

Office of the Sheriff



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

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BILL BROWN

Sheriff - Coroner

CRAIG BONNER

Undersheriff

STATIONS

Buellton
140 W. Highway 246
Buellton, CA 93427
Phone (805) 656-8150

Carpinteria
5775 Carpinteria Avenue
Carpinteria, CA 93013
Phone (805) 755-4452

Isla Vista
6504 Trigo Road
Isla Vista, CA 93117
Phone (805) 681-4179

Lompoc
3500 Harris Grade Road
Lompoc, CA 93436
Phone (805) 737-7737

New Cuyama
70 Newsome Street
New Cuyama, CA 93254
Phone (661) 766-2310

Santa Maria
812-A W. Foster Road
Lompoc, CA 93436
Phone (805) 934-6150

Solvang
1745 Mission Drive
Solvang, CA 93463
Phone (805) 686-5000

Sheriff - Coroner Office
66 S. San Antonio Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93110
Phone (805) 681-4145

Main Jail
4436 Calle Real
Santa Barbara, CA 93110
Phone (805) 681-4260

Northern Branch Jail
2301 Black Road
Santa Maria, CA 93455
Phone (805) 554-3100

COURT SERVICES CIVIL OFFICES

Santa Barbara
1105 Santa Barbara Street
P.O. Box 690
Santa Barbara, CA 93102
Phone (805) 568-2900

Santa Maria
312 E. Cook Street, "O"
P.O. Box 5049
Santa Maria, CA 93456
Phone (805) 346-7430

September 13, 2023

Christian McGrath
Foreperson
2022-2023 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
"Death on Electronic Monitored Home Release"

Dear Foreperson McGrath:

I am sharing with you the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office response to the 2022-2023 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report entitled "Death on Electronic Monitored Home Release."

As requested in the report, the Sheriff's Office is responding to findings and recommendations 1 and 2. Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at 681-4290.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bill Brown", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

BILL BROWN
Sheriff – Coroner

Enclosure: SBSO response

Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office
Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury 2022-2023 Report
"Death on Electronic Monitored Home Release"

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1a

A list of mental health and addiction treatment program contacts was offered to NM upon his discharge to the Electronic Monitored Home Release program, but the Sheriff's Office did not monitor whether NM contacted or participated in any of those programs.

Sheriff's Office Response: Agree

Finding 1b

Beginning July 1, 2022, the Sheriff's Office transferred the Electronic Monitored Home Release program monitoring responsibility to the Santa Barbara County Probation Department.

Sheriff's Office Response: Agree

Recommendations 1a and 1b

That the Sheriff's Office and the Santa Barbara County Probation Department ensure that participants in the Electronic Monitored Home Release program, especially those with mental health and substance abuse issues, enter appropriate clinical programs and closely monitor such participation.

Sheriff's Office Response: Will be implemented, with an implementation schedule.

The Sheriff's Office and Probation Department will research, develop, and implement a process that strives to identify individuals accepted to the Alternative Sentencing Program who suffer from mental health and substance use issues, to ensure they are appropriately referred to treatment, and that their participation is monitored. This process will be completed on or before January 9, 2024.

Finding 2

If the Sheriff's Office had known of NM's mental health history, it indicated it would have more closely monitored him to ensure meaningful participation in effective substance abuse and mental health clinical programs.

Sheriff's Office Response: Agree

Recommendation 2a

That the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office and the Santa Barbara County Probation Department promptly request that Santa Barbara County Counsel prepare a legal opinion as to whether, consistent with Federal and California law, WellPath or any successor may provide critical inmate mental health information to Sheriff's Office personnel who need to know that information for inmate housing, programming, and Electronic Monitored Home Release program decisions.

Sheriff's Office Response: This has been implemented.

To the extent that such information can be legally shared, additional research would be needed to ascertain if a WellPath contract amendment would be required due to an expanded scope of work. If so, negotiation would then be needed, as well as Board approval and funding, once that process was completed. Even with an aggressive schedule, the full implementation of such an information-sharing procedure will likely take 8 to 10 months.

The Sheriff's Office has received legal advice from County Counsel and entered into negotiations with WellPath about such information sharing. This process will be completed on or before January 9, 2024, with a view to implementing the Jury's recommendation.

Recommendation 2b

That if Santa Barbara County Counsel determines that WellPath does have legal authority to provide inmate mental health information to Sheriff's Office personnel and Santa Barbara County Probation Department, then the County and the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office shall amend the existing agreement with WellPath to require such sharing to the full extent of the law.

Sheriff's Office Response: Requires further analysis.

To the extent that such information can be legally shared, additional research would be needed to ascertain if a WellPath contract amendment would be required due to an expanded scope of work. If so, negotiation would then be needed, as well as Board approval and funding, once that process was completed. Even with an aggressive schedule, the full implementation of an information-sharing procedure will likely take 8 to 10 months.

The Sheriff's Office has received legal advice from County Counsel and entered into negotiations with WellPath about such information sharing. This process will be completed on or before January 9, 2024, with a view to implementing the Jury's recommendation.