



CITY OF LA HABRA

POLICE DEPARTMENT

September 15, 2015

Honorable Judge Glenda Sanders
Presiding Judge of the Orange County Superior Courts
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Dear Judge Glenda Sanders:

The La Habra Police Department received the Orange County Grand Jury Report regarding ***“The Mental Illness Revolving Door: A Problem for Police, Hospitals, and the Health Care Agency”***. The Department is pleased that the Grand Jury continues to focus its efforts to protect those most at risk and the systems in place at the County level. The Department is honored to provide the following responses.

The La Habra Police Department was requested to respond to the following Grand Jury Findings:

F.1. Deputy Sheriffs and police officers receive insufficient training on how to evaluate and handle the mentally ill in the field.

The respondent agrees with the finding.

F.2. Deputy Sheriffs and police officers receive insufficient training regarding Laura’s law.

The respondent agrees with the finding.

The La Habra Police Department was requested to respond to the following Grand Jury Recommendations:

R.1. All law enforcement officers should receive at least 40 hours of comprehensive crisis intervention training on how to handle and evaluate the mentally ill in the field with a periodic refresher training.

The respondent will not implement the recommendation because it is excessive and is not reasonable. The respondent agrees training in handling the mentally ill is needed for law enforcement; however, (40) hours is excessive and

brings police officers far beyond the scope of their duty to the mentally ill. This amount of training will be cost prohibitive as an unfunded mandate and a significant drain on staffing resources. Lastly, there are currently no training courses offered to law enforcement that in-depth into the mental health field. Police officers need to be viewed as the first level of triage for mentally ill patients and be aware of resources available to get the patients the help they need.

The La Habra Police Department sent our sworn staff to (4) hours of "Effectively Dealing with the Mentally Ill" put on by Embassy Consulting Services, LLC, in the fall of 2014. This training was beneficial to our police officers and received good reviews. Additionally, all of our newer officers, who just completed the police academy, received (6) hours of training on dealing with the mentally ill in their academy basic training.

R.2. All law enforcement officers should receive mandatory and specific training regarding Laura's Law. (F.2.)

The La Habra Police has trained a limited number of our sworn staff in Laura's Law and we plan on completing the rest of our sworn staff by mid 2016.

Sincerely,



Jerry Price
Chief of Police