

CALIFORNIA **Sheriff**

CALIFORNIA STATE SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

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Association Mission Statement: To support the role of Sheriff as the Chief Law Enforcement Officer in each county and to speak as a collective statewide voice on matters of public safety.

Foundation Mission Statement: To provide education and training services to the 58 Elected Sheriffs of California, their departmental employees and other members of the California State Sheriffs' Association.



■ SHERIFF BRANDON BARNES
■ SUTTER COUNTY

Greetings from the California State Sheriff's Association (CSSA). As we head into Fall and the leaves begin to change, it's a reminder that change is inevitable and we must be adaptive as a profession. There is no shortage of challenges, and state and national issues tend to have an impact on many of the decisions being made at county levels.

The Office of the Sheriff is a nonpartisan position representing those constituents in our respective counties. To that end, sheriffs are a reflection of those they serve. Sheriffs share many of the same values, and they want their communities to be safe and enjoyed by all. It is the county sheriff that is the constant, and reliable, presence that will shape California's future.

In 2024, California passed Proposition 36 with almost seventy percent of the voters supporting enhanced penalties for some theft and drug related offenses. Sheriffs are already seeing the impacts with rising jail populations and a need for more community-based rehabilitative services. Not only did the state budget fail to properly fund Proposition 36, but there were no new dollars for public safety to help implement what is outlined in the law. Some may argue this is an attempt to see

Proposition 36 fail, regardless, it has left the sheriffs working diligently to find solutions and carry out the will of the voters.

The CSSA plays an important role in state legislation. During our current legislative cycle, there were roughly two-hundred and fifty bills introduced with some impact on public safety. While some of the bills enhance and support public safety, many of the bills, if signed into law, would further strain public safety resources. Taking a stance and monitoring legislation is an important part of the Office of the Sheriff. Implementing legislative outcomes can be both challenging and problematic but it is also part of what drives the sheriffs to be good stewards and uphold the Constitution.

While each day provides new challenges, it is also an opportunity for a better and safer tomorrow.

On behalf of the CSSA, I would like to thank everyone for their continued support. The sheriffs are privileged to serve and even during the most challenging of times, there is no greater calling than to serve our communities. God bless.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Brandon Barnes, *Sutter County*
CSSA President



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Dear CSSAF Supporter,

From **October 23–31**, the California State Sheriffs' Association Foundation (CSSAF) will partner with more than 100 organizations across California to sponsor **Red Ribbon Week**, the nation's largest and longest-running drug prevention campaign. Each year, this powerful initiative brings together parents, schools, law enforcement, and local businesses to raise awareness about the dangers of drug abuse and to encourage healthy, drug-free choices.

Today, fentanyl overdoses among young people are increasing at an alarming rate. Your support is more important than ever. By standing with CSSAF, you help your local Sheriff provide vital education and resources to protect children from the dangers of both illegal and prescription drug misuse.

This year's theme is:

"Life Is A Puzzle. Solve It Drug Free."

Enclosed, you'll find personalized address labels and Red Ribbon Week stickers as a token of our appreciation. Please use them during **Red Ribbon Week** and throughout the year to help spread the message that choosing a drug-free life can save lives.

Thank you for your continued commitment to building safer, healthier communities. Your partnership truly makes a difference.

Carmen Green,
Executive Director



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▪ **M. CARMEN GREEN**
▪ **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Welcome to the latest edition of the *California Sheriff Magazine.*

The California State Sheriffs' Association would once again like to thank you for your support! We would also like to express our thanks and grateful appreciation to the CSSA Corporate 100 Partners, Associate Members, Joint Members, Lifetime Members, and Business Members for their continued support. Your generous contributions continue to allow us to offer valuable education and training services to employees of the Sheriff's Office and provide them with the necessary resources and tools to perform their jobs, fight for public safety, and make a difference.

If you are interested in supporting CSSA please feel free to contact Executive Director Carmen Green at cgreen@calsheriffs.org, or Chelsea Pellow at cpellow@calsheriffs.org or at 916.375.8000 or visit our website at www.calsheriffs.org.

Thank you for your great support and we look forward to your continued partnership!

Red Ribbon Week is October 23 - 31, 2025. During Red Ribbon week the California State Sheriffs' Association Foundation (CSSAF) will unite with over 100 statewide organizations for this crucial seven-day campaign to help build drug-free communities and to raise awareness of the destructive consequences of drug abuse. This year's slogan is **"LIFE Is A Puzzle. Solve It Drug Free."** See page 5 for more details.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Domestic violence is a major concern for all of law enforcement.

Use the VINE (Victim Information and Notification Everyday) Program to register against an offender.

VINE is a statewide service sponsored by the California State Sheriffs' Association. VINE is free of charge, available 24/7/365 and is completely confidential.

VINE offers peace of mind to victims of crime by providing access to timely and reliable offender information. Victims have the ability to call a toll-free number 877.411.5588, visit www.vinelink.com, or use the VINELink mobile app to anonymously check on an offender's custody status. ✨

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▪ **CORY SALZILLO**
▪ **LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR**

The Legislature concluded the first year of its 2025-26 regular session on Saturday, September 13. This legislative year saw approximately 2,400 bills introduced, about 800 of which, at the time of this writing, are currently on the Governor's desk awaiting his signature or veto. The Governor has until October 13 to act on the bills presented to him.

During the first nine months of the session, CSSA identified nearly 400 bills with potential impact on sheriffs, law enforcement, and public safety. This year, California's Sheriffs worked with other law enforcement partners and sent to the Governor **AB 400** (Pacheco) which requires the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) to study and issue recommendations to the Legislature on the use of canines by law enforcement, and **AB 992** (Irwin) which revises prospective peace officer education requirements adopted as part of previous legislation to provide multiple pathways to satisfy degree or experience requirements.

Conversely, CSSA, as part of a broad law enforcement coalition, was able to defeat **AB 1231** (Elhawary), a dangerous bill that would have created an expansive new felony diversion program. This measure would have not only undermined the will of the voters by creating an end-run around the main crimes contained in Proposition 36, but it would also have allowed felony offenders to escape accountability by creating their own diversion plans to be approved by judges.

