



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

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AGENDA LETTER

Department Name:

Sheriff-Coroner

Department Number:

032

Agenda Date:

June 23, 2026

Placement:

Administrative Agenda

Estimated Time:

N/A

Continued Item:

No

If Yes, date from:

N/A

Vote Required:

Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Director(s): Sheriff Bill Brown

BMW 2861

CONTACT: Cassandra Marking, custody Commander

SUBJECT: Request for Waiver of Competition in Purchase of Pharmaceuticals from Federal Drug Company for Incarcerated Persons upon Release from Custody.

Concurrences:

County Counsel Concurrence:

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence:

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Purchasing Division

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Authorize the County Purchasing Agent, pursuant to County Code section 2-39(c), to procure pharmaceuticals for incarcerated people upon release from the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office custodial facilities from Federal Drug Company (BL11341) without

being required to conduct a formal bid process, in an amount not to exceed \$34,388.00 for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 and in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 for the period of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 in a total amount not to exceed \$134,388; and

- b) b) Determine that the above recommended action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5) since this is a continuing administrative or maintenance activity, such as a purchase for supplies.

Summary Text:

This item is before your Board to request that the Board of Supervisors waive the requirement for competitive bidding to purchase pharmaceuticals for incarcerated people being released from Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office custodial facilities (Main Jail and Northern Branch Jail), pursuant to County Code section 2-39(c). Granting this waiver will allow the Sheriff's Office to maintain our business partnership with Federal Drug Company, bring our existing account into good financial standing, meet expected performance outcomes related to delivering continuity of care, and plan for unforeseen medication provisions as we implement discharge medications under the CalAIM guideline requirements.

The Federal Drug Company is a locally owned pharmacy within the City of Santa Barbara that the Sheriff's Office has used to purchase 30-day supplies of pharmaceuticals for incarcerated people being released who do not have the means to purchase medication for themselves. Additionally, the Sheriff's Office purchases pharmaceuticals from Federal Drug Company for individuals entering a community-based program where a 30-day supply of medication is required upon entry, thus ensuring preliminary acceptance into the program and aiding in the goal of successful program completion.

Discussion:

The Sheriff's Office provides medication to incarcerated people upon release when they do not have the means to purchase medication, or the medication is a requirement for acceptance to a community program, including community programs that are inclusive of MAT (Medication Assisted Treatment) patients. For this discharge medication, pharmaceutical expenses with Federal Drug are budgeted up to \$25,000, and that amount is included in the overall pharmaceutical budget for FY 2025-26. Pharmaceutical cost increases were experienced in general medication, MAT medication (inclusive of long-acting injectables), and psychotropic medication. The additional increased costs for pharmaceuticals and the influx in discharge medications physically picked up were not budgeted.

In April 2025 the Sheriff's Office secured a contract with California Forensic Medical Group (CFMG)/Wellpath for continued medical and mental health services. In this agreement, the discharge planner/liaison position increased from 1.0 to 2.0 FTE. The medical discharge planner/liaison plays a vital role in ensuring a smooth "warm handoff" by coordinating care transitions, communicating directly with receiving providers, and helping all patients stay connected to needed medical and mental health services after release, including coordinating medications upon release. The FTE increase in this position afforded the Sheriff's Office to have a Wellpath discharge planner at both custodial facilities, therefore expanding the educational and resources reach to more of the incarcerated population. Our post release medications supplied through Federal Drug Company work in tandem with the medical and pharmaceutical care provided by Wellpath, while the person is incarcerated, by mirroring the prescribed medication available (for

pickup) upon release with the medication received during incarceration. Information regarding post release medication availability improved and has driven the increase in medications directly picked up by recently incarcerated community members in need of continued medication. The increase in ordering and provision of medications to individuals being released resulted in a larger than expected expense.

MAT medications provided post release from June-October have been expensed at \$6,042 for FY25/26. An additional \$6,370 of MAT medication expenses are estimated from itemizing the November-December Federal Drug Company invoices pending payment. The Sheriff's Office has manually itemized invoices and has used opioid settlement funds to cover the cost of MAT pharmaceuticals. Although these itemized costs are paid from opioid settlement funds and do not pull from the budgeted general fund allocation, this amount does contribute to the overall \$25,000 purchasing authority amount detailed in the blanket purchase order.

