

County of Santa Clara

Office of the Sheriff

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MEMORANDUM

Laurie Smith
Sheriff

DATE: November 24, 2020

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors
Jeffrey V. Smith, County Executive

FROM: Laurie Smith, Sheriff *Laurie Smith*

SUBJECT: Off Agenda Report Item #6: Training Effectiveness and Retention

Under advisement from the Public Safety and Justice Committee meeting of November 5, 2020, on Item 6, Supervisor Susan Ellenberg requested for an off agenda report to better understand how Sheriff's Office, "training is assessed for effectiveness and how staff training retention is determined" as it relates to the quarterly report from the Sheriff's Office on specific training topics for public safety.

As a matter of background, the aforementioned quarterly report was created to advise the Public Safety and Justice Committee (PSJC) on specific training topics that the committee had a particular interest in, stemming from recommendations related to implementing implicit bias training. The report was later enhanced to include additional training compliance measures at the request of the Finance and Government Operations Committee (FGOC).

The Training and Compliance Division supports the professional growth and development for Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office personnel. The division focuses on providing innovative and relevant law enforcement training utilizing contemporary adult learning theory and instructional concepts that support a learner-centered focus on experience-based learning. The division also ensures that personnel are trained on those topics mandated by the state and/or the agency, facilitates the regional Justice Training Center (JTC), which hosts the basic police academy, custody academy, and other regional training opportunities, and tracks and reports training to the State of California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) and the California Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) Standards and Training for Corrections (STC).

Professional development within the Sheriff's Office is a career long objective and a priority for the office. The Sheriff's Office embraces the idea that 21st century policing professionals must be empowered with the skills, knowledge, experience and supporting culture to face the challenges ahead, while also forging deeper bonds and trust with the communities we serve. It is the philosophy of the Training and Compliance Division to provide training that exceeds industry standards and best practices, coupled with compliance with statutory and certification standards established through POST and STC.

The report from the Sheriff’s Office on specific training topics for public safety only captures precise training topics and courses with a goal of demonstrating our efforts towards training enforcement and/or custody staff on those specific topics, for example, Implicit Bias, Gender Responsiveness, Suicide Prevention, and Mindfulness. The report is not a holistic summary of the comprehensive training program and professional development that the Sheriff’s Office provides and/or staff attend from other specialized providers. The Sheriff’s Office has multiple paths for professional development for sworn staff, including Basic Training, Perishable Skills and Continuing Professional Training, Advanced Officer Training, Career Incentive Program Training, and Supervisory, Management, and Leadership Development.

Basic Training

Our Basic Training includes the POST Regular Basic Course (Enforcement Academy)¹, Custody Academy and STC Core Training Program², and the in-service training components that ensure Deputy Sheriff’s who graduate the academy have a formal transition from academy training to general day-to-day duties. Our in-service training programs include the Court Training Program, Jail Training Program, and POST Field Training Program³.

Our Regional Basic Academy curriculum, for both enforcement and custody, meet or exceed state mandates in all areas and are regularly audited by POST and STC. For example, the basic enforcement academy is currently 1,034 hours while the POST requirement is 664 hours (35% more hours than mandated) and the custody academy is 606 hours while the STC core requirement is 176 hours (71% more hours than mandated).

Enforcement Basic Training (POST)		Custody Basic Training (STC)	
Basic Academy	1034 hours	Custody Academy	606 hours
Court Training Program	280+ hours	Jail Training Program	920+ hours
Field Training Program	680+ hours		
Total:	1,994+ hours	Total:	1,526+ hours

The Regional Basic Academy curriculum incorporates many specific trainings that are consistent with the philosophy of our Office and the County, including but not limited to Blue Courage, Crisis Intervention Training, and Active Shooter courses.

Perishable Skills and Continuing Professional Training

POST requires sworn personnel in the Enforcement Bureau to complete 24-hours of Continuing Professional Training (CPT), which incorporates 12-hours of mandatory Perishable Skills (PS)⁴ and Communications training within every two-year training

¹ <https://post.ca.gov/regular-basic-course>
² http://www.bscc.ca.gov/s_stcaboutcoretrainingprogram/
³ <https://post.ca.gov/field-training--police-training>
⁴ <https://post.ca.gov/perishable-skills-program>

cycle. Similarly, STC requires sworn personnel in the Custody Bureau to complete 24-hours of specialized or refresher training each fiscal year.

Perishable Skills and Continuing Professional Training is provided on an ongoing basis through the Training and Compliance Division utilizing highly skilled instructors and POST and/or STC approved curriculums. Training curriculums vary in each training cycle and between the Enforcement and Custody Bureaus, based on state mandates and other agency driven learning objectives, including industry best practices, new legislative requirements, emerging trends or community concerns, training needs that have been identified based on recent events or critical incident debriefs, and/or other areas of risk mitigation and professional development.

Example training topics include first aid (including CPR, AED, and Naloxone), arrest and control, de-escalation and force options, strategic/interpersonal communications, bias based policing, emergency vehicle operations, weapons qualifications, leadership development, mindfulness, implicit bias, body worn cameras, report writing, and mental health awareness.

