

# Office of the Sheriff



## SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

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Phone (805) 686-8150

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5775 Carpinteria Avenue  
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**Isla Vista**  
6504 Trigo Road  
Isla Vista, CA 93117  
Phone (805) 681-4179

**Lompoc**  
3500 Harris Grade Road  
Lompoc, CA 93436  
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70 Newsome Street  
New Cuyama, CA 93254  
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**Santa Maria**  
812-A W. Foster Road  
Santa Maria, CA 93455  
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**Solvang**  
1745 Mission Drive  
Solvang, CA 93463  
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**Sheriff - Coroner Office**  
66 S. San Antonio Road  
Santa Barbara, CA 93110  
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**Main Jail**  
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### COURT SERVICES CIVIL OFFICES

**Santa Barbara**  
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P.O. Box 690  
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**Santa Maria**  
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**BILL BROWN**  
Sheriff - Coroner

**SOL LINVER**  
Undersheriff

July 22, 2020

Pamela Olsen  
Foreperson  
2019-2020 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury  
Grand Jury Chambers  
Santa Barbara County Courthouse  
1100 Anacapa Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report Entitled  
*"Juveniles in Gangs in Santa Barbara County: Has Accountability Been  
Forgotten?"*

Dear Foreperson Olsen:

Enclosed please find the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office response to  
the 2019-2020 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report entitled *"Juveniles  
in Gangs in Santa Barbara County: Has Accountability Been Forgotten?"*

As requested in the report, the Sheriff's Office is responding to findings and  
recommendations 1, 3, 6, 6a and 6b.

The report states on page 15 that the D.A.R.E. Program was eliminated in  
South County years ago, although it is still operating in Santa Maria. I  
would like the Grand Jury to be aware that the Sheriff's Office continues to  
provide the D.A.R.E. Program in various schools in the Santa Ynez Valley  
and in the unincorporated areas of Lompoc and Santa Maria, and has done  
so since 2007.

Thank you for your important work. Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at 805-681-4290.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bill Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bill" and last name "Brown" clearly distinguishable.

BILL BROWN  
Sheriff-Coroner

CC: Clerk of the Board  
CC: Board of Supervisors

Enclosure: SBSO response

**Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office**  
**Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury 2019-2020 Report**  
**JUVENILES IN GANGS IN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY**  
**Has Accountability Been Forgotten?**

**Finding 1**

No comprehensive database exists to identify gangs and gang membership.

**Response to Finding 1**

The Sheriff's Office agrees with this finding.

**Recommendation 1**

That the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department [sic], the Probation Department, the District Attorney and the police departments of Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, Guadalupe and Lompoc pool their resources to establish a comprehensive database that includes a gang roster across jurisdictions.

**Response to Recommendation 1**

This recommendation will not be implemented at this time. The Sheriff's Office is unable to implement this recommendation within the current and anticipated budgetary constraints placed upon our organization. However, the recommendation could be implemented if the Board of Supervisors designates sufficient additional one-time and ongoing funding for the creation and ongoing operation of such a system, to include sufficient staffing to ensure that mandated levels of oversight and records maintenance can be met. While a comprehensive database with current criminal street gang membership and activities is desirable, such a database would be governed by the fairly onerous rules contained within Federal regulations, 28 CFR Part 23 - Criminal Intelligence Systems Operating Policies. 28 CFR Part 23 would necessitate a significant level of oversight for the creation and ongoing maintenance of the proposed countywide, cross-agency gang database. Additionally, any such cross-agency database would require a comprehensive MOU between all involved entities.

Alternatively, with an infusion of resources, the agencies outlined within the Grand Jury Report could potentially establish a countywide gang task force, staffed by a member from each agency. The formation of a gang task force within this county would put investigators together with a common goal, where information sharing is paramount. Within this model, the taskforce, through its members could have access to the records already maintained by the participant agencies, including gang-related source documents, while minimizing the need for integrated database systems and additional records management resources that would be needed for the oversight and ongoing maintenance of a countywide, cross-agency gang database. However, this alternative can only be implemented if the county and city governing boards designate sufficient additional one-time and ongoing funding for the creation and ongoing operation of the task force.



Irrespective of the option utilized to achieve the recommended sharing of countywide gang data, this recommendation cannot be achieved unless the involved agencies are provided with sufficient one-time and ongoing funding to facilitate and maintain the desired information sharing.

### **Finding 3**

The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department [sic] disbanded its gang unit in 2017.

### **Response to Finding 3**

The Sheriff's Office agrees with the finding. At its height, the Sheriff's Gang Unit was staffed with a dedicated supervisor and two geographically-based teams, one in the south county and one in the north county. As noted within the Grand Jury report, the unit provided a valuable service to our local communities and to our public safety partners. Unfortunately, through the repeated budget cuts endured by the Sheriff's Office over the past twelve years, the Sheriff's Gang Unit was repeatedly downsized, and in 2017 it was completely closed.

### **Recommendation 3**

That the Santa Barbara County Sheriff organize and fund a gang unit within the next budget cycle to address gang activity in Santa Barbara County and its contract cities.

### **Response to Recommendation 3**

This recommendation will not be implemented within the current and anticipated budgetary constraints placed upon the Sheriff's Office, because the Sheriff does not fund any unit within his office. However, the recommendation could be implemented if the Board of Supervisors (and/ or the councils for the contract cities served by the Sheriff's Office) designate sufficient additional one-time and ongoing funding for the creation, equipping and staffing of the proposed gang unit.

### **Finding 6**

Gang activities cross jurisdictional boundaries of local law enforcement agencies.

### **Response to Finding 6**

The Sheriff's Office agrees with the finding.

### **Recommendation 6a**

That the Santa Barbara County District Attorney form a consortium including the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department [sic], the Santa Barbara County Probation Department and the Police Departments of Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, Lompoc and Guadalupe to hire a full-time crime analyst and share data to reduce gang crime.

### **Response to Recommendation 6a**

This recommendation will not be implemented at this time. Although we are not opposed to the formation of the recommended consortium, the governing bodies of the county and cities would need to designate additional funding to enable this to occur. Additionally, as was mentioned within our response to Recommendation 1, with the exception of cases that are submitted for prosecution to the District Attorney's Office, the Federal requirements of 28 CFR Part 23 would likely apply to the work of the proposed crime analyst in sharing gang related data across agencies. Any such cross-agency data sharing would require a comprehensive MOU between all involved entities.

### **Recommendation 6b**

That the Santa Barbara County District Attorney form a consortium including the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department [sic], the Santa Barbara County Probation Department and the Police Departments of Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, Lompoc and Guadalupe and hire staff that would apply for grants to fund anti-gang programs.

### **Response to Recommendation 6b**

This recommendation will not be implemented at this time. Although the Sheriff's Office is certainly not opposed to the formation of the recommended consortium, the governing bodies of the county and involved cities would need to designate additional funding to enable the creation and operation of the proposed consortium. The addition of resources focused on pursuing grants and other funding opportunities that would assist our community in addressing the negative impacts of criminal street gangs would be beneficial, but cannot be accomplished within current staffing and resource constraints.

Additionally, it should be noted that community partners, including the Community Action Commission, have been instrumental in bringing youth-oriented resources to our local communities, specifically seeking to enhance the safety of youths within our local communities.