As has been the case in recent years, several problematic bills in the criminal justice arena were introduced in 2025. CSSA was able to defeat or otherwise assist in the stoppage of bills that would have that would have prohibited a business from disclosing precise geolocation information to a state or local government agency without a court order (**AB 322** (Ward)); prohibited law enforcement agencies from transporting a homeless individual on public property within a different jurisdiction to relocate that person without first coordinating shelter or long-term housing (**AB 820** (Pellerin)); deleted law enforcement's authority to remove or immobilize a vehicle that has been issued five or more unresolved parking violations (**AB 1022** (Kalra)); made it easier for persons involved in criminal activity to seek victim compensation (**AB 1100** (Sharp-Collins)); provided that a prior juvenile conviction for an offense committed when the person was less than 18 years of age shall not constitute a prior serious or violent felony conviction for the purposes of specified sentence enhancements (**AB 1279** (Sharp-Collins)); and limited the use of consent searches (**SB 277** (Weber Pierson)).

Unfortunately, given the sheer number of bad bills considered this year, several reached the Governor's desk. Despite these bills passing, we have asked the Governor to veto them. Among them are bills that will allow county boards of supervisors to increase jail inmate worker wages (**AB 248** (Bryan)); make civil service of process more costly for sheriffs' offices (**AB 747** (Kalra)); expand civilian review boards' access to peace officer personnel records (**AB 847** (Sharp-Collins)); prohibit sheriff-coroner offices from conducting death investigations on in-county in-custody deaths (**AB 1108** (Hart)); limit license plate reader data retention to 60 days (**SB 274** (Cervantes)); and prohibit law enforcement officers from wearing masks (**SB 627** (Wiener)).

While CSSA actively opposed several detrimental proposals, we also supported many positive bills that are before the Governor for his consideration. We supported legislation that would add key programming and duplicating devices to the existing burglary tool statute (**AB 486** (Lackey)); authorize law enforcement to remove e-bikes from roadways when they are operated under specified circumstances (**AB 875** (Muratsuchi)); increase the minimum custody time served by a person convicted of torture of a child 14 years of age or younger from seven years to 10 years; (**AB 1094** (Bains)); allow counties to create multidisciplinary personnel teams to facilitate mental health care of justice-involved individuals (**AB 1387** (Quirk-Silva)); provide that any person who willfully threatens to commit a crime in any school, or any place of worship, which will result in death or great bodily injury is guilty of a misdemeanor or felony (**SB 19** (Rubio)); expand the definition of "credible threats" in the crime of stalking to include threats to the safety of a victim's pet, service animal, emotional support animal, or horse (**SB 221** (Ochoa Bogh)); establish several violations and penalties relating to the use of signal jammers (**SB 701** (Wahab)); and authorize, until January 1, 2030, a separate process to involuntarily medicate individuals charged with a misdemeanor who have been found to be incompetent to stand trial (**SB 820** (Stern)).

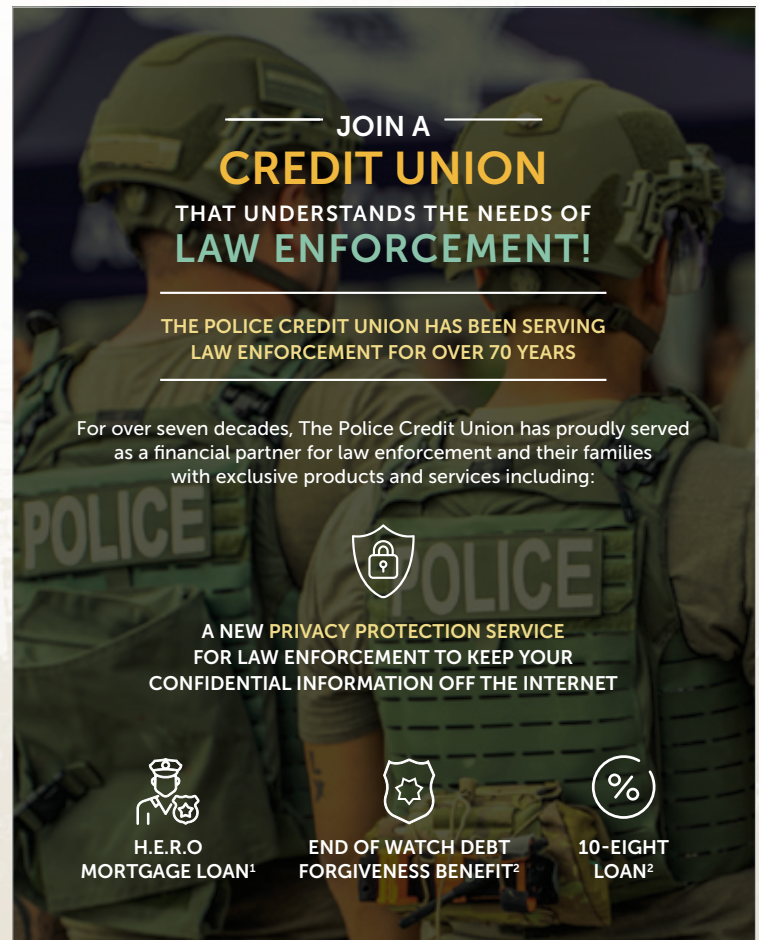
2025 LEGISLATIVE YEAR

The Legislature will reconvene for the second year of the 2025-26 session on Monday, January 5, 2026. While the legislature is in interim recess, it is the practice of the Legislature's policy committees, in preparation for the

coming legislative year, to hold informational hearings. These hearings, held throughout the state, can be a constructive opportunity to get stakeholders and field experts involved in discussions on policy issues impacting the state and our communities.

Thank you to all the sheriffs and their staff for their dialogue, collaboration, and tough decisions that come with shaping public safety policy for the state and advancing CSSA's legislative priorities. We could not be as successful as we are if we did not have the time, expertise, and insight of those we serve. ✨

Cory Salzillo, CSSA's Legislative Director, is a partner of the firm WPSS Group, a pre-eminent team of advisors on matters involving state and local government. The firm effectively influences public policy in a broad spectrum of public sector issues.



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■ JAMES TOUCHSTONE
■ GENERAL COUNSEL

“Mitigation of Liability Exposure in Officer-Involved Shootings”

In the recent case of *Est. of Hernandez v. City of L.A.*¹, an en banc panel of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals determined that although a police officer acted reasonably under the Fourth Amendment when firing the first four rounds at an individual armed with a knife and was approaching the officer, there was a triable issue of fact as to whether the use of deadly force was no longer reasonable when the suspect fell to the ground. This case highlights the necessity of continually assessing an incident to determine whether a suspect continues to present an imminent threat of serious bodily injury or death to a law enforcement officer or others, thus justifying the use of deadly force to stop that threat. The case also highlights the need to incorporate this concept into officer training in robust real-world scenarios.

