



Kern County Sheriff's Office

Policies And Procedures

TITLE: EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE-TRAINING AND AUDITS NO: D-0800			
APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner			
EFFECTIVE: August 6, 2024	REVIEWED: 01/07/2026	REVISED: 01/07/2026	UPDATED: 01/07/2026

POLICY

As part of the Sheriff's Office's commitment to accountability and transparency, comprehensive training and auditing procedures have been established to ensure that personnel complaint intake, classification, investigation, and resolution processes are conducted with the utmost professionalism and adherence to policies and procedures while maintaining the rights of public employees.

TRAINING

Supervisors, managers, investigators, and reviewers shall be trained in updated complaint intake, classification, and investigation techniques. The training will include guidelines on recording complaints from individuals who may not be proficient in English, and the consequences for failing to properly take and objectively investigate complaints from the public.

Investigators

All personnel involved in conducting personnel complaint investigations at the Sheriff's Office must receive initial training on how to conduct these investigations and receive refresher training each year. This training will cover:

- Investigative skills, including proper interrogation and interview techniques, gathering and objectively analyzing evidence, and data and case management;
- Challenges of personnel complaint reviews/investigations, including identifying alleged misconduct that is not clearly stated in the complaint or that becomes apparent during the investigation, properly weighing the credibility of both civilian witnesses and deputies, using objective evidence to resolve inconsistent statements, and the proper application of the preponderance of evidence standard;
- Relevant state, local, and federal law, including state employment law related to deputies and the rights of public employees, as well as criminal discovery rules such as those set out in *Garrity v. New Jersey* (1967) 385 U.S. 493, *Lybarger v. City of Los Angeles* (1985) 40 Cal.3d 822, and *Brady v. Maryland* (1963) 373 U. S. 83;
- Sheriff's Office Policy and Procedure Manual, and protocols related to criminal and administrative investigations of alleged deputy misconduct.

Reviewers

All personnel responsible for reviewing personnel complaint investigations at the Sheriff's Office must receive initial training and receive annual refresher training. The training should cover the following areas:

- Ensuring all witnesses and subject employees are interviewed about allegations they may have witnessed or been involved in;
- Ensuring that summarized statements accurately reflect recorded interviews;
- Identifying, analyzing, and interpreting evidence in the investigation;
- Identifying and addressing any risk-management issues, such as inadequate policies, insufficient training, inadequate or inoperable safety equipment, and ineffective field supervision;
- Determining appropriate corrective action and/or penalty, when necessary;
- Understanding relevant state and local laws related to conducting personnel investigations and disciplinary actions.

AUDITS

The Professional Standard Unit (PSU) will conduct quarterly confidential audits of complaint intake, categorization, investigations, and resolution processes. These audits will assess whether complaints are being accepted and categorized according to policy, whether investigations are thorough, and whether complaint resolutions are based on a preponderance of evidence. PSU will consistently evaluate the efficiency of the complaint process, analyzing the complaints to identify any need to re-evaluate existing policies, procedures, training, and overall effectiveness of the complaint process and the process for determining which complaints are investigated by Internal Affairs.

Audits of complaint investigations will also be conducted to ensure the quality and accuracy of summarized statements and adherence to standards. The audit reports will be sent through the chain of command to the Sheriff or their designee for consideration of recommendations and any other necessary actions.

ANNUAL REPORT

PSU or the Internal Affairs Unit will release complaint statistics reports (an annual report) to the public. This report will include data on personnel complaints, including the categories of complaints received, the final resolution of completed investigations, and the status of pending investigations. It will also encompass data from the previous calendar year. This report will be published by April 1 of each year and accessible to the public on the Sheriff's Office's public website after approval by the Sheriff. This report is in addition to the requirements of reporting complaint statistics to the California Department of Justice under Penal Code section 13012.

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