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# WARRANT ANALYSIS & STRATEGIES SUBCOMMITTEE

County of Santa Barbara

# Subcommittee Overview

*A multi-agency approach including representation from the Superior Court, District Attorney's Office, Probation Department, Public Defender's Office, and Sheriff's Office to review data and inform strategy.*

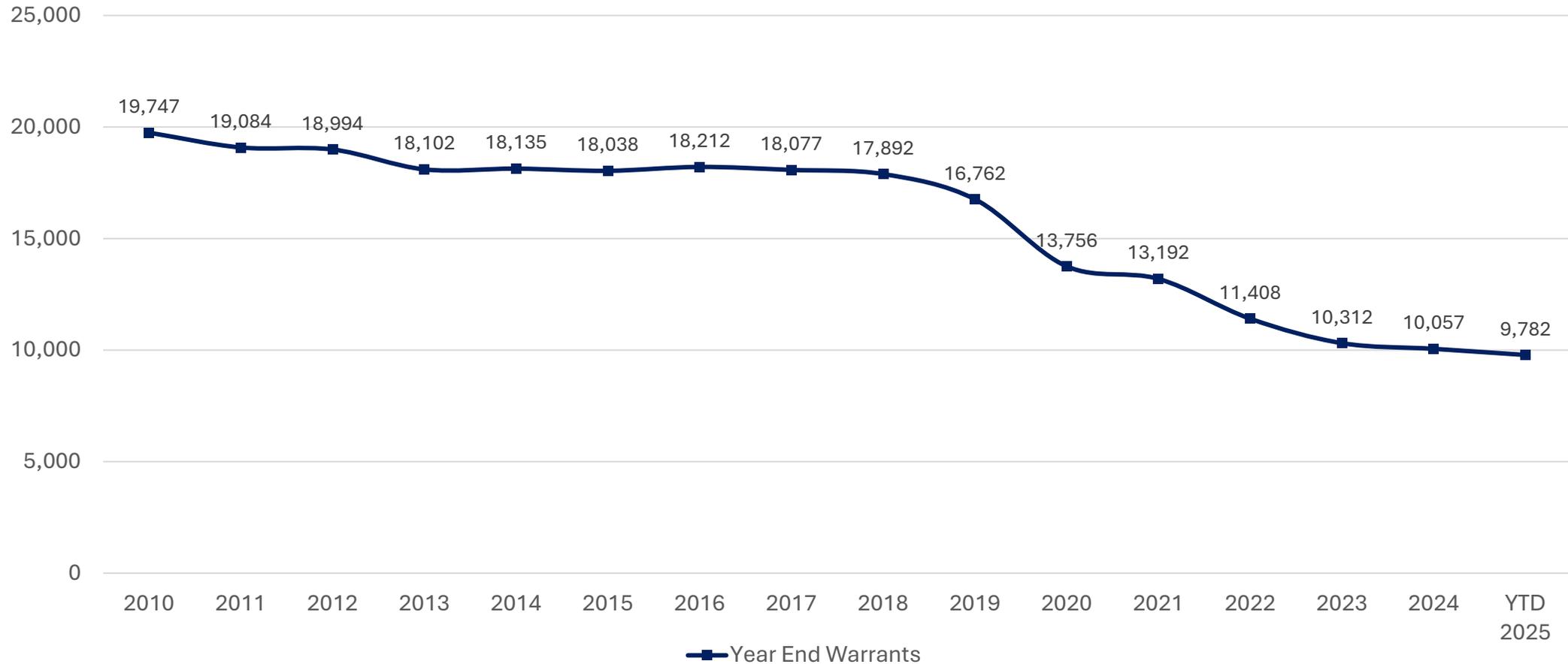
- **Established: June 25, 2025**, per the request of the Board of Supervisors
- **Purpose:** To parse data related to the inventory of warrants, devise processes to ameliorate the backlog of active warrants, and recommend protocols for efficient warrant management.
- **Reviewed:** Warrants Automated Network Directly Accessed (WANDA) data and existing warrant purge protocols.