BACKGROUND FACTS

In April 2020, Los Angeles Police Department (“LAPD”) officers McBride and Fuchigami were on patrol when they came upon a multi-vehicle collision, involving a black pickup truck. Officer McBride’s body camera footage recorded events that followed. As the officers exited their vehicle at the scene of the collision, the police radio broadcasted that “the suspect’s vehicle is a black Chevrolet truck” and “the suspect is male, armed with a knife.” Bystanders told the officers that a “crazy guy with a knife” was in the truck, threatening to kill himself. The officers instructed the bystanders to move back, and McBride drew her service weapon to the “low-ready” position. The police radio reported that the suspect was “armed with a knife, cutting himself . . . inside his vehicle.” McBride asked Fuchigami if they had “less lethal” force options.

The driver of the truck – later identified as Daniel Hernandez – climbed out of the truck through the window and temporarily disappeared from view. McBride called out to Hernandez: “Hey man, let me see your hands. Let me see your hands, man.” Hernandez emerged from behind the rear of the truck, approximately 43 feet from McBride.

As he rounded the truck, Hernandez began walking in McBride’s direction. He was holding something in his right hand—McBride initially could not tell what Hernandez was holding. The item turned out to be a box cutter. McBride backed up 10 feet. As she did so, she gestured with her hand for Hernandez to stop and ordered: “Stay right there. Drop the knife.” Hernandez continued to advance.

McBride repeated: “Drop the knife. Drop the knife.” Hernandez, still approaching, raised his fully extended arms to each side at roughly a 45-degree angle. He did not say anything. McBride pointed her gun at him. Hernandez took three more steps toward her, closing the distance between them to approximately 36 feet. McBride yelled “Drop it!” and without pausing fired two rounds at him.

Hernandez fell to the ground on his right side and yelled out something. He then rolled to the left into a position with his knees, feet, and hands on the pavement, facing down, and started to push himself up, though he did not continue walking toward McBride. McBride again yelled at Hernandez to “drop it” and fired another two rounds.

This second volley caused him to fall onto his back and curl up into a ball with his knees against his chest and his arms wrapped around them. As he rolled away from McBride onto his left side, she fired two more rounds. The third volley caused Hernandez to collapse on the ground and remain down. Hernandez died from his injuries.

The whole shooting sequence lasted approximately 6.2 seconds. Roughly 2.5 seconds elapsed between the first and second volleys and 1.4 seconds between the second and third volleys. The sixth shot caused an immediately fatal wound to his head. The next most serious injury, from the fourth shot, damaged his lung and liver but may have been survivable with immediate medical treatment.

The Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners found that McBride acted outside of the LAPD’s policy on lethal force when firing the fifth and sixth rounds. The policy permits officers to use lethal

force only when necessary, based on the totality of circumstances, “[t]o defend against an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury to the officer or another person.” The Board found that it was unreasonable to think Hernandez posed such a threat after the second volley because he “did not reposition himself from laying on his side to being” in a position “from which he could resume an advance toward [McBride] or others.”

Hernandez’s parents and his minor daughter (collectively, “Plaintiffs”) filed separate suits, alleging excessive force, which were consolidated by the District Court. The District Court granted summary judgment in favor of defendants on each of plaintiffs’ claims, concluding in part that McBride did not violate Hernandez’s Fourth Amendment rights because her use of lethal force was reasonable under the circumstances. Alternatively, the District Court ruled that McBride was entitled to qualified immunity because the law did not clearly establish that her actions constituted constitutionally excessive force.

A three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed in part, reversed in part, and remanded. The panel held that

the reasonableness of McBride’s final two shots was a triable issue of fact, and therefore the District Court erred in granting summary judgment on the state law claims at issue. However, the three-judge panel agreed with the District Court that McBride did not violate clearly established law by firing the third volley of bullets and thus was entitled to qualified immunity on Plaintiffs’ Fourth Amendment claim. A majority of the active, non-recused Ninth Circuit judges voted to rehear the case en banc.

DISCUSSION

The Ninth Circuit *en banc* reviewed the District Court’s summary judgment rulings de novo, including regarding whether qualified immunity should apply. The *en banc* panel first considered whether Officer McBride acted reasonably when firing at Hernandez. When she began firing, McBride had probable cause to suspect that Hernandez had caused a serious traffic collision and saw him moving toward her with a bladed weapon. McBride knew that Hernandez’s actions had likely already injured nearby motorists. McBride backed up several feet, and Hernandez continued walking toward her, refusing her commands to stop and drop his weapon. The Court



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found a reasonable officer in those circumstances could conclude that Hernandez posed a safety threat to the officer and the bystanders in the vicinity. The Court added that while McBride could have continued backing up and used the rear of a nearby sedan as cover, officers “need not avail themselves of the least intrusive means of responding to an exigent situation.” *Scott v. Henrich*, 39 F.3d 912, 915 (9th Cir. 1994). The en banc panel concluded that McBride reasonably began shooting at Hernandez.

The Court next considered whether at some point thereafter McBride’s continued fire might have become unreasonable. The Court explained that “if police officers are justified in firing at a suspect in order to end a severe threat to public safety, the officers need not stop shooting until the threat has ended.” *Plumhoff*, 572 U.S. at 777. However, it is a “different case” if the officer “initiate[s] a second round of shots after an initial round ha[s] clearly incapacitated [the suspect] and ha[s] ended any threat.” *Plumhoff*, 572 U.S. at 777. The en banc panel observed that in *Zion v. County of Orange*, 874 F.3d 1072, 1076 (9th Cir. 2017), the Ninth Circuit held that under “long-settled Fourth Amendment law,” “the use of deadly force against a non-threatening suspect is unreasonable,” including “continued force against a suspect who has been brought to the ground.” “[T]erminating a threat doesn’t necessarily mean terminating the suspect.” *Id.* A suspect who “is on the ground and appears wounded . . . may no longer pose a threat; a reasonable officer would reassess the situation rather than continue shooting.” *Id.*

The en banc panel recounted events after the first two-shot volley. Hernandez fell to the ground. McBride paused firing and again ordered Hernandez to drop his knife. He ignored her command and, despite being on the ground, reoriented himself in her direction and had risen halfway to a standing position when McBride again fired at him. While Hernandez had not yet resumed walking toward

her, and he may have yelled out in pain rather than rage, he was not yet incapacitated. Thus, a reasonable officer could conclude that he continued to present an imminent threat at the time McBride fired her second volley, i.e. rounds three and four. Accordingly, the en banc panel determined that as a matter of law, Officer McBride acted reasonably when firing the first four rounds at Hernandez.

