

08-09-18



San Diego County Sheriff's Department

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William D. Gore, Sheriff

July 31, 2018

Sandra Arkin, Board Chairperson
Citizens' Law Enforcement Review Board
555 West Beech Street, Suite 505
San Diego, CA 92101-3819

CLERB CASE NUMBER: 16-093 / Helton

Dear Chairperson Arkin:

The Sheriff's Department welcomes and supports the Citizens' Law Enforcement Review Board's (CLERB) independent review of complaints alleging improper actions by members of this organization. We continuously strive to respond with professionalism and concern to the citizens we serve and the CLERB process provides invaluable input to that end.

The letter from CLERB dated May 9, 2018 recommended policy changes related to the Sheriff's Department Detentions policy I.47 "*Inmate Identification Wristbands and Clothing*." Specifically, CLERB requested the following:

- It is recommended that the San Diego Sheriff's Department (SDSD) revise its Detention Services Bureau Policy and Procedures entitled, "Inmate Wristbands and Clothing," to provide, via the identifying wristband, a visual indicator that the inmate had a prior suicide attempt.

This recommendation was thoroughly reviewed at all levels in this organization. Additionally, we consulted with Peter Fischetti, who is the Sheriff's Chief Mental Health Clinician for his input. Mr. Fischetti has 22 years of experience working in the mental health field. Of those 22 years, he has worked within the Sheriff's Department for 12 years.

As the Sheriff's Department expert on mental health, Mr. Fischetti believes that using a wristband as an indicator of a prior suicide attempt(s) is both a violation of the inmate's privacy and is counter therapeutic to their recovery." Additionally, "using a visual indicator of an inmate's prior suicide attempt is contrary to standards of patient confidentiality and best practices of suicide prevention.

In order to track an inmate's prior suicide attempt, the Department already uses "markers" in the Jail Information Management System. These "markers," called "In Custody Suicide Attempt," automatically trigger a follow up by a mental health professional.

CLERB #16-093 / Helton

Policy Response

July 31, 2018

The Sheriff's Suicide Prevention Response Team is constantly reviewing jail suicides and suicide attempts in order to reduce the number of jail suicides. This is done through training and education to deputies, inmates, and medical staff.

In closing, we appreciate the time and effort of the Citizen's Law Enforcement Review Board. I would like to thank you for your service to the Citizens of San Diego County and the policy recommendation. It is our goal to provide the "Highest quality public safety services" to everyone in San Diego County.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM D. GORE, SHERIFF

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Gilmore', written over a horizontal line.

David Gilmore, Lieutenant
Office of the Sheriff
Division of Inspectional Services

DG: adm