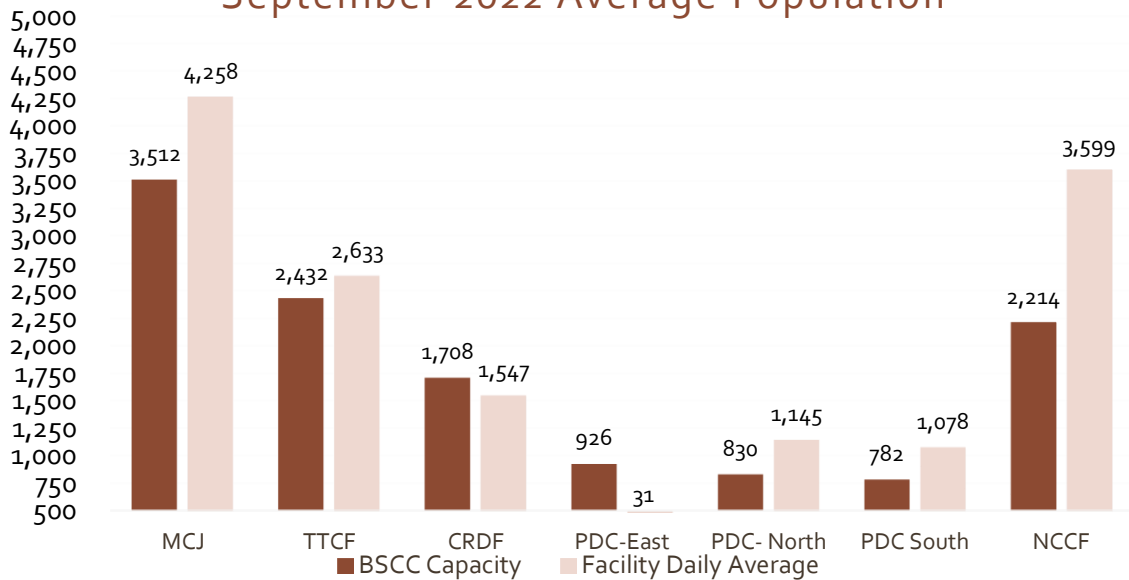
July 2022 Average Population



August 2022 Average Population



September 2022 Average Population

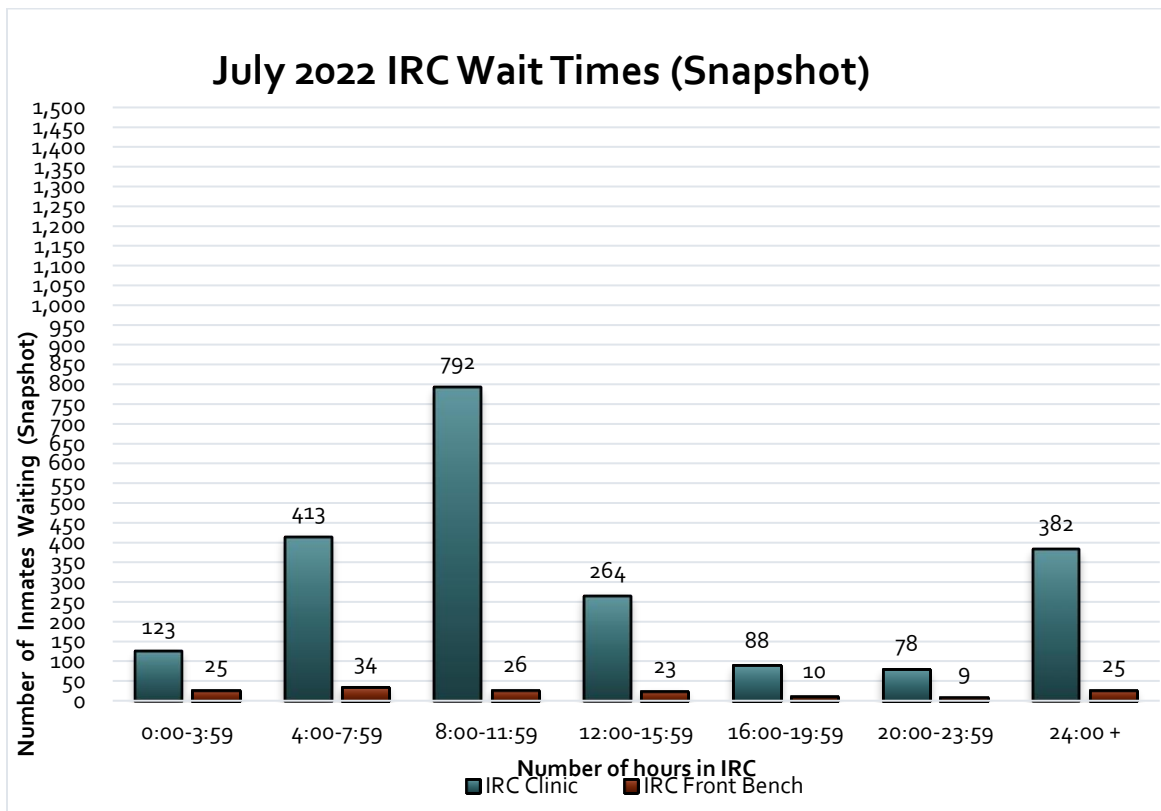


Overcrowding not only imperils humane conditions in the permanent housing units but impacts conditions at the Inmate Reception Center (IRC) where incoming prisoners