# 15-Year Warrant Snapshot

*Outstanding warrants halved over the past 15 years; annual clearance average of 11,108.*

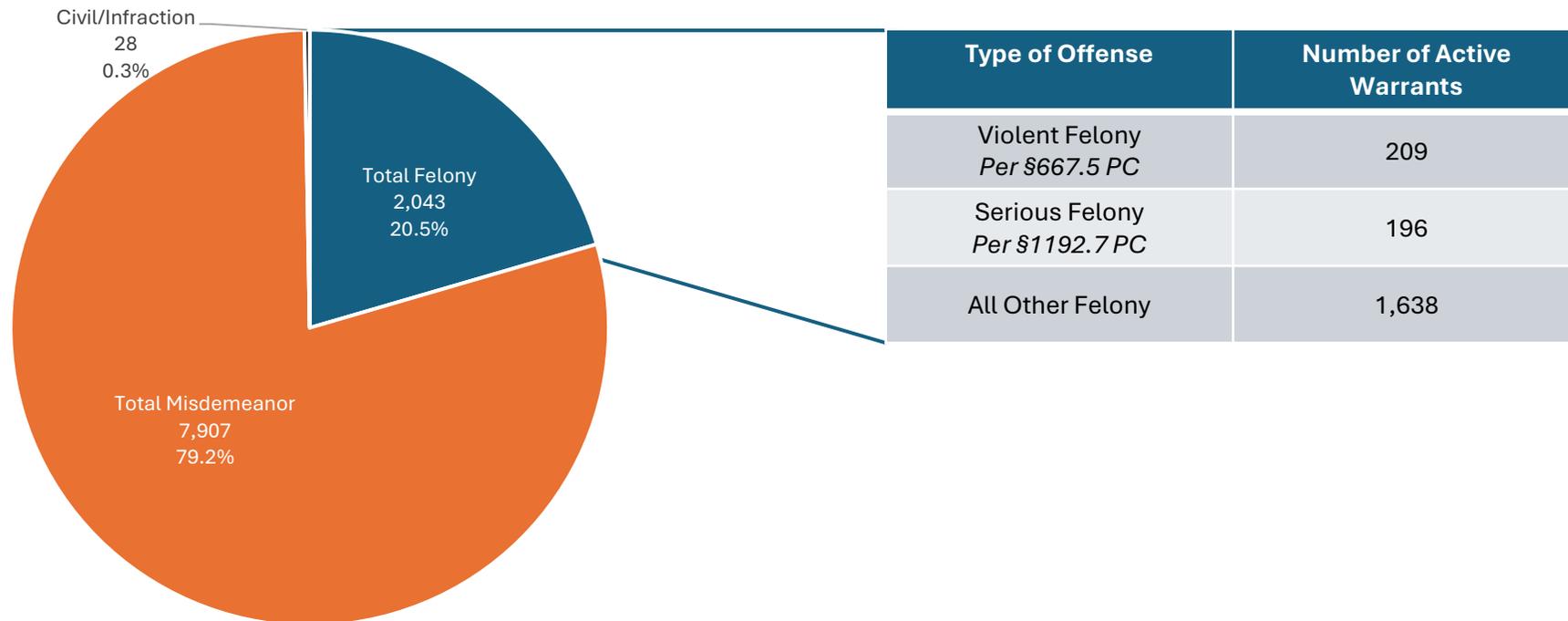
Count of Warrants at Year End



# Snapshot of Active Warrants

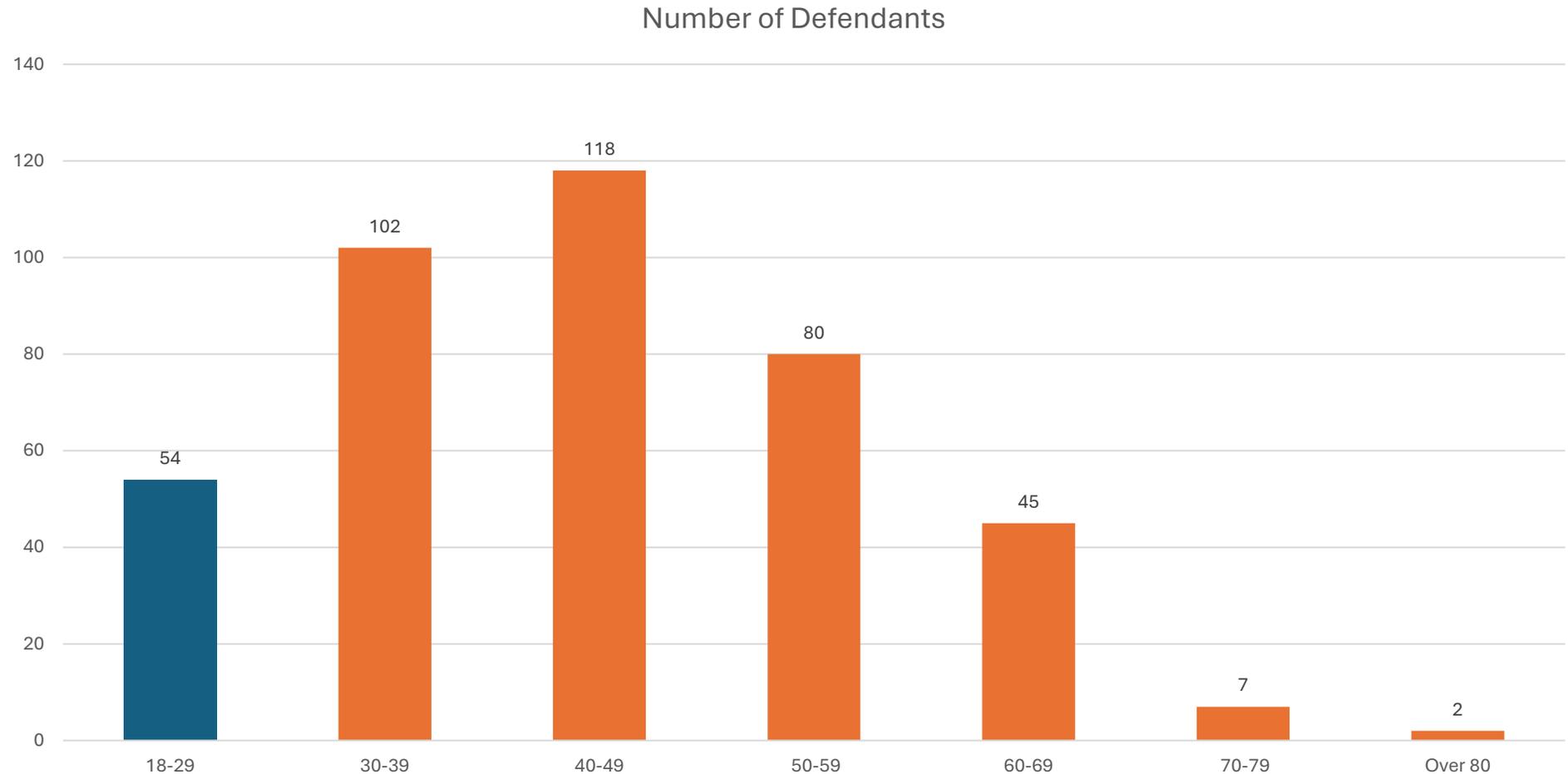
