



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HALL OF JUSTICE

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF



March 17, 2020

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT INMATE DEPOPULATION PLAN TO ADDRESS CORONAVIRUS

On March 4, 2020, Los Angeles (County) declared a public health emergency. This emergency proclamation came after health officials confirmed several cases of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) within the County.

Separately, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Department) has received inquiries from the Board, as well as a number of outside entities, including the Civilian Oversight Commission and the American Civil Liberties Union, with concerns about the Department's response to the additional challenges this community outbreak may pose in the current custodial environment.

The Department recognizes it has a duty along with our partners from Correctional Health Services (Department of Health Services) and the Department of Public Health to provide for the safety and wellbeing of individuals incarcerated in our jail system. Given the unique challenges the COVID-19 virus may place on our housing locations, Custody Services Division started developing and implementing plans to begin reducing the overall daily jail population at the end of February 2020, when it was determined we would need to prepare for anticipated future quarantine zones, as well as additional isolation space for any COVID-19 positive patients.

The Department's initial steps to help reduce the inmate population have consisted of accelerated releases for those within 30 days of the completion of their sentences, with approval of the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court, under the statutory authority of

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4024.1 PC. Additionally, we will now begin reducing the percentage of time served for our AB109/N3 sentenced inmates (Non-Violent, Non-Serious, Non-Sexual), as we have been required to do for Traditional County Sentenced Inmates over many years, in order to meet population control mandates under the Rutherford Decision.

The Sheriff will also be raising the minimum bail amount for the acceptance of misdemeanor bookings into the County jail system, rather than being released on a citation to appear, from \$25,000 to \$50,000 (excluding crimes of domestic violence).

We do not take any of these steps lightly, as we seek to reduce the population in a necessary, but also responsible, way which takes into account public safety.

Furthermore, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board had already passed a number of resolutions directing County stakeholders to focus on the "Care First, Jail Last" approach to justice. We believe these ongoing efforts to incorporate alternatives to incarceration, which the Department fully supports, will continue to have an impact on reducing the population moving forward, even once we are out of this current crisis.

The health and well-being of the Department's workforce and inmate population are of the utmost importance. As we demonstrated during the mumps outbreak in our jail system during the latter months of 2019, we will continue to work with our County health care partners to ensure the highest level of health and safety for all those entrusted to our care.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact either myself, or Chief Brendan J. Corbett, Custody Services Division General Population, at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Chase", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

BRUCE D. CHASE
ASSISTANT SHERIFF

AV:MEA:mea

(Custody Services Division/Population Management Bureau)

c: Board of Supervisors, Justice Deputies
Celia Zavala, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
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Timothy K. Murakami, Undersheriff
Brendan Corbett, Chief, Custody Division General Population
John P. Burcher, A/Chief of Staff
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Adam R. Wright, Deputy, ASD