are searched, evaluated, and classified for housing. It includes the IRC Clinic area, which is where prisoners wait for medical and mental evaluations, and the front bench area,

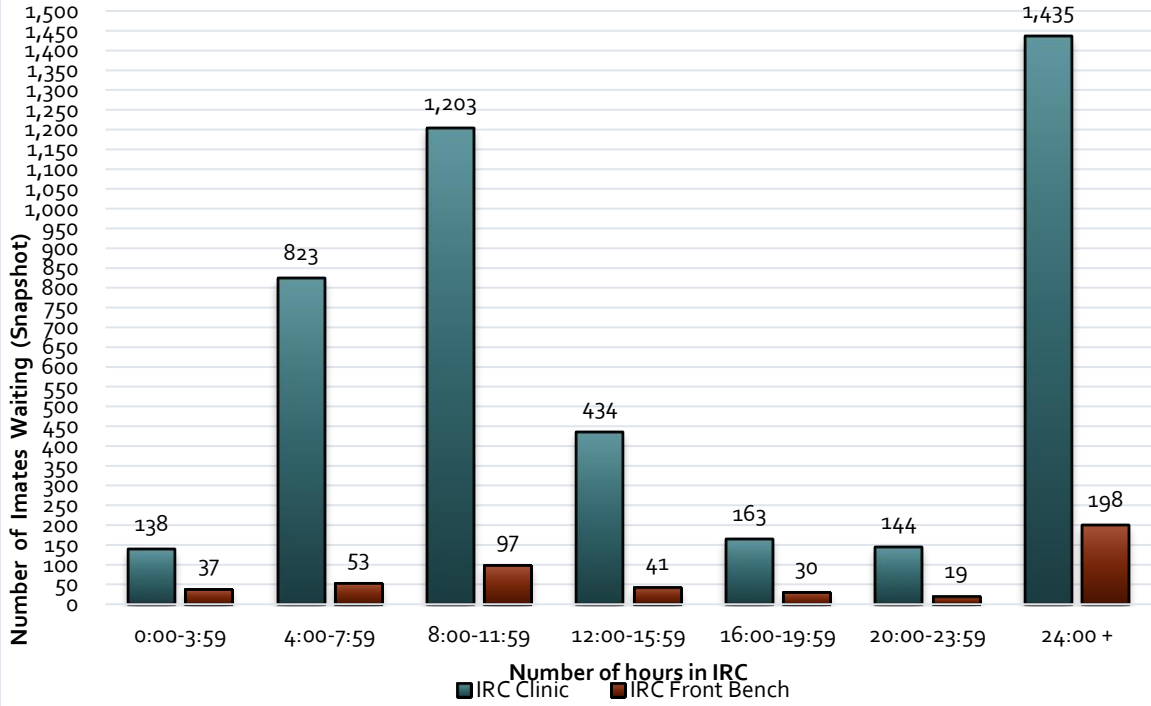
where prisoners who are at risk of or exhibit acute mental distress are tethered with handcuffs to chairs while awaiting evaluation.