However, the en banc panel determined that a reasonable jury could find that after the second volley, the immediate threat posed by Hernandez had ended. The en banc panel stated that the Ninth Circuit’s earlier decision in *Zion* clearly established for several years that an officer cannot reasonably “continue shooting” a criminal suspect who “is on the ground,” “appears wounded,” and “shows no signs of getting up” unless the officer first “reassess[es] the situation”—“particularly . . . when the suspect wields a knife rather than a firearm”—because the suspect “may no longer pose a threat.” *Zion*, 874 F.3d at 1076. And, as in *Zion*, a jury could reasonably conclude that McBride “could have sufficiently protected [her]self and others” after Hernandez fell by pointing her gun at him “and pulling the trigger only if [he] attempted to flee or attack.” *Id.* As such, the court denied McBride qualified immunity as to her last two shots.

Several judges dissented, with some noting that six shots over six seconds did not trigger a duty to reassess the risk Hernandez posed, particularly where he remained armed and in motion during that entire time. Another judge noted that, under the totality of the circumstances, McBride did not use excessive force in stopping an obvious threat. The judge explained that McBride had no reasonable opportunity to ensure her safety or the safety of the many civilians surrounding Hernandez in the short time.

Force Science recently published an article discussing the outcome of a study they conducted examining reaction times to signals to individuals to stop shooting. The results were somewhat telling. “Using a validated VirTra V-100 shooting simulator, 113 participants—most of them young, healthy, and without firearms experience—were instructed to shoot at a target that turned green (start) and stop immediately when it turned red (stop). There were **no moving threats, no distractions, and no ambiguity.**” [Emphasis added.]

The article goes on to note, “[t]he environment was intentionally controlled and simple. Participants were standing 15 feet from the screen in a well-lit auditorium, armed with a CO₂-powered Glock simulator designed to mimic recoil and trigger feel. They had clear, verbal, and visual instructions: shoot fast and accurately when the target turns green, and stop immediately when it turns red.

Despite this ideal scenario, **participants fired an average of 2.18 additional rounds after the red “stop” signal was given.** [Emphasis added.] The fastest observed time for a post-stop shot was 0.11 seconds, with the last shot coming an average of 0.36 seconds after the stop cue, and some as late as 0.41 seconds.

Even with no stress, no confusion, and no decision-making demands beyond color recognition, stopping wasn't immediate."

In explaining these results, the article provided additional information. Specifically, in answering the question of why this happens, the author noted, "There are multiple cognitive and physiological contributors:

1. Stop-Signal Reaction Time (SSRT): This is the time it takes to suppress an already initiated action. Once the 'go' process reaches a certain stage—especially under stress—it may be too late for the stop process to interrupt it. Even a clear decision to stop firing can result in additional rounds being discharged.
2. Psychological Refractory Period (PRP): The brain can only process one stimulus-response pairing at a time. If the decision to fire is still being processed, the decision to stop gets queued behind it.
3. Motor Execution Delay: Even after the brain makes the decision to stop, the body still has to carry out the command—a process that can take 100–300 milliseconds depending on muscle engagement and biomechanical constraints."

In light of these concerns and scientific realities, one particularly troubling aspect of the *Hernandez* case was the pace of the event that confronted Officer McBride. The entire shooting incident lasted only seconds. The case places what appears to be an unreasonable burden on an officer to assess a suspect's actions in a manner that is difficult for any human being to meet, particularly in the heat of

such a confrontation in the field. An officer does not have the luxury of pausing a situation or rewinding and playing it forward in slow motion.

As noted in the Force Science study, where the participants were not facing extrinsic threats or external stimuli and background considerations, they continued to fire even after the red stop signal was displayed. The additional environmental concerns that officers face in the field make the cognitive task of determining when to stop firing even more difficult, and therefore, delayed. In sum, expecting instantaneous cessation of fire is unrealistic. It is therefore critical to focus training on decision-making and movement dynamics under pressure to better assist a law enforcement officer's ability to respond to the real-world dynamics he or she is likely to face in the field during an officer-involved shooting incident. ✨

The information contained in this article is for general use and does not constitute legal advice. This article is not intended to create, and receipt and review of it does not constitute, an attorney-client-relationship with the author.

ⁱ 139 F.4th 790 (9th Cir. 2025).

² <https://www.forcescience.com/2025/07/new-study-time-to-stop-why-even-the-most-disciplined-officers-cant-stop-faster-than-humanly-possible/>; Lon Bartel, M.S., PES, TSAC-F/Force Science News



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▪ SHERIFF BOB JONSEN
▪ SANTA CLARA COUNTY

The Missing Link in Workforce Wellness: COMPASSION AS A CORE COMPETENCY

In law enforcement, we are trained to be vigilant, resilient, and mission focused. I have written past articles and hopefully everyone has begun to embrace the science of sleep, cardiovascular health, and proactive lab testing to extend our health span and improve performance. But there's one critical element of wellness that remains untapped - compassion. Not just compassion for the communities we serve, but for ourselves and each other.

Compassion is often misunderstood as a soft skill, but in reality, it's a strategic advantage. In *Awakening Compassion at Work*, Monica Worline and Jane Dutton argue that compassion is a quiet power that elevates people and organizations. Compassionate workplaces experience higher morale, lower turnover, and greater resilience in the face of adversity. In our profession, where trauma exposure is routine and emotional suppression is normalized, compassion can be a lifeline—not a liability.

Thupten Jinpa, author of *A Fearless Heart* and the architect of the Compassion Cultivation Training (CCT) program at Stanford University, writes that compassion is not a weakness, but a courageous act. Drawing from neuroscience and contemplative traditions, he shows how compassion activates the parasympathetic nervous system, reduces stress hormones, and fosters deeper human connection. As someone trained in CCT through the Compassion Institute, I've seen firsthand how these practices can help law enforcement professionals reconnect with their purpose, regulate their nervous systems, and build emotional resilience. CCT isn't about being soft, it's about being sustainably strong. I will be the first to acknowledge that if I hadn't participated in CCT many years ago, the relationships most important to me would have suffered because I was. It was a simple question posed during the training that changed so much for me – What do you truly want in your life?

