



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number:

Submitted on:  
(COB Stamp)

Department Name: Sheriff-Coroner  
Department No.: 032  
Agenda Date: February 24, 2026  
Placement: Administrative Agenda  
Estimated Time:  
Continued Item: No  
If Yes, date from:  
Vote Required: Majority

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TO: Board of Supervisors  
FROM: Department Director: Sheriff Bill Brown   
Contact: Lieutenant Frank Vasquez  
SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding between the County of Santa Barbara and the Superior Court of Santa Barbara for the Provision of Court Security Services

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Other Concurrence:** Risk Management

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve, ratify, and authorize the Chair to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the Superior Court of Santa Barbara for the provision of court security services for January 1, 2026, to June 30, 2030.; and
- b) Determine this action is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15378(b)(5), which are organizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment.

**Summary Text:**

This item is before your Board to approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Superior Court of Santa Barbara for the provision of court security services from January 1, 2026, to June 30, 2030. Pursuant to California Government Code 69922, the Sheriff's Office is required to provide a variety of court security services, for which the State of California provides funding through an annual Trial Court Security Fund, supplemented by County General Fund. The MOU's intent is to meet legal requirements, while also establishing procedures and practices to promote reasonable staffing thresholds and budget safeguards.

**Discussion:**

Pursuant to California Government Code Sections 69920 through 69927, and specifically Section 69926(b), the Sheriff and the Superior Court are required to enter into an annual or multiyear agreement specifying the level of court security services to be provided. Approval of this MOU will ensure compliance with statutory requirements and formalize the service levels and fiscal framework governing court security operations. Funding for these services is provided by the State through the annual Trial Court Security Fund, as outlined in Government Code Section 69922.

The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office (SBSO) has long provided comprehensive law enforcement and security services within court facilities to ensure the safe and orderly administration of justice. These services include courtroom security, courthouse access control, prisoner transportation and custody, protection of judicial officers and jurors, and coordinated emergency response within court facilities. The prior MOU, which expired several years ago but still governs per Government Code section 69926(f), allocated 49 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions dedicated to court operations. While State funding covered most costs associated with salaries, benefits, training, and overtime to accommodate fluctuating court calendars and security needs, any funding shortfalls were absorbed through Sheriff's Office set-asides and, when necessary, the County General Fund.

The proposed MOU establishes a revised staffing model of 40.5 FTE positions, with the operational flexibility to surge staffing levels up to 48.5 FTE when court security demands require. This approach aligns staffing more closely with actual operational needs while maintaining the ability to respond to high-volume calendars, complex trials, or emergent security concerns. Additionally, the agreement incorporates fiscal safeguards, including structured monitoring of expenditures and mechanisms to identify and mitigate cost overruns. By allowing SBSO supervisors to strategically increase or decrease staffing based on real-time court needs, the new MOU enhances operational efficiency, strengthens fiscal accountability, and supports sustainable service delivery while preserving the longstanding collaborative relationship between the County and the State judicial system.

**Background:**

SBSO provides law enforcement and security services to the California court system pursuant to Government Code Sections 69920 through 69927. Pursuant to Government Code Section 69926(b), the Superior Court and the Sheriff, through the County of Santa Barbara, are required to enter an annual or multiyear MOU specifying the agreed upon level of court security services. The execution of this agreement will bring the Superior Court and Sheriff into compliance with this requirement and solidify the long-standing relationship between the County of Santa Barbara and the State of California. The MOU and service levels outlined within are critical to the safe and orderly operation of court facilities and include courtroom security, courthouse access control, prisoner transportation and custody, protection of judicial officers and jurors, and emergency response within court facilities.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: Yes

**Fiscal Analysis:**

The State of California annually provides approximately \$9 million to the County of Santa Barbara through the annual Trial Court Security Fund. This annual total may change in future years depending on a variety of State budget factors. Although the State of California funds trial court operations, counties are still required to pay for certain related costs not covered by the Trial Court Funding Act of 1997, such as County internal service fund charges, as outlined in Government Code § 69920–69927. To support these related costs, SBSO is budgeting approximately \$620,000 from their existing General Fund Contribution to support these related costs not supported by State funds. **Additionally,** the Courts will continue to pay SBSO \$150,000 to support the operational needs of Family Court.

Funding Source	FY 26-27 Estimated Total
General Fund	\$620,000
State	\$9,000,000
Federal	
Courts-funded	\$150,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,770,000</b>

The Sheriff’s Office will conduct and submit to the CEO a quarterly fiscal review of all costs associated with the services provided under this MOU. This review will include budget status and costs associated with services provided to ensure expenditures remain within approved budget parameters. Additionally, SBSO will discuss with the CEO any court security demands that require utilization of surge staffing under the MOU, including the number of positions, anticipated duration, and estimated cost. To the extent possible, such discussion will occur in advance of utilization of surge staffing to ensure sufficient funding exists for such costs.

This process will ensure continued fiscal accountability while maintaining required court coverage and operational continuity.

**Key Contract Risks:**

Contract risks are low. The MOU contains language in which the parties agree to mutual indemnification.

**Special Instructions:**

Please send a Minute Order and a fully executed copy of the Memorandum of Understanding to the

Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office Contract Services Bureau, attention Lt. Frank Vasquez.

**Attachments:**

**Attachment A** – Memorandum of Understanding between the County of Santa Barbara and the Superior Court of Santa Barbara.

**Contact Information:**

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County of Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office  
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