Jail overcrowding has contributed to overcrowding and excessive wait times in IRC, as the lack of available permanent housing results in persons being housed in IRC until permanent beds becomes available.

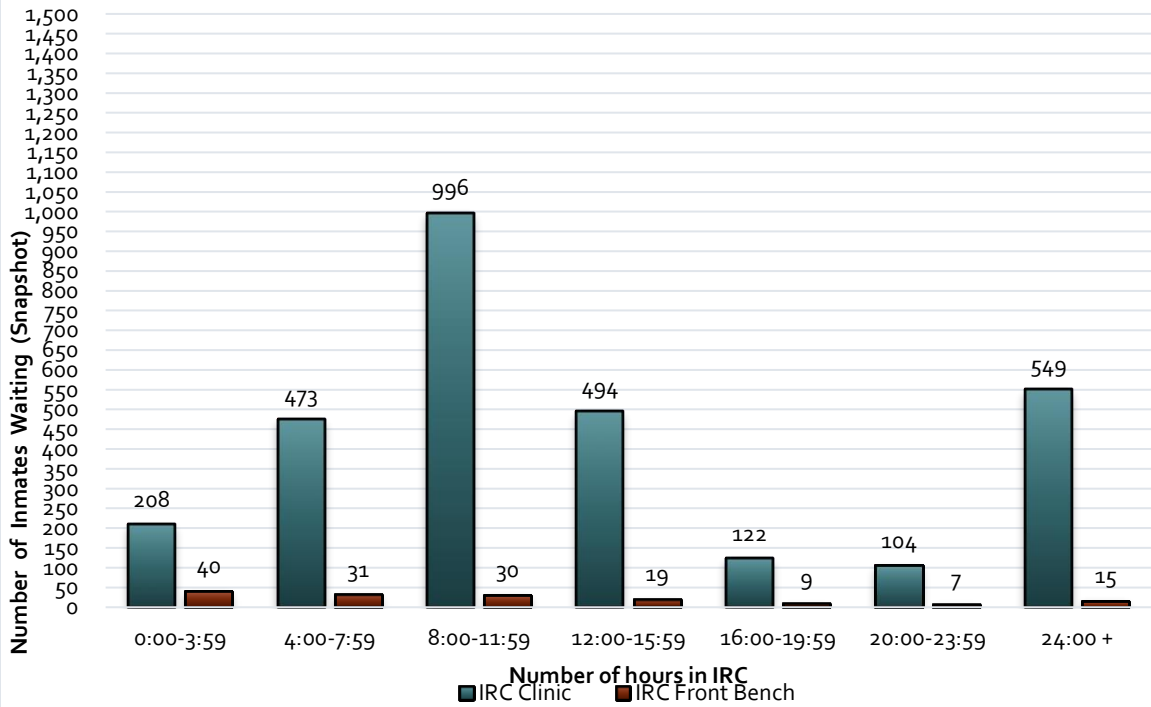
The graphs below illustrate the number of persons waiting for permanent housing broken down by hours waited in IRC and in the front bench areas.



August 2022 IRC Wait Times (Snapshot)



September 2022 IRC Wait Times (Snapshot)



Based on the overcrowding, unsanitary conditions, and long wait times, on September 8, 2022, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) as the attorneys of record in *Dennis Rutherford v. Alex Villanueva, et al.*, filed an Ex Parte Application for a Temporary Restraining Order and Order to Show Cause Re Preliminary Injunction to ensure that the constitutional rights of people held in the IRC and that the Sheriff’s Department abide by previously issued court orders. The County of Los Angeles on behalf of the defendants agreed that the ACLU was “largely correct that conditions inside the ...IRC... have deteriorated dramatically in the past months” and agreed that the relief sought by the plaintiffs should be granted with minor variances. As a result, the court issued a temporary restraining order (TRO) that, among other things, specifies maximum times for persons held at IRC and maximum times for persons tethered in the front bench area. The order also specifies the number of persons who may be held in various cells and areas within the IRC. The Office of Inspector General continues to monitor the IRC in order to report compliance or non-compliance with the TRO.