Dr. Kristin Neff, a pioneer in the field of self-compassion, defines it as “treating ourselves with the same kindness, understanding, and concern we would show to a good friend.” Her research shows that self-compassion enhances emotional resilience, reduces burnout, and improves motivation, not by lowering standards, but by changing how we relate to failure and stress. For law enforcement

professionals, me included, this means acknowledging the emotional toll of the job without judgment and creating space for recovery. Thankfully, I dove headfirst to help prioritize what really matters in my life. Cultivating compassion has transformed my work and personal relationships, as well as continually inspire me to continue to serve our communities. All of us have heard from our employees, the backbone of our departments, how emotional strain, lack of support, and unspoken stress are taking a toll. Their voices are aligned with what national surveys are now confirming: a vast majority of Americans report feeling overwhelmed and believe that more emotional support is needed to manage stress in their daily lives. This is not just a public health issue, it's a workforce readiness issue. If we want to build a workforce that is not only fit for duty but also fit for life, we must embrace compassion as a core competency. Because the truth is, compassion doesn't make us weaker, it makes us last longer!

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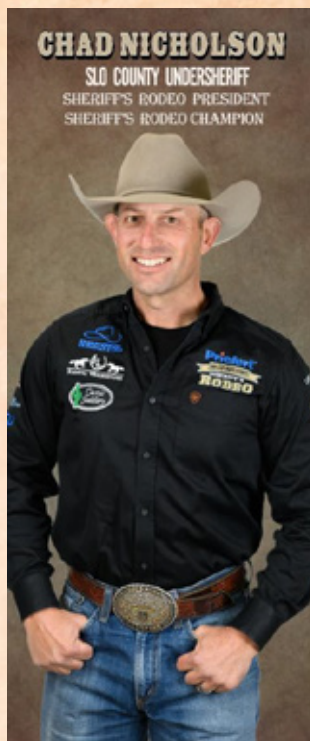
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~The SLO County Sheriff's Rodeo Story~

The story of the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Rodeo is about much more than cowboys, cowgirls, and arena lights. It's a reflection of our community values, our deep western heritage, the strength of law enforcement bonds, and what happens when people come together to celebrate something bigger than themselves. What started as an idea has grown into a tradition that continues to unite and inspire, year after year.

In 2019, Sheriff Ian Parkinson approached Chad Nicholson with the idea of putting on the first-ever SLO County Sheriff's Rodeo. Chad, a sixth-generation rancher, team roper, and rodeo champion, had produced roping events professionally across the country before becoming a Deputy Sheriff. He jumped at the opportunity to bring rodeo and law enforcement together in one event.

Every great rodeo needs a great committee, and early believers like Chuck and Vikki Houck provided the foundation. Rodeo Vice President Nate Paul soon joined, bringing years of rodeo knowledge and helping drive the effort forward.

Chad and Nate had already spent years working together in law enforcement — from night shifts in South County to assignments on the Special Enforcement Detail and as Sheriff's Detectives. On long nights in the patrol car, they'd talk rodeo production. Now, that dream had a real path forward.

Planning the first rodeo was a true grassroots effort. Deputies and department members volunteered their time and skills to handle logistics, operations, marketing, sponsorships, and merchandise. It was a small team, but it had big vision — and momentum was building. Then came 2020. COVID-19 hit, and the launch was delayed.





Planning never stopped, and hopes shifted to 2021. The first sponsorship opportunities were offered — and the community stepped up in a major way, showing overwhelming support for the concept and the mission behind it. But as the pandemic dragged on, the tough decision was made to postpone once again. The rodeo would have to wait until 2022.

What happened next confirmed that this was something special: every single one of the original sponsors chose to roll their support into the following year. Not a single refund was requested. That unwavering commitment is what made the first Sheriff's Rodeo a reality.

In May 2022, the inaugural event finally came to life — and over 5,000 people packed the stands to be a part of it. Since then, the SLO Sheriff's Rodeo has grown rapidly, now drawing more than 8,000 fans to the rodeo performance and selling out the Paso Robles Events Center. The event features top rodeo athletes, a Friday night kick-off concert, and a Saturday night post-rodeo concert with some of Nashville's stars — including Easton Corbin, Annie Bosko, and Filmore.

But this rodeo is about more than entertainment. It's about community. It's about honoring our first responders. And thanks to proceeds from the event, the Sheriff's Rodeo Foundation is able to purchase critical equipment and provide support to those who protect and serve.

We're proud of what this event has become — and more proud of what it represents: law enforcement and community standing shoulder to shoulder, celebrating the western way of life, and building something lasting together. And every year, we're committed to making it even better. Please join us on May 8-9, 2026 as we celebrate year five of the SLO Sheriff's Rodeo. Visit us online at www.slosheriffsrodeo.com





FREEDOM BRAIDERS

▪ SHERIFF YESENIA SANCHEZ, ALAMEDA COUNTY

The Re-Entry and Support Services (RESS) Unit, of the Alameda County Sheriff's Office, and Five Keys School partnered together to bring the Freedom Braiders program to the female population at Santa Rita Jail.

The RESS Unit partners with several community-based organizations that play a vital role in providing services that aim to help individuals develop skills, gain employment and connect with their communities. We needed to increase our efforts in providing programs to our incarcerated female population and Freedom Braiders allowed us to provide an opportunity that the female population requested, the field of cosmetology.

This program equips women with braiding skills, essential business knowledge, cognitive-behavioral skills, and strategies for reentry planning. Through hands-on learning, journaling, and postreentry referrals, participants gain pathways to economic independence and personal transformation. The program focuses on breaking cycles of economically driven crimes, interrupting generational patterns of incarceration, and empowering participants to create lasting change in their lives and communities. This program allowed our female population to learn new and innovative opportunities to become entrepreneurs and build on their skills outside of custody. Our goal is to prevent individuals from re-





offending and being re-incarcerated. If they can build their skills and create job opportunities for themselves, the less likely they will return to incarceration.

