

**CITIZENS' LAW ENFORCEMENT REVIEW BOARD
POLICY RECOMMENDATION**

CREATE FENTANYL CANINE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

BACKGROUND:

From 2006 through 2020, 185 people died in San Diego County's jails. The rate of deaths in San Diego County's jails raised concerns about underlying systemic issues within the San Diego Sheriff's Department's (SDSD) policies, procedures, and practices. The California State Auditor (CSA) conducted an audit of the SDSD to determine the reasons for in-custody deaths; concluded that the SDSD failed to adequately prevent and respond to deaths of individuals in its custody; and made several recommendations pertaining to intake screenings, medical and mental health care, safety checks, and responses to medical emergencies.

A CLERB-commissioned study by Analytica Consulting in which overdose/accidental death rates of San Diego County Adult Detention Facilities inmates were compared to those from 11 other California counties revealed that San Diego County inmates have the highest overdose/accidental death rates. An inmate in San Diego is two times more likely to die in this manner than what is expected based on county mortality rates. San Diego County was the only county with a statistically significant excess number of overdose/accidental deaths. A review of drug-related causes of death for inmates over the past two years indicated that fentanyl, a synthetic opioid, contributed to most of those deaths.



As part of its drug interdiction efforts, the SDSD has trained and deployed a canine for the purpose of detecting fentanyl. As there are no documented policy or procedures (P&P) for the use of this specialized canine, CLERB recommends that SDSD update Detentions Services Bureau Policy I.87, entitled, "Detention Canine Program," and its Detentions Canine Manual to include said P&P. The P&P should indicate that the fentanyl canine will be used for searches of contraband in all areas; to conduct sniffs of all persons entering a facility to include visitors, inmates, and staff; and to conduct sniffs of persons already inside of a facility, to include visitors, inmates, and staff.

CLERB believes that all efforts to reduce the likelihood of in-custody deaths must be taken, to include those that would appear fiscally cost prohibitive or delay facility operations. CLERB is hopeful that the SDSD will pursue and obtain or be provided funding to fully train and deploy as many fentanyl canines as required to prevent fentanyl from being smuggled into the detention facilities and to identify persons and the methods used to do so. CLERB believes the value of human life outweighs any cost and is greater than any resulting operational delays.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Pursuant to Section 340.9(g) of the San Diego County Administrative Code, the Citizens' Law Enforcement Review Board (CLERB) shall have the authority to review and make recommendations on policies and procedures of the San Diego County Sheriff's Department and San Diego County Probation Department. As such, CLERB makes the following policy recommendations to the SDSD:

1. Update Detentions Services Bureau Policy I.87, entitled, "Detention Canine Program," and its Detentions Canine Manual to include said P&P. The P&P should indicate that the fentanyl canine will be used for searches of contraband in all areas; to conduct sniffs of all persons entering a facility to include visitors, inmates, and staff; and to conduct sniffs of persons already inside of a facility, to include visitors, inmates, and staff.

Submitted by:  Paul R. Parker III, Executive Officer	Date: 05-05-22	Reviewed by:  Lynn Setzler, Supervising Special Investigator	Date: 05-05-22
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