Taser Use in Custody

The Office of Inspector General continues to compile the number of times the Sheriff’s Department has employed a Taser in custodial settings. Below are the numbers from January 2021 through September 2022. The numbers below were gathered from the Sheriff’s Department’s *Monthly Force Synopsis*, which the Sheriff’s Department produces and provides to the Office of Inspector General each month.¹¹

| Month | Number of Times a Taser was Employed |
|----------------|---|
| January 2021 | 4 |
| February 2021 | 8 |
| March 2021 | 3 |
| April 2021 | 5 |
| May 2021 | 3 |
| June 2021 | 11 |
| July 2021 | 5 |
| August 2021 | 4 |
| September 2021 | 3 |
| October 2021 | 6 |
| November 2021 | 3 |
| December 2021 | 4 |
| January 2022 | 2 |
| February 2022 | 3 |
| March 2022 | 6 |
| April 2022 | 4 |
| May 2022 | 6 |

¹¹ The Office of Inspector General is not opining on whether the use of the Taser in each of these incidents was permissible under the Sheriff’s Department’s policies and/or if the Taser was employed lawfully.

| Month | Number of Times a Taser was Employed |
|----------------|---|
| June 2022 | 10 |
| July 2022 | 4 |
| August 2022 | 6 |
| September 2022 | 5 |

Use-of-Force Incidents in Custody

The Office of Inspector General monitors the Sheriff's Department's use of force incidents, institutional violence¹², and assaults on Sheriff's Department or CHS personnel by people in custody. The Sheriff's Department reports the following numbers for the uses of force and assaultive conduct within its CSD (the Sheriff's Department is still verifying the accuracy of the reporting of incidents that occurred subsequent to March 31, 2022)¹³:

Use of Force Incidents:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 1 st Quarter of 2018 | 546 |
| 2 nd Quarter of 2018 | 592 |
| 3 rd Quarter of 2018 | 530 |
| 4 th Quarter of 2018 | 452 |
| 1 st Quarter of 2019 | 501 |
| 2 nd Quarter of 2019 | 478 |
| 3 rd Quarter of 2019 | 525 |
| 4 th Quarter of 2019 | 431 |
| 1 st Quarter of 2020 | 386 |
| 2 nd Quarter of 2020 | 274 |
| 3 rd Quarter of 2020 | 333 |
| 4 th Quarter of 2020 | 390 |
| 1 st Quarter of 2021 | 373 |
| 2 nd Quarter of 2021 | 430 |
| 3 rd Quarter of 2021 | 450 |
| 4 th Quarter of 2021 | 428 |
| 1 st Quarter of 2022 | 384 |

¹² Institutional violence is defined as assaultive conduct by a person in custody upon another person in custody.

¹³ The Sheriff's Department recently provided information to the Office of Inspector General regarding some discrepancies in the reported data based upon its internal reporting systems. The Office of Inspector General will work with the Sheriff's Department to understand the reasons for the discrepancies and to ensure accurate reporting.

Assaults on Personnel:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 1 st Quarter of 2018 | 144 |
| 2 nd Quarter of 2018 | 173 |
| 3 rd Quarter of 2018 | 131 |
| 4 th Quarter of 2018 | 115 |
| 1 st Quarter of 2019 | 122 |
| 2 nd Quarter of 2019 | 132 |
| 3 rd Quarter or 2019 | 164 |
| 4 th Quarter of 2019 | 136 |
| 1 st Quarter of 2020 | 131 |
| 2 nd Quarter of 2020 | 91 |
| 3 rd Quarter of 2020 | 111 |
| 4 th Quarter of 2020 | 140 |
| 1 st Quarter of 2021 | 143 |
| 2 nd Quarter of 2021 | 145 |
| 3 rd Quarter of 2021 | 153 |
| 4 th Quarter of 2021 | 136 |
| 1 st Quarter of 2022 | 137 |