This was a trauma-informed program that assisted these students address some of their trauma. It was a very interactive and creative program with a holistic approach which allows the empowerment of women. This program allowed the students to focus on a future goal when they get out of custody and hopefully start their own businesses or partner with community organizations and private businesses that could use their experience and knowledge. By providing programs like Freedom Braiders, we are providing opportunities for our incarcerated population to create economic opportunities to break the cycle of economically driven crimes.

The RESS Unit offers programs and services designed to help incarcerated individuals prepare for release, such as vocational training, educational programs, and support services. Freedom Braiders is one of many programs that assist these students in preparing for release with new skills and possibilities of future employment. ✨

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DESIGNING FOR SUCCESS: HOW INNOVATION ELEVATED A SHERIFF'S OFFICE HEADQUARTERS PROJECT



Building-wide access to natural light was critically important for this project. Image courtesy of Dewberry.

Some facilities are built for the needs of today. Others are built for the needs of tomorrow.

Once completed, the Lake County Sheriff's Office headquarters will address the needs of the next half century or more.

A SENSE OF URGENCY

This forward-looking project began in 2019, when in a land swap with the state, the county acquired the former Lakeport Armory to serve as the new hub for the sheriff's office. Formerly occupied by the National Guard, the facility had been vacant for about a decade but stood in a prime location next to the county jail and the Emergency Operations Center, both of which are run by the sheriff's office. The ensuing project was both novel and necessary: repurposing an outdated facility to seamlessly house inward-facing departments alongside community-facing spaces.

The existing sheriff's office facility lacks office capacity to hold all its staff. In fact, detectives, patrol, investigations, dispatch, finance, and records are dispersed across five locations. The resulting inefficiencies—such as staff driving long distances to meet, collaborate, and conduct business, especially during emergencies—are costly, especially given the county's approximately 1,300 square miles of terrain. By working side-by-side rather than across town or even several towns away, the department would be well-positioned for success and improved efficiencies.

HIRING THE RIGHT ARCHITECT

The county and sheriff's office understood that it was essential to hire an architecture firm with expertise designing public safety facilities, experience anticipating challenges, and a track record for recommending solutions their clients couldn't have imagined. So, when Dewberry was brought on as the architect, the team invited key stakeholders to share what they thought would make this project successful. By understanding top priorities at the outset, the firm could aim to design a building that addressed each one.

Now that the facility is under construction, these top priorities—which the architecture team refers to as the critical success factors—are being tracked throughout the project's lifecycle. These include simple, reliable building systems that are easy to maintain and efficiently regulate temperature, humidity, and air quality. Other ingredients for success included durable finishes, as well as installing hard floors rather than carpets in common areas.

FACILITATING FUTURE EXPANSION

Some priorities compelled the project team to look beyond common design principles for answers. For example, the sheriff's office wanted flexible spaces in the new headquarters that would allow for potential staff expansion. Although accustomed to working separately, the sheriff's office is committed to collaborating in the same building and campus going forward. The question wasn't, "how do we make sure this facility meets our needs today," but rather, "how do we create a space that we won't outgrow in the coming years."

This led to a recommendation by the design team to transform part of the armory's warehouse space into a usable second floor, which could be easily repurposed later depending on future needs. Since the project program already had been finalized, this mid-project shift first required approval from Lake County Public Works, which financed the whole project. Given that this was not part of the original budget, the public works department had to receive loan permission from the Board of Supervisors to fund the add-on.

The pitch was compelling: investing in an enlarged building's footprint would cost much more money in the future and would threaten operational efficiencies caused by staff disruptions during



The headquarters was designed to facilitate community access while simultaneously protecting confidential information and other sensitive materials. Image courtesy of Dewberry.

construction. Transforming the armory would lead to maximized value. The board agreed and approved the loan.

PRIORITIZING DAYLIGHTING

Daylighting was one of the most important critical success factors. Studies have shown sizable and wide-ranging benefits of natural light in workplaces, from better health to better moods. It also has been found to improve productivity through boosts in short-term memory, focus, and energy. For example, in a controlled 2018 study measuring the effects of office daylight, workers with more access to natural lighting were 56.5% less likely to suffer headaches than those with less access to natural lighting. Additionally, those enjoying less natural lighting were 225% more likely than their counterparts to experience office drowsiness.

The financial impact is clear: healthier and more productive workers take fewer sick days and get more done. Sometimes natural light in offices can even reduce utility costs. Put it all together, and it's easy to see why access to daylight was essential.

Given the emphasis the project team placed on daylighting, the second-floor warehouse space posed a challenge, as it was situated in the middle of the building. The design team developed a solution, modifying the design to allow ample natural light to reach the first floor without compromising the upstairs layout or functionality.

A FOCUS ON COMMUNITY

The sheriff's office exists because of the community and not apart from the community. They were eager to include areas for the public and community space in the design. With this in mind, the second floor is more than a build-out space and a training room for the sheriff's office staff, rather it's a meeting place for community

members. While secure rooms to store sensitive materials are essential and incorporated into the final design, creating welcoming spaces for the public makes this building much more than a traditional public safety facility.

Using the built environment to bring police and community together reflects the forward-thinking determination of Lake County stakeholders who aspired to build a structure that would endure for generations.

The 26,000 square foot, \$20-million headquarters is currently under construction and is expected to open in 2027. ✨

Sheriff Luke Bingham began his career with the Lake County Sheriff's Office in 1998 and was sworn in as Sheriff-Coroner to lead the Office in January 2025. He previously served the County as Sergeant in 2015, Lieutenant in 2019, and Undersheriff in 2024.

Patti Esposito is the Senior Project Manager of the new Lake County Sheriff's Administration Facility, working in close collaboration with Sheriff-Coroner Bingham for the design of the project.

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A black and white portrait of Sheriff Charlie Byrd, an African American man in a suit and tie, looking directly at the camera. A flag is partially visible on the left side of the frame.

CALIFORNIA SHERIFFS HISTORY

SISKIYOU COUNTY

HONORING A TRAILBLAZER: SHERIFF CHARLIE BYRD'S ENDURING LEGACY

▪ SHERIFF JEREMIAH LARUE, SISKIYOU COUNTY

When people in Siskiyou County talk about Sheriff Charlie Byrd, they rarely begin with his title. They talk about his steady presence, his humility, and the way he carried himself. Yet history reminds us that his story reaches far beyond one county. In 1986, he became the first African American ever elected sheriff in California. He achieved that milestone not through headlines or identity politics, but by quietly earning the trust of his neighbors.

