



Report on Sheriff-Coroner Overtime Usage and Costs, and Proposed Budget Development Policy for Overtime Mitigation

County Executive Office

Board of Supervisors Meeting
October 18, 2022

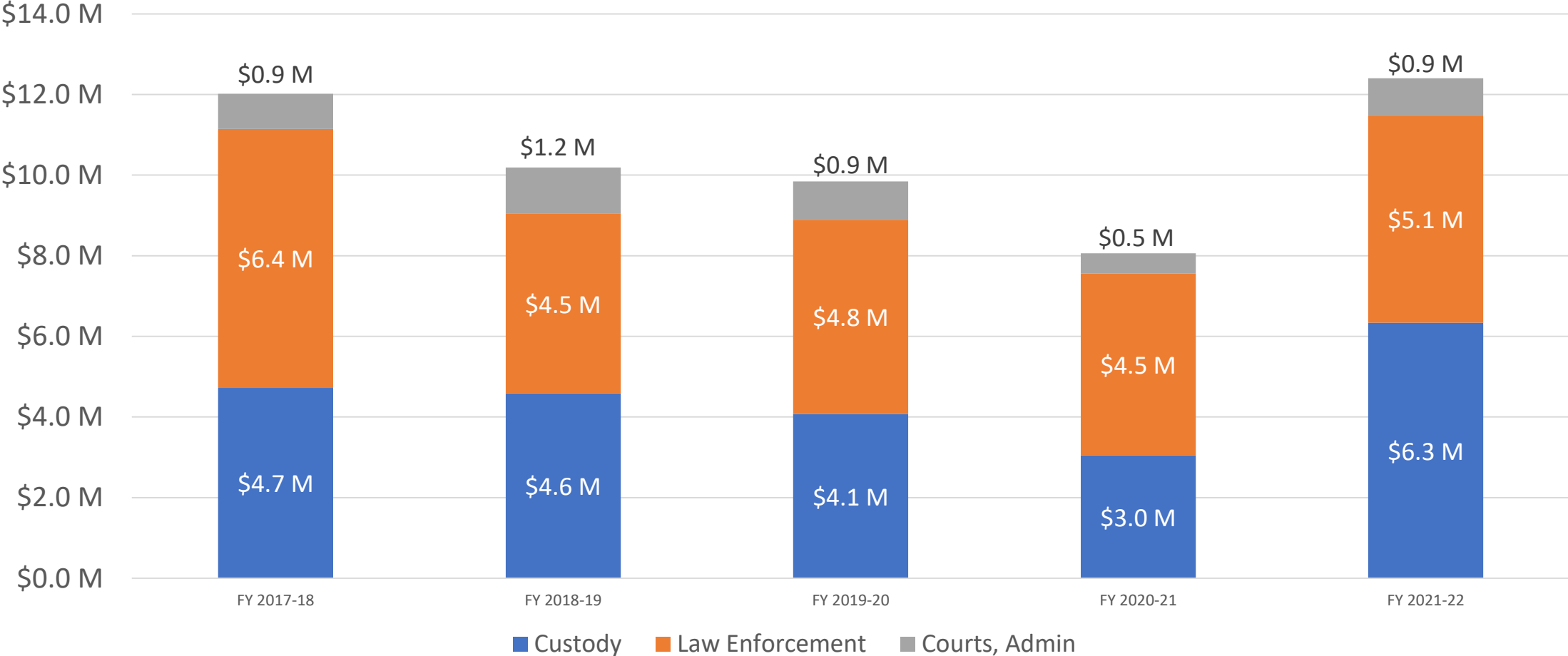
Today's Report

- Background and focus of report
- Observations and findings
 - Main cost drivers and getting to a baseline estimate
 - Issues contributing to overtime
 - Mitigating efforts and strategies
- Proposed budget development policy for overtime mitigation
- Additional options for consideration

Background and Focus of Report

- Department has ended fiscal year with an average budget deficit of \$2.7M over past 5 years due to use of unbudgeted overtime both in Custody and LE branches
 - Current OT budget is \$4.1M vs. FY 2021-22 actual of \$12M+
- Department is trending to exceed \$17M in overtime in current year (the highest on record)
- In FY 2018-19, Board set aside \$2M for Sheriff's overtime reduction plan, to be released once vacancies were reduced so additional positions could be filled
- In May 2022, Board directed CEO to develop and propose policy recommendations for longer-term fiscal planning and overtime cost drivers
- Report findings identified:
 - Recommendation to provide clarity on use of \$2M set-aside, and need for additional data to track cost drivers and develop an annual baseline that can be validated for transparency and accountability
 - Additional proposed options for Board's consideration, based on issues contributing to overtime and critical current staffing challenges