*Serious and Violent felony warrants are a minority of all active warrants.*

Active Warrants by Offense Type  
June 12, 2025 WANDA snapshot



# Age of Defendants with Strike Offense Warrants

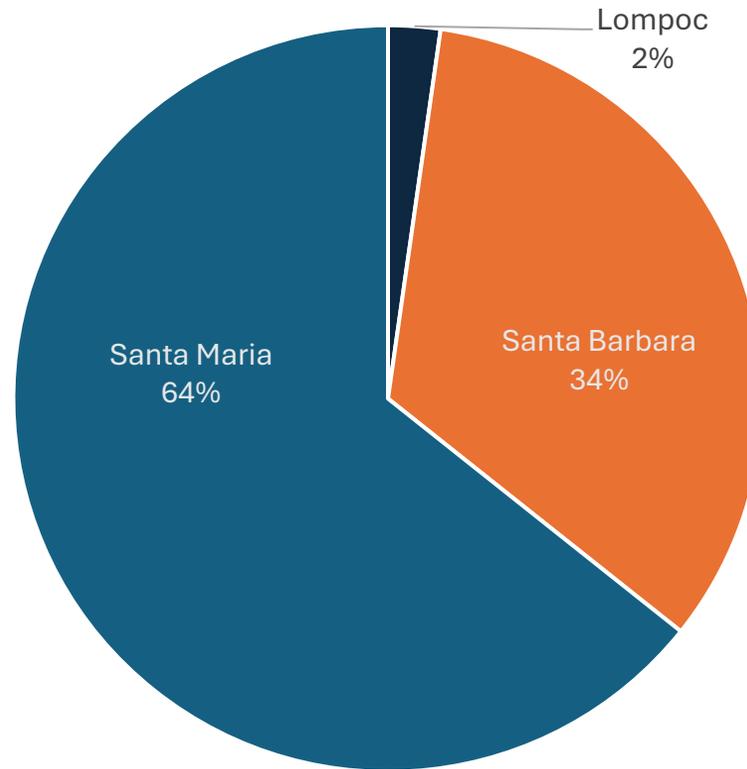
*87% of defendants with strike offense warrants are age 30+ reflecting lower age –related risk.*



