



The LASD Holds the Highest Expectations of Professional Standards

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) provided comprehensive answers to all the questions posed by the Los Angeles Times in relation to an article published today, October 27, 2018, pertaining to tattoos and allegations of cliques. Although some of the information was included in the article, the LASD felt it important to share all the information provided about the comprehensive efforts being put into addressing these concerns.

Sheriff's Statement:

"We have taken a very strong posture in this organization to hold individuals accountable for their actions. My expectations for employee behavior, conduct and performance, are very clear and have been communicated through orders, directives, briefings, policies and training. We have discussed several personnel issues, such as the existence of tattoos, extensively with the Inspector General and County Counsel. Just recently, I appointed a second Constitutional Policing Advisor to assist the Department in sustaining reform and advancing justice for the diverse communities we serve.

We are continuing to assess any potential issues that may arise related to employee conduct, as well as personal and professional choices that impact our organization. We have the same concerns as all of law enforcement, the military, and the private sector about how to balance the constitutional right of free expression with what may, or may not be, an indicator of something more serious. We are looked to by many law enforcement entities around the nation for our comprehensive and progressive protocols, programs and training. We have some of the most comprehensive policies pertaining to sexual harassment, as well as other workplace harassment prevention programs.

As outlined in the training curriculum provided, we are working hard to help our deputies understand that the decisions they make could unnecessarily place them in legal, financial or professional jeopardy. At the end of the day, the way we are perceived is essential for us to gain the public's trust and successfully keep Los Angeles County safe."

Sheriff Jim McDonnell

Policy and Training Related to the Sheriff's Department Tattoo Policy and Professional Standards

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Training Bureau provides each academy recruit with a Recruit Training Manual during their orientation prior to starting the 22-week academy. Included in the manual are grooming standards, proper uniform and physical training attire, and policies related to covering any visible tattoos, consistent with Department policy. During the first week of the academy, staff teach a block of instruction titled "Leadership, Professionalism and Ethics" which is a mandated learning domain (LD #1) required by Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T). The instructors reinforce the expectations placed upon the recruits about their professional behavior both on and off duty, social settings, public and Departmental expectations, perceptions, and the public image.

The Sheriff's Department also conducts a Principled Policing course that addresses topics such as Law Enforcement's Professional Role, the Making of Deputies and Police Officers, and discusses topics related to modern policing, and professionalism. Newly promoted sergeants attend a two-week supervisor course at the beginning of their promotion. During the course, instructors teach a block of instruction titled "Ethics, Values and Decision Making." The course reinforces the Core Values of the Department which specifically relate to conduct and behavior and adherence to the policies of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

Personnel Mandatory Rotation Policy:

Custody Division Manual (CDM 3-01/020.05) - Mandatory Rotation of Line Personnel in Custody – All custody units have orders in place ensuring that line personnel are rotated between job assignments at least once every six months.

Continuing Education, Training and Briefings:

Per Rosas provision 3.2, all Department members in Custody receive a four-hour training course in Ethics in Jail Operations training or the Custody Assistant Academy. They also attend a two-hour refresher course in Ethics every other year. The main focus of the Ethics training is "doing the right thing." Discussions include many topics --- specifically cliques, unprofessional behavior and critical decision making.

In addition to continued briefings and trainings discouraging personnel from associating with deputy cliques that might undermine a sense of camaraderie or loyalty to the Department, a number of administrative investigations have been initiated over the years involving inquiries into tattoos and/or cliques whenever information has come to light suggesting a violation of Department policies or procedures.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department will continue its efforts in direct cooperation with all oversight bodies and stakeholders. The trust of the public is essential in all we do in keeping Los Angeles County safe.