Sheriff Historical Overtime Cost

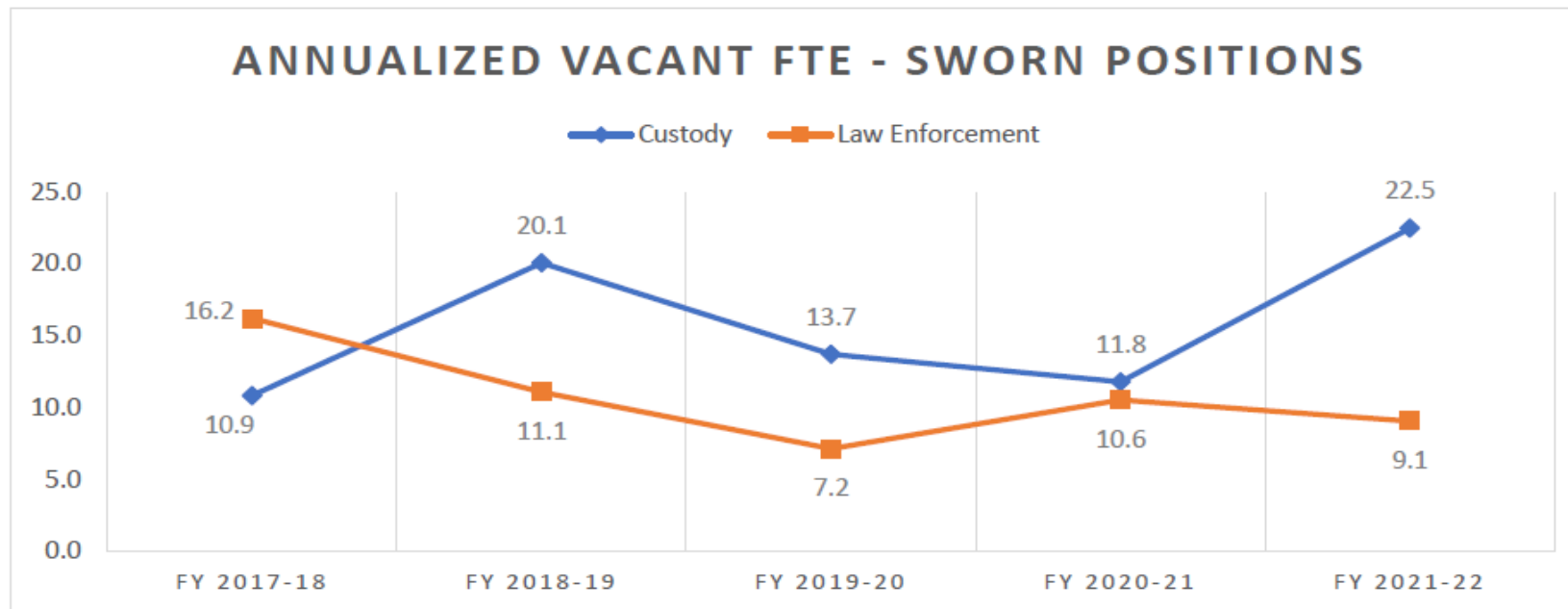


Main Overtime Cost Drivers

- Factors historically leading to overtime include:
 - Backfilling for required training of new hires and mandatory annual advanced training for existing sworn staff
 - Vacation and sick time and other leaves of absence
 - Occurrence of emergency and seasonal events requiring additional staffing
 - Position vacancies due to retirements and other separations
- While some data exists, additional time tracking detail is needed to break down specific impact of various drivers and develop an annual baseline of reasonably anticipated annual costs, excluding vacancy-related overtime

Issues Contributing to Overtime Usage: Vacancies

- Position vacancies contribute to overtime usage and are due to both internal and external factors
 - Avg. 26.6 FTE sworn vacancies in past 5 years
 - Vacancies have recently increased but are still lower than some other local agencies
 - Sheriff's HR team is incorporating new strategies to address recruitment challenges and expand capacity



Issues Contributing to Overtime Usage: Recruitment

- Challenges
 - Decreasing applicant pool over time
 - Long and intensive hiring process
 - High cost of living area
 - External, uncontrollable factors including other agency incentives and broader public sentiment surrounding law enforcement
- Strategies
 - Implementing new technology platforms to streamline hiring process and reduce staff time on time-intensive stages (e.g. background investigations)
 - Streamlining candidate-facing processes (e.g. testing and interview stages) to expand reach and improve efficiency
 - Engaging professional marketing services
 - Hosting first-ever First Responder Career Fair and increasing presence at local community events
 - Increasing radio and other advertisements; evaluating new methods and platforms for ad opportunities
 - Evaluating digital platforms to improve communication with applicants in various stages of the hiring process
 - CEO recommending New Hire Incentive Program to support recruiting

Issues Contributing to Overtime Usage: Retention

- Challenges
 - Lingering pandemic impacts on working conditions
 - Increased use of mandatory overtime, particularly in Custody Branch, due to position vacancies
 - External, uncontrollable factors including other agency incentives and broader public sentiment surrounding law enforcement
 - Above factors may be contributing to increased (perhaps earlier than planned) retirements and other separations
- Strategies
 - Sheriff management staff recently authorized to work overtime shifts while receiving Sergeant pay
 - Overtime shifts being offered to other sworn personnel at the County
 - Department requested to implement a temporary over-hire program for SSTs (currently underway)