# Geographical Distribution of Warrants

*Majority of warrants emanate from the Santa Maria Superior Court*

Active Warrants By Court Jurisdiction  
November 14, 2025 WANDA Snapshot



# Efforts to Address Warrant Backlog

*Key strategies for managing and resolving the warrant backlog:*

- **District Attorney** – in addition to the ongoing warrant purge process described in the following slide, the District Attorney’s Office has identified specific misdemeanor charges that are three years or older and, provided the defendant does not have open felony charges, the cases will be dismissed.
- **Santa Barbara Superior Court** – the Santa Barbara Superior Court is reviewing outstanding warrants and plans to create a process to review older, less serious technical violation warrants for possible recall.
- **Probation Department** – the Probation Department will continue to focus on serving felony warrants on people currently under probation supervision.
- **Probation Department and Sheriff’s Office** – the Compliance Response Teams will continue their focus on finding and arresting realigned offenders with active warrants.
- **Sheriff’s Department** – the Felony Fugitive detective creates warrant “hot sheets” and disseminates them to all law enforcement agencies, conducts warrant investigations, and conducts surveillance to apprehend more serious wanted warrants. Those operations will be reported to the Board via quarterly Cannabis Tax Revenue updates.

# District Attorney Warrant Purge

*Robust warrant purge process in place.*

## **Misdemeanor Cases Warranted for Ten or More Years**

- All open, warranted misdemeanor cases are dismissed.
- All warranted misdemeanor probation violations are terminated.

## **Misdemeanor Cases Warranted Greater than Three and Less than Ten Years**

- All open, warranted misdemeanor cases are dismissed notwithstanding the below which are litigated on a case-by-case basis:

Domestic Violence, Child Abuse, Elder Abuse, Sex Crimes, and DUIs

- All warranted misdemeanor probation violations are terminated.

## **Misdemeanor Cases Warranted Less than Three Years**

- Litigated on a case-by-case basis.

# Felony Fugitive Detective

*Performance Measures are geared toward apprehending strike and other felony warrants*

- Achieve a 20% increase in the number of individuals with active warrants booked into Santa Barbara County Jails each month when compared with a FY 24/25 baseline.
- Apprehend at least 25% of individuals with new serious and/or violent felony warrants within 90 days of warrant issuance.
- Achieve a 20% decrease from the baseline observed in 2025 in the total number of active serious and/or violent felony warrants in the system.
- Coordinate the extradition of 80% of all felony fugitive apprehensions occurring outside the state.
- Update the list of the top 20 most wanted subjects on public-facing websites and social media platforms monthly.
- Conduct at least two intelligence-led warrant sweeps or targeted operations per quarter.
- Produce and distribute a “hot sheet” of priority fugitives to tri-county law enforcement agencies every quarter.

# Key Takeaways

*The active warrant analysis and concentration on warrant purge efforts yielded several key takeaways.*

## **Strike Offense Warrants:**

- Of the 9,978 warrants active on June 12, 2025, only 4% were for the most serious crimes, so most all active warrants are for less serious offenses.

## **Declining Year End Warrant Inventory:**

- The 2024 year-end warrant inventory marked the lowest number during a 15-year look-back at active warrants and has continually trended down.

## **Warrant Purge Protocol:**

- The District Attorney's Office is currently using a strong system to clear out low-level misdemeanor warrants, which will be applied to older warrants as well, in addition to clearing many vehicle code violations warrants in batch format.

## **Felony Warrant Service:**

- The Sheriff's Department Felony Fugitive Detective and Compliance Response Teams will prioritize warrant service on the most severe crimes.



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