Charlie Byrd's journey began in the timber town of Weed beneath the shadow of Mount Shasta. His parents came west from Louisiana in search of opportunity, and Byrd absorbed their work ethic early. He graduated from Weed High School in 1965, played football, attended College of the Siskiyous, and soon chose a career in law enforcement.

In 1967, he joined the Weed Police Department as a reserve officer. Two years later, he was hired full-time, and in 1975, at only 27 years old, he became Chief of Police. At the time, he was one of the youngest chiefs in California.

Byrd ran for sheriff in 1986 on a message of experience, vision, and fairness. Voters in one of the state's most rural and conservative counties elected him decisively. Reflecting later, he told the Los Angeles Times, "People judged me on my past performance, not on the color of my skin. They know me. I ran on my record." He was highly respected throughout the state and served as the President of the California State Sheriff's Association in 1997-1998.

From 1987 to 2003, Sheriff Byrd guided Siskiyou County through a period of modernization. He helped form the Siskiyou County Inter-Agency Narcotics Task Force, created a Domestic Violence Response Team, and expanded the detective bureau. He introduced updated communications systems and made training and professionalism central to the agency's culture.

Inside the department, Byrd's motto was simple but powerful: "We Can." It captured his belief that no challenge was too large when met with teamwork and commitment. That phrase still resonates as a reminder of what leadership can inspire.

What many remember most is not the programs but the person. Sheriff Byrd managed crises without raising his voice. He carried authority with calm confidence. He also believed law enforcement should stay rooted in community life. He served with the Weed Rotary Club, Habitat for Humanity, Weed Baptist Church, the Siskiyou Food Bank, and the College of the Siskiyous Foundation. Those roles kept him close to the people he served.

In 1998, a traffic stop revealed an open container in his vehicle. Byrd did not minimize it. "I screwed up. I'm embarrassed," he admitted publicly. Voters re-elected him that same year, showing that candor and credibility outweighed a single mistake. His willingness to own responsibility remains one of the defining marks of his leadership.

After losing a re-election bid in 2002, Byrd passed away unexpectedly on September 23, 2003, at only 56 years old. His death was deeply felt in Siskiyou County and beyond. Congressman Wally Herger honored him on the floor of the United States House of Representatives as "a quiet giant of a man with a heart that contained only the best for Siskiyou."

Today, his portrait hangs in the Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office. It is not only a tribute to the first Black sheriff elected in California but also a reminder of a leader who believed in progress, accountability, and respect. For those of us who follow, his example is both inspiration and challenge: to lead with character, to stay connected to our communities, and to remember that true legacy is built on trust earned over time. ✨



JAIL MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL PLANNING: MANAGING THROUGH COMPLEXITIES

▪ SHERIFF KELLY MARTINEZ, SAN DIEGO COUNTY

Managing the maintenance needs of multiple jail facilities is no small task. The safety, security, and functionality of systems and structures required to operate jails in any jurisdiction can affect the safety, health and well-being of staff and incarcerated people. Properly maintaining detention facilities is further challenged by resource limitations and regulatory requirements.

The San Diego County Sheriff's Office is planning for the replacement of our jail in Vista, California, and the complexities around multi-jail maintenance has never been clearer. Strategic planning and significant investments are needed in jail facilities to ensure the health and safety of people who work and live there, as well as being able to reduce facility maintenance costs.

We are working in partnership with the County to complete a master planning document for construction of a new Vista Detention Facility, the oldest of our seven jails. There have been several recurring themes during this planning process that stand out as lessons learned and best practice in both facility maintenance and capital planning for detention facilities.

ESTABLISH A VISION

The vision for the new Vista Detention and Re-entry facility is to prioritize public safety by emphasizing programming and mental health support, positive behavior change, reducing recidivism, and encouraging staff wellness. Establishing a vision and communicating it to those involved in the capital or major maintenance project is a great first step. Challenging the team to think about the outcomes that will be achieved through the investments in construction will

keep everyone on the same page. We started by re-naming Vista Detention Facility to Vista Detention and Re-entry facility, reflecting our priority to invest in people and to remember our purpose, which is to make lives better.

Managing through Complexities with Aging Infrastructure

Old infrastructure is a common issue for detention facilities. Many jails were built decades ago, and the systems in place throughout these facilities are often outdated and broken. From plumbing to electrical and HVAC systems, jails age more rapidly than other facilities resulting in a breakdown of equipment and systems. The Vista Detention Facility was built in 1972 and expanded in 1988. There are structural and construction deficiencies in the current facility and much of the equipment is old and should be replaced. But Vista is not unique. The average age of our seven jails is thirty years. Frequent maintenance emergencies result in operational stress on staff who regularly create "work arounds" to accomplish day to day duties.

SECURITY CONCERNS

Security is a top priority in jails and the maintenance of the facilities and equipment that keep people safe is another aspect of complexity. Security systems, surveillance cameras, body scanners, locking mechanisms, and perimeter fencing require regular maintenance. The failure of any of these systems can lead to security breaches.

The Vista Detention Facility needs to maintain and keep operational its security systems while a new facility is built. San Diego County does not have the resources or facilities to move



700+ incarcerated people to other jails in the County to complete construction of a new jail, so building from the “ground up” while still operating the current facility is our only option.

One of the major themes as we consider the current Vista Detention Facility master plan is the challenge and importance of maintaining “swing space” in our jail system to accommodate major jail renovations where aging infrastructure often requires repair and replacement.

STAFFING AND RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS

When a facility has insufficient skilled maintenance personnel or a lack of financial resources, it can cause facility operations staff to focus on responding to urgent repairs instead of routine upkeep.

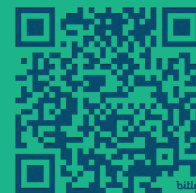
When this happens, staff tend to be reactive rather than proactive which increases costs and employee stress and decreases morale among staff. Like many older jails, Vista Detention Facility was not built to house the number of people for the length of stay it currently holds, and staff must find ways to creatively work around the facility design. Recruiting and retaining skilled tradespeople, investing in preventive maintenance, and designing new detention facilities for future, not current, needs will create a recipe for success.