Advanced Officer Training

Providing advanced training for personnel is a top priority, particularly in specialized positions and assignments. Advanced officer training includes training that supports specific assignments or roles, professional and personal growth, and specialized training requirements. The office frequently sends personnel to advanced training opportunities hosted by outside providers and industry experts that are consistent with our culture and philosophy as an agency. The Training and Compliance Division also hosts and instructs many advanced officer training courses for both enforcement and custody, for example Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), Blue Courage⁵, Implicit Bias (Fair and Impartial Policing)⁶, De-Escalation, Active Shooter Response, Academy Instructor Certificate Course, Boating Safety and Operations, Field Training Officer Update, Less Lethal Weapons, Motorcycle Operations, and Radar Operator.

Career Incentive Program Training

The Deputy Sheriff's Association (DSA) and Correctional Peace Officers' Association (CPOA) Memoranda of Understanding both allow for pay incentives for continuing education for deputies. The program is designed to encourage and enhance the continued professional development of staff through pre-approved job-related educational programs of study, including law enforcement and public safety training, higher education, and personal and professional development on their own time (off duty). The Training and Compliance Unit administers this program and ensures completed training is tracked and reported.

⁵ <https://www.bluecourage.com>

⁶ <https://www.fipolicing.com>

Supervisory, Management, and Leadership Development

Career growth and supervisory, management, and leadership development are critical aspects of our training plan. The Training and Compliance Division facilitates personnel to attend required supervisory training for Sergeants⁷ and Lieutenants⁸ through POST and STC upon promotion. The division also hosts internal leadership and supervisory development training and has hosted external classes for personnel, including courses from the FBI-Law Enforcement Executive Development Association. The Sheriff's Office also participates in executive development opportunities, including the FBI National Academy⁹ and other regional and national programs, such as the American Jail Association and International Association of Chiefs of Police.

The Training and Compliance Division measures training competency and retention through several lenses; however, our primary goal is to utilize adult learning concepts and learner-centered instruction that requires the student to demonstrate competency and knowledge before completing the course. For example, our training incorporates scenarios, simulations, and other practical application that test student's retention and ability to apply the instructed skills in a way that meet the specific learning objectives of the course. Skills are also tested and/or simulated across multiple training classes to ensure retention and the ability to apply the skills, for example, our range qualification include basic radio and body worn camera manipulation and our force options course includes basic arrest and control concepts, verbal communication, and first aid skills.

The Sheriff's Office continues to find innovative approaches and technology that improves the impact of our training, such as the use of force simulator, emergency driving simulator, auto-articulating threat assessment targets at the range, and online and hybrid training opportunities. The Training and Compliance Division also collects course and instructor evaluations for trainings and uses this information to assess the effectiveness and impact of the course from the student's perspective. This is often used to improve and/or restructure the course to enhance the delivery and outcome of the training.

Our training is also POST and/or STC approved and both government entities audit and inspect courses and facilities to ensure compliance with approved curriculums, industry best practices, and safety protocols. Other courses, including Blue Courage and Below 100, are nationally accredited through the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST) National Certification Program¹⁰. The Training and Compliance Division works closely with regional and national public safety and police training associations, POST and STC, and a network of other public agencies and trainers, to ensure our training and instructors remains up-to-date and consistent with best practices and industry standards.

For many topics, course frequency is mandated by legislation and POST training requirements; however, for other courses, the Training and Compliance Division determines our training plan

⁷ <https://post.ca.gov/Supervisory-Course>

⁸ <https://post.ca.gov/management-course>

⁹ <https://www.fbi.gov/services/training-academy/national-academy>

¹⁰ <https://iadlest-ncp.org/>

based on a training cycle that ensures staff are introduced to new and relevant skills and knowledge. For non-mandated refresher training, we use a “update” or “booster” methodology to reinforce skills and ensure retention, for example in-depth training may be mandated one time; however, we then offer an abbreviated update course that is an opportunity to refresh personnel with relevant updates, resources, and a review of the core concept and skills. For example, we offer a 4-hour Crisis Intervention Team Update Course that is designed to provide a booster to the comprehensive course.

We also utilize a building block method to reinforce core skills, knowledge, and culture. For example, courses build off and supplement each other in way that refreshes previously instructed skills. For example, the Mindfulness training is reinforced and built-on by components of Blue Courage and we are now in the process of introducing an Officer Wellness and Resiliency course, which will further build on the core concepts and culture of both courses and more importantly, the overall training objective.

The Sheriff’s Office is very proud of the innovative training we provide and our progressive philosophy towards personnel growth and development. The Training and Compliance Division welcomes and encourages any member of the Board of Supervisors or their staff to visit any of our training facilities to better understand our training program. We also offer this unique opportunity to the public through our Teen Academy and other community engagement opportunities. Unfortunately, these programs are currently on hold due to COVID; however, we eagerly await a time when we can engage in-person with the Board and the community.

c: Chief Board Aides
Miguel Marquez, Chief Operating Officer
James Williams, County Counsel
Megan Doyle, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors