



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HALL OF JUSTICE

ROBERT G. LUNA, SHERIFF



May 12, 2025

Sharmaine Moseley, Executive Director
Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission
World Trade Center
350 South Figueroa Street, Suite 288
Los Angeles, California 90071

Via Electronic Submittal

Dear Ms. Moseley:

UPDATE ON LOS ANGELES SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENT OF THE DUAL CAREER TRACK MODEL FOR CUSTODY/COURT SERVICES

This communication provides an overview on the status of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Department) assessment of the dual career track model for custody/court services, as well as the feasibility of first assignments to patrol rather than jail facilities, as outlined in recommendations made by the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission (COC) in the "Report and Recommendations of the Special Counsel to Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission Regarding Deputy Gangs and Deputy Cliques in the Los Angeles County Sheriff Department¹."

In the February 2025 update to the recommendations outlined in the COC's report, the Department indicated that it is assessing this recommendation. As had been outlined in that response, the Department had previously instituted a dual track system and ultimately decided to discontinue its usage because lieutenants and sergeants with patrol experience proved to be valuable resources in the custody environment, due to their experience, enhanced investigative skills, and ability to mentor young deputies to become more well-rounded. Additionally, a greater number of patrol-trained personnel enhanced the ability of the Department to deploy field personnel during emergency situations. Furthermore,

¹ [1138014_DeputyGangsSpecialCounselReporttoCOC3.2.2023.PDF.PDF](#)

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Custody Services Division had sufficient interest in all ranks to maintain staffing consistency and continuity.

However, the Department is further evaluating this recommendation. In anonymously surveying four current Academy classes, the Department found a high level of interest in patrol assignments, with percentages of those interested in patrol ranging from 73.6 percent to 90.5 percent across the four current classes. As such, the Department has developed a proposal, outlined below, for a modified dual track system that would mitigate the operational issues identified while allowing for a direct-to-patrol path for willing recruits.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prior to Department Class 214 (May 6, 1983), there had been no requirement that Department members deploy to patrol divisions. In 1997, the Department introduced a Modified Academy Class concept, which required a ten-week academy to deploy to Custody Services Division but was not approved by the State of California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) for deployment to patrol. In 1999, the Department began offering its first POST-approved Academy Class. The remaining modified deputies were given the option to either return to the academy for additional deputy sheriff training or reclassify as custody assistants.

In 2015, then-Sheriff Jim McDonnell allowed sworn personnel to select, remain, and promote within custody or patrol as a career path, with a five-year commitment. In 2019, the commitment for patrol-certified supervisors in Custody Services was reduced from five to three years, and Court Services assignments were recognized as part of the custody career path. In 2021, the commitment of patrol-certified supervisors in custody was reduced from three years to two years, where it remains today.

CURRENT MODEL

The Department is a California POST Academy, which prepares recruits for patrol. Department Academy graduates attend a six-week jail orientation, and new deputies are deployed to custody assignments.

Upon completion of a custody assignment, trainees attend a three-week orientation to retrain for patrol. Patrol trainees then complete six months in the Field Training Program (FTP) and remain at their patrol station for the remainder of their one-year commitment, at a minimum. The assignment to patrol remains voluntary.

As has been highlighted in the COC's report, issues exist with the current model of deployment directly to custody assignments. The custody setting is governed by different policies and procedures than the patrol setting that POST academies train for. As such, there is risk of losing perishable skills during their time in custody assignments. To mitigate this issue, following custody assignments deputies attend patrol orientation.

Concerns with the current model include the fact that when deputies are ready to deploy to patrol, they may be at varying degrees of seniority, competency, enthusiasm, and commitment to a patrol assignment. Leaving the custody setting requires that deputies re-adjust to new policies and procedures and re-learn what was taught in the academy.

MODIFIED DUAL TRACK PROPOSAL

The Department has developed a proposal for a modified dual track model, which will allow for a portion of academy graduates to proceed to patrol or custody, depending on Departmental needs. For example, the distribution of an academy class might reflect 60 percent of recruits going to custody, and 40 percent to patrol.

The proposed model contemplates the modified dual track system going into effect one of two ways: (1) Once the existing transfer list is exhausted; or (2) based on dedicating a negotiated percentage of each Patrol School to academy graduates who will be going directly to patrol, based on the needs of the Department at that time.

The Department would select FTP stations within a patrol division, where the program will last 18 months. This will include six months of academy training, six months of patrol training, and six months at the patrol station upon successful completion of patrol training. Following the 18-month program, deputies would transfer to an assignment based on the needs of the Department for one year, after which the deputy would have the choice to remain in that assignment or submit a request to transfer back to a patrol assignment. The length of time for the transfer will depend on which station is requested.

While representing a shift in some aspects of the Department's current operations, implementation of this model is not anticipated to impact custody operations, and custody attrition would be offset by academy graduates. It would allow for academy graduates to select their career paths and retain the ability for custody deputies to shift to a patrol career path at any point during their careers.

CONCLUSION

While this proposal will require further discussions with labor and other partners, the format of this modified program would also improve the Department's ability to recruit new academy applicants, given that many elect to apply to other law enforcement agencies over the Department, due to the current custody requirement. Additionally, increasing the percentage of Department personnel with immediate patrol experience provides for a workforce that is more consistently trained to respond to major planned events, such as the upcoming Olympics and World Cup, and unanticipated emergencies or natural disasters.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

ROBERT G. LUNA, SHERIFF



APRIL L. TARDY
UNDERSHERIFF