FACILITY ASSESSMENTS INFORM INVESTMENTS

San Diego County Sheriff’s Office partners with the County’s Department of General Services to create an annual Major Maintenance Improvement Plan. Assessing the current condition of each facility helps in determining where to allocate resources and to plan for future maintenance needs. San Diego County’s Department of General Services performed a system wide assessment of all jail facilities, and the Vista Detention Facility was identified in the County’s 2023 Detention Facility Strategic Framework Plan for replacement. Facility assessments inform investments and justify resource requests.



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HOLISTIC APPROACH

The Vista Detention and Re-entry Facility master planning process has included significant collaboration between stakeholders including Sheriff's Office and Department of General Services staff through extensive stakeholder interviews, site visits, and design charettes to develop a comprehensive space needs program. Diversity of perspective is encouraged and the investment of time in collecting feedback from so many stakeholders will be reflected in the quality of the new Vista jail once it is funded and built.

BALANCING IMMEDIATE NEEDS WITH LONG-TERM GOALS

While it is important to address urgent maintenance needs, it is also important to plan long-term and make investments that will provide value and cost savings over time. This includes a balance between short-term repairs and investments in preventive maintenance and future capital needs. The Vista Detention and Re-entry Facility master plan includes a vision and long-range projection for future expansion, as population projections for the new facility show an average daily population of 1,056 people by the year 2044, an increase of 300 people compared to today's average daily population. In today's constrained fiscal environment, weighing phased construction with increasing costs becomes a quandary.

The new Vista Detention and Re-entry Facility will bring programming and mental health services to the housing units, rather than consolidating programming and mental health services in a central area of the jail. When the time comes, the new Vista Detention and Re-entry facility will have ample space and programming to allow physical and mental health professionals to provide much-needed care for the incarcerated people within the facility. We have planned sufficient space for educational and rehabilitative services, which will ultimately lead to better outcomes and improved public safety.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

It is important for detention facilities to strive for continuous improvement in facility maintenance. This means regularly reviewing and updating maintenance plans, investing in staff, planning for capital improvements, including replacement of aging jails, and staying up to date with new technologies and best practices in the industry.

Thoughtful planning and investment will not only lead to cost savings but will also contribute to safer detention systems which ultimately benefits the whole community. ✨



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Pictured left to right – Carmen Green, CSSA Executive Director, Lacey Archer, Cody Aleshire, and Undersheriff McMechan (Ret.), Madera County Sheriff's Office.

2025 JOHN SULLY AWARD WINNER

The California State Sheriffs' Association (CSSA) and the 58 elected sheriffs of California are very pleased to congratulate Cody Aleshire and Lacey Archer on being our 2025 recipients of the California State Sheriffs' Association Foundation (CSSAF) Second-in-Command "John Sully" Scholarship.

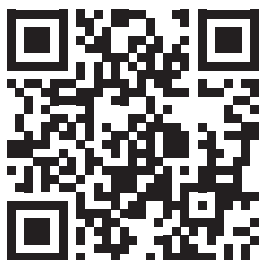
This scholarship was created to honor the memory of former Sonoma County Undersheriff John Sully. "Sully" as he was known had a distinguished 30-year law enforcement career. He was dependable, enthusiastic, fair and trustworthy. He cared about people and worked hard to make their lives better. Sully loved to laugh-and make others laugh-and he had an infectious smile. He fought a valiant 5-year battle with kidney cancer with much courage, strength, and dignity. Sully is remembered with great fondness and respect by those who were fortunate enough to know and love him.

Undersheriff McMechan, of the Madera County Sheriff's Office was the 2024 recipient of the Second-in-Command "John Sully" Memorial Award. He is the eighth recipient of this award, intended to honor a Second-in-Command who has demonstrated outstanding performance. After being selected Undersheriff McMechan was given the responsibility of advertising the scholarship opportunity within his county.

Cody plans to major in Computer Science with the goal of becoming a software developer, while Lacey intends to pursue a degree in Psychology with aspirations of becoming a Forensic Psychologist. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to both of our outstanding recipients!

We wish you both well in all your future endeavors! 🌟

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California State Sheriffs' Association Foundation Membership Program

Individuals and Businesses who want to take a proactive approach to support public safety in their communities may join the California State Sheriffs' Association Foundation (CSSAF). CSSAF is entirely funded by the generous contributions and support from our members. We are a qualified, non-profit organization under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code, which means that your donations qualify as tax deductions. The sheriffs of California have full control and direction of all association operations and activities.

Individual Membership Levels

ASSOCIATE, STUDENT & RECENT GRADS, & JOINT MEMBERS

- ★ Personalized membership card
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- ★ One-year subscription to California Sheriff

LIFETIME & JOINT LIFETIME MEMBERS

- ★ Personalized plastic member card
- ★ Metal license plate holder
- ★ Two Bumper stickers
- ★ Name recognition as a Lifetime Member in California Sheriff
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- ★ Lifetime Member specific merchandise

Business Membership Levels

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- ★ Membership Plaque (plaque size and star color depends on membership level)
- ★ Membership cards
- ★ Two Bumper sticker/window decals
- ★ One-year subscription to California Sheriff
- ★ Partner listing on our website, calsheriffs.org (Gold Members Only)
- ★ Partner listing with your website link on our website, calsheriffs.org (Platinum Members Only)

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Please detach the form and mail.

2025 Membership Form



Please check the membership level you wish to join or which you would like to renew your current membership at:

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(Renewal rate will be at business level joined)

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CSSAF Merchandise

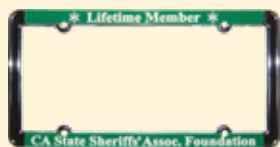
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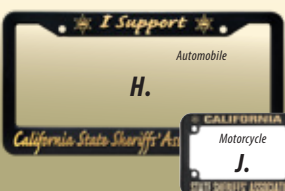
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D	Belt Buckle		\$40	
E	CSSA K9 Plush Dogs		\$25	
F	Challenge Coin		\$10	
FF	CSSA Ornament		\$15	
G	Lapel Pin		\$6	
H	License Plate Frame		\$10	
I	Lifetime Member Metal License Plate Frame		\$20	
J	Motorcycle License Plate Frame		\$10	
K	Star Lapel Pin		\$5	
L	Baseball Cap		\$15	
M	Black Flexfit Hat with Black Logo		\$45	
N	Black Trucker Hat with Black Logo		\$40	
O	Black Beanie With Black Logo		\$25	
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