Mitigating Overtime Usage: Relief Factor

- “Soft vacancies” – academies, training, and all leaves – also require overtime usage to backfill needed posts
 - Over past 5 years, avg. \$3.1 million/year spent on costs for deputies in academy and field or custody training (~50,000 training hours/year for 8-10 month training period)
- Staffing for a relief factor would account for soft vacancies and minimize overtime use, as demonstrated through:
 - Santa Maria experiment
 - Addition of Custody personnel prior to NBJ opening
- Relief factor calculated by combining average training hours and other lost time (e.g. vacation, sick)
 - Purpose is to ensure proper (i.e. 24/7) coverage of required security posts
 - Not calculated for most civilian posts and positions
- 2019 Justice Planners report recommended additional Custody positions to address shift relief needs
 - Adding more funding for sworn positions not recommended when existing positions not yet filled
 - However, addition of Sheriff Service Tech positions could address shift relief needs for sworn Custody staff

Mitigating Overtime Usage: **KPMG Recommend- ations**

- Several KPMG recommendations pertain to overtime usage and overall operational efficiency
- Department has implemented some recommendations and made progress in multiple areas, with more work still to be done

Key recommendations:

- Adopt demand-based, workload-driven processes to optimize staffing and service levels
- Restructure staffing model and assess barriers to filling funded positions and drivers of attrition
- Develop and codify consistent, data-driven policies to govern use of overtime by tracking and enforcing overtime usage and approvals
- Assess drivers of Custody Operations Branch overtime to better reflect demand for service

Mitigating Overtime Usage: Sheriff Service Technicians

- Entry-level, non-sworn position that assists deputies with certain duties and can reduce deputy overtime
 - Almost break-even: approximately \$102k in overtime saved per FTE, at a cost of \$108k
 - But, improves working conditions and morale by reducing overtime requirements on deputies
- Supports hiring and retention objectives, through ability to hire candidates in this capacity and creating a promotion pipeline into a sworn position after gaining experience and departmental knowledge
- Increasing use of SSTs supported by 2019 Justice Planners staffing study, KPMG recommendations, and Renew '22 initiative of civilianizing positions
- Sheriff submitted expansion request for 6 SSTs during FY 2022-23 budget cycle

Conclusion and Recommendation

- Retention and recruitment challenges result in increased and prolonged position vacancies (for sworn positions in particular), leading to higher overtime costs and budget overruns
- Additional data needed to better track drivers of overtime usage, determine OT baseline, and assess staffing needs once positions are filled

Recommended Budget Development Policy

\$2M set-aside in Prop 172 for the following purposes:


- To mitigate baseline overtime usage in the Sheriff Office at year-end that includes a detailed accounting of the actual cost of overtime related to shift relief backfill, including academy/training time, vacation, sick, and other lost time, and special events/emergencies that are not reimbursed through other resources
- Reimbursement for costs incurred for the County New Hire Incentive Program or other recruitment efforts pre-authorized by the CEO

Additional Options for Consideration

- **Option 1 (Immediate):** Assist Sheriff with filling vacancies
 - Employ existing tools such as New Hire Incentive Program and evaluate other opportunities within current labor agreements (may require one-time or ongoing costs, to be funded from Prop 172)
- **Option 2 (Short Term):** Augment Custody Branch staff with SSTs
 - Add 6 SSTs (\$648,000), funded from Prop 172, to alleviate jail staffing challenges
 - Additional positions could be evaluated with the budget process
- **Option 3 (Longer Term):** Assess other staffing levels once data is available
 - Develop a multi-year plan, with additional data, that identifies priority funding areas and trade-offs with other General Fund department needs

Recommended Actions

- a) Receive and file a report on Sheriff-Coroner Office overtime usage and costs;
- b) Approve a budget development policy for FY 2023-24 maintaining a \$2 million set-aside in General County Programs Proposition 172 fund balance, only to be released each year upon review and recommendation of the CEO and approval by the Board of Supervisors, to mitigate baseline overtime usage in the Sheriff-Coroner Office at year-end as defined in this report and reimbursement for the New Hire Incentive Program or other recruitment efforts pre-authorized by the CEO;
- c) Provide other direction, as appropriate; and
- d) Determine that the above actions are not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), because pursuant to sections 15378(b)(4) and 15378(b)(5) the recommended actions consist of organizational, administrative or fiscal activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

A low-angle photograph of a white building with a clock tower and a balcony, with the text "Comments from Sheriff Brown" overlaid in the center. The building features a balcony with a black metal railing and a clock face on the tower. The sky is blue with light clouds. The text is in a dark blue, sans-serif font.

Comments from
Sheriff Brown