Incidents of Institutional Violence:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 1 st Quarter of 2018 | 871 |
| 2 nd Quarter of 2018 | 905 |
| 3 rd Quarter of 2018 | 988 |
| 4 th Quarter of 2018 | 881 |
| 1 st Quarter of 2019 | 769 |
| 2 nd Quarter of 2019 | 794 |
| 3 rd Quarter of 2019 | 858 |
| 4 th Quarter of 2019 | 709 |
| 1 st Quarter of 2020 | 717 |
| 2 nd Quarter of 2020 | 496 |
| 3 rd Quarter of 2020 | 560 |
| 4 th Quarter of 2020 | 753 |
| 1 st Quarter of 2021 | 745 |
| 2 nd Quarter of 2021 | 698 |
| 3 rd Quarter of 2021 | 746 |
| 4 th Quarter of 2021 | 693 |
| 1 st Quarter of 2022 | 659 |

HANDLING OF GRIEVANCES AND COMMENTS

Office of Inspector General Handling of Comments Regarding Department Operations and Jails

The OIG received ninety-eight new complaints in the third quarter of 2022 from members of the public, prisoners, prisoners' family members and friends, community organizations and County agencies. Each complaint was reviewed by OIG staff. Sixty of these grievances were related to conditions of confinement within the Department's custody facilities, as shown below:

| Grievances/ Incident Classification | Totals |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Personnel Issues | 9 |
| Medical | 15 |
| Classification | 8 |
| Living Condition | 5 |
| Mental | 3 |
| Vocational Programs | 2 |
| Bedding | 1 |
| Food | 1 |
| Property | 1 |
| Mail | 1 |
| Visiting | 1 |
| Showers | 1 |
| Telephones | 1 |
| Total | 60 |

Thirty-eight complaints were related to civilian contacts with Department personnel by persons who were not in custody.

| Complaint/ Incident Classification | Totals |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Personnel | |
| Off Duty Conduct | 5 |
| Alleged Criminal Conduct | 3 |
| Improper Tactics | 3 |
| Discrimination | 2 |
| Neglect of Duty | 2 |
| Improper Search, Detention, Arrest | 2 |

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Dishonesty | 1 |
| Force | 1 |
| Discourtesy | 1 |
| Operation of Vehicles | 1 |
| Other | 4 |
| Service | |
| Response Time | 7 |
| Policy Procedures | 4 |
| Traffic Citation | 2 |
| Total | 38 |

Handling of Grievances Filed by People in Custody

The Sheriff's Department has not fully implemented the use of tablet computers (tablets) in its jail facilities to capture information related to requests, and eventually grievances, filed by people in custody. Currently, there are a total of 165 installed iPads. There are 31 iPads at CRDF, 49 iPads at MCJ, and 85 iPads at TTCF. The Sheriff's Department reports that moving to Windows based tablets is under consideration in order to rectify compatibility issues and other connectivity concerns. The Sheriff's Department reports that the iPads are not functioning. The Office of Inspector General recommends that inoperable tablets be repaired or replaced and continues to recommend that the Sheriff's Department pursue full implementation of tablets throughout the CSD.

As reported in the Office of Inspector General's January 2018 *Reform and Oversight Efforts: Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department* report, the Sheriff's Department implemented a policy restricting the filing of duplicate and excessive grievances filed by people in custody.¹⁴ The Sheriff's Department reports that between July 1, 2022 and September 30, 2022, one person in custody was restricted from filing two grievances under this policy. The Office of Inspector General continues to raise concerns about the quality of grievance investigations and responses, which likely increases duplication and may prevent individuals from receiving adequate care while in Sheriff's Department custody.

