

City of Anaheim
POLICE DEPARTMENT



September 24, 2015

Mr. Paul S. Borzcik
Orange County Grand Jury
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: Response to Grand Jury Report (The Mental Illness Revolving Door: A Problem for Police, Hospitals and the Health Care Agency)

Dear Mr. Borzcik:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Grand Jury Report, ***The Mental Illness Revolving Door: A Problem for Police, Hospitals, and the Health Care Agency***. Thorough in its research and analysis of this complex and pervasive issue, the report's findings and recommendations are on point, specific and highly relevant. In compliance with California Penal Code section 933.05 and per the instructions provided in the Grand Jury Report, the Anaheim Police Department is responding to Findings F.1 and F.2, and Recommendations R.1 and R.2.

Findings F.1 – *“Deputy Sheriffs and Police Officers receive insufficient training on how to evaluate and handle the mentally ill in the field.”*

Response: The Anaheim Police Department agrees that in general, the training provided to law enforcement officers is deficient in this particular area. Increasingly, police officers and deputy sheriffs are called upon to interact with individuals suffering from mental illness or who are in mental health crisis. These demanding and challenging situations require an approach tailored to the specific mental health issue presented; and the application of appropriate tactics and techniques to deescalate the incident if necessary and to ultimately take the correct course of action which leads to resolution and positive outcome for the individual.

Findings F.2 – *“Deputy Sheriffs and Police Officers receive insufficient training regarding Laura’s Law.”*

Response: The Anaheim Police Department agrees with this finding and concurs that the deficiency in training has led to a lack of awareness and knowledge regarding Laura’s Law among law enforcement professionals. An alternative to assist chronically and severely mentally ill individuals who generate repeated responses due to mental health crises, the involuntary outpatient treatment afforded via Laura’s Law serves as another effective tool for law enforcement.

Recommendation 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 periodic refresher training.”*

Response: While the Anaheim Police Department agrees that providing police officers and deputy sheriffs forty (40) hours of crisis intervention training would greatly enhance the service delivery level to this challenging population, the impact to Departmental operations to accommodate forty (40) hours for this training would be significant and untenable. Considerable and unanticipated overtime expense would be required to cover critical positions while officers receive the training, and the availability of personnel to fill those positions is not certain. Further, the recommendation does not specify whether the forty (40) hours includes academy curriculum, or consists completely of post-academy training. The Anaheim Police Department is committed to enhancing and expanding the training provided in this critical area, but will not implement this recommendation as currently presented.

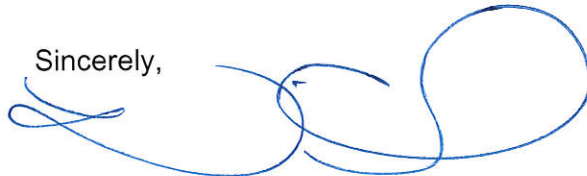
The Anaheim Police Department is eager and prepared to assist and participate in identifying and developing a training regimen that would serve the County as a whole while mitigating and minimizing the resulting staffing and budgetary burden.

Recommendation R.2 – *“All Law Enforcement Officers should receive mandatory and specific training regarding Laura’s Law.”*

Response: We agree with and support this recommendation. While not yet implemented, the Anaheim Police Department Training Section is evaluating the best manner in which to provide this training to officers. It is anticipated that all officers will receive this training within the following twelve (12) months.

In closing, I want to extend my personal appreciation to the Grand Jury members who dedicated their valuable time, talents and efforts on such an important issue affecting every community and every law enforcement agency in Orange County.

Sincerely,



RAUL QUEZADA
CHIEF OF POLICE