Sheriff's Department's Service Comment Reports

Under Sheriff's Department policies, the Sheriff's Department accepts and reviews comments from members of the public about departmental service or employee

¹⁴ [See Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Custody Division Manual, 8-04/050.00, Duplicate or Excessive Filings of Grievances and Appeals, and Restrictions of Filing Privileges.](#)

performance.¹⁵ The Sheriff's Department categorizes these comments into three categories:

- External Commendation: an external communication of appreciation for and/or approval of service provided by the Sheriff's Department members.
- Service Complaint: an external communication of dissatisfaction with the Sheriff's Department service, procedure or practice, not involving employee misconduct; and
- Personnel Complaint: an external allegation of misconduct, either a violation of law or Sheriff's Department policy, against any member of the Sheriff's Department.¹⁶

The following chart lists the number and types of comments reported for each station or unit.¹⁷

| INVESTIGATING BUREAU/STATION/FACILITY | COMMENDATIONS | PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS | SERVICE COMPLAINTS |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| ADM : NORTH PATROL ADM HQ | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| ADM : SOUTH PATROL ADM HQ | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| ADM : TECH & SUPPORT ADM HQ | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| ALD : ALTADENA STN | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| CCS : COMMUNITY COLLEGE BUREAU | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| CEN : CENTURY STN | 4 | 8 | 2 |
| CER : CERRITOS STN | 4 | 4 | 1 |
| CMB : CIVIL MANAGEMENT BUREAU | 5 | 4 | 2 |
| CNT : COURT SERVICES CENTRAL | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| COM : COMPTON STN | 2 | 5 | 0 |
| CPB : COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP BUREAU | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| CRV : CRESCENTA VALLEY STN | 13 | 4 | 0 |
| CSB : COUNTY SERVICES BUREAU | 3 | 5 | 0 |
| CSN : CARSON STN | 5 | 3 | 2 |

¹⁵ See [Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Manual of Policy and Procedures, 3-04/010.00, "Department Service Reviews."](#)

¹⁶ It is possible for an employee to get a Service Complaint and Personnel Complaint based on the same incident in question.

¹⁷ This data was provided by the Sheriff's Department from its Performance Recording and Monitoring System on October 4, 2022, and reflects the data provided as of that date.

| INVESTIGATING BUREAU/STATION/FACILITY | COMMENDATIONS | PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS | SERVICE COMPLAINTS |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| CST: COURT SERVICES TRANSPORTATION | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| ELA : EAST LA STN | 1 | 6 | 3 |
| EST : COURT SERVICES EAST | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| HOM : HOMICIDE BUREAU | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| IAB : INTERNAL AFFAIRS BUREAU | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| IND : INDUSTRY STN | 4 | 12 | 4 |
| LCS : LANCASTER STN | 17 | 11 | 6 |
| LKD : LAKEWOOD STN | 5 | 4 | 1 |
| LMT : LOMITA STN | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| MAR : MARINA DEL REY STN | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| MCB: MAJOR CRIMES BUREAU | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| MCJ : MEN'S CENTRAL JAIL | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| MLH : MALIBU/LOST HILLS STN | 17 | 7 | 9 |
| MTL : METROLINK | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| NAR : NARCOTICS BUREAU | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| NO: PITCHESS NORTH FACILITY | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| NWK : NORWALK REGIONAL STN | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| OSS: OPERATION SAFE STREETS BUREAU | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| PKB : PARKS BUREAU | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| PLM : PALMDALE STN | 8 | 15 | 4 |
| PRV : PICO RIVERA STN | 6 | 6 | 1 |
| RIB: RECORDS & IDENTIFICATION | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| SCV : SANTA CLARITA VALLEY STN | 27 | 9 | 1 |
| SDM : SAN DIMAS STN | 14 | 4 | 1 |
| SHR: OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| SIB: SHERIFF INFORMATION BUREAU | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| SLA : SOUTH LOS ANGELES STATION | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| SSB : SCIENTIFIC SERV BUREAU | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| SVB : SPECIAL VICTIMS BUREAU | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| TB : TRAINING BUREAU | 6 | 0 | 0 |

| INVESTIGATING BUREAU/STATION/FACILITY | COMMENDATIONS | PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS | SERVICE COMPLAINTS |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| TEM : TEMPLE CITY STN | 5 | 6 | 3 |
| TSB : TRANSIT SERVICES BUREAU | 2 | 7 | 0 |
| TT : TWIN TOWERS | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| WAL : WALNUT/SAN DIMAS STN | 6 | 9 | 4 |
| WHD : WEST HOLLYWOOD STN | 4 | 6 | 2 |
| WST : COURT SERVICES WEST | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| Total : | 190 | 184 | 56 |