In October 2026, the Sheriff's Office is scheduled to implement medication provisions under California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) guidelines, which will support individuals transitioning from incarceration to community with up to a 30-day supply of prescribed medications at the time of release. The operational responsibility for this medication supply will rest with the contracted correctional healthcare provider (CFMG / Wellpath), not the community pharmacy network, Federal Drug Company. Medications will be dispensed directly to the individual at the time of release, from the jail facility, rather than relying on post-release pharmacy pickup. The cost associated with the medication purchase will be the responsibility of the Sheriff's Office through contracted pharmacy billback in lieu of invoicing through Federal Drug Company for the majority of released incarcerated persons. After the full implementation of CalAIM, there may be a need to have a back-up pharmacy if time sensitive medications are unavailable from the primary pharmacy to ensure that individuals have access to a supply of medications upon release. Therefore, approval of this contract will allow Federal Drug Company to function as a back-up pharmacy and allow the Sheriff's Office to maintain the purchasing authority to provide that service.

Background:

Since 2015, the Sheriff's Office has partnered with Federal Drug Company to purchase pharmaceuticals for incarcerated people being released from the Santa Barbara Main Jail. From 2015 to present, this has been done as it was recognized that people did not always have insurance, the money, the means, etc. to purchase medication once out of custody of the Sheriff. Furthermore, during the 2017 fiscal year, a 30-day supply of medication became a requirement to enter some community-based organizations' programs. Established community programs that require the medication supply prior to admittance include but are not limited to the following: Rescue Mission, Bethel House, Stalwart Sober Living, Victory Outreach, and all of the Salvation Army ARCs. Recognizing the importance of continuity of care and with support from community residential and treatment programs, the Sheriff's Office implemented the purchase of medication for individuals in these circumstances.

Prior to 2015, the Sheriff's Office partnered with other local big brand pharmacies, mainly CVS. At that time, the Sheriff's Office paid for a post release, 14-day pharmaceutical supply and occasionally used these pharmacies for emergency fills of medication that might not have been in stock at the jail, such as psychotropics, and general health medications. In 2015, as the Sheriff's Office continued to pay for these 14- or 30-day supplies of medications (upon release) for a greater

number of people, we found our partnership with CVS partnership to be less feasible. Medications were often out of stock or unavailable, no cost savings were realized, and these pharmacies were not as responsive to the Sheriff's Office needs. Staff also found instances where mutual clients and patients were treated in a less amenable fashion. There were reports of excessively poor customer service targeted toward program advocates and the released incarcerated population when physically going to the pharmacy to pick up medications. After prescriptions were bridged with the pharmacy in advance, discharge planners who were picking up the medication on behalf of the incarcerated person, on the day of their scheduled release, reported extended wait times, which interfered with the allotted intake and processing window of the released person into the community program. These reoccurring circumstances tarnished the positive efforts of successfully transitioning a released person into a program while adhering to the program timeframes and admission requirements. Since partnering with Federal Drug Company, the Sheriff's Office has been able to improve continuity of care through medication provisions as this vendor has been able to supply discharge coordinators and post release community members with their prescribed medications upon pick up, while maintaining positive community interactions and customer service.

With the Board of Supervisor's approval to authorize the County Purchasing Agent, to waive the formal competitive bidding requirements for specific procurements, in this case procuring pharmaceuticals, pursuant County Code section 2-39(c), The Sheriff's Office would be granted the ability to continue to acquire essential medications and provide payment to our established community partner. Unlike the major pharmacies, Federal Drug Company has worked closely with our agency contact to provide timely medication supplies to facilitate an incarcerated person's successful transition into the community. Using Federal Drug Company has also provided cost savings to the Sheriff's Office by suggesting medication refills of certain medications closer to the prescription refill date, which allows for some of the prescriptions to be filled within a date range when post release insurance benefits are available.

Contract Renewals:

Pursuant to County Code Section 2-39(c), "When permitted by state and/or federal law the purchasing agent may waive competition where there are limitations on the source or supply, necessary restrictions in specifications, or other valid reasons provided that a full record of the circumstances is made, and the expenditure does not exceed twenty-five thousand dollars. Where the expenditure would or could exceed twenty-five thousand dollars competition may be waived only after approval by the board of supervisors." The Sheriff's Office is requesting the Board of Supervisors waive the competitive bid process because valid reasons for doing so exist. The Sheriff's Office did not previously participate in a competitive bid process, and the competitive bid process would not prove beneficial in fulfilling our invoice balance obligation due to our current vendor, Federal Drug Company. As previously described, Federal Drug Company has been able to supply medications to recently released community members in a timely and consistent manner which supports continuity of care to the county's clients and patients.

During FY 2025-26 the cost and demand for pharmaceuticals increased, and the Sheriff's Office exceeded the blanket purchase order (BL11341) authority amount of \$25,000. The Sheriff's Office still holds the responsibility of purchasing discharge medications as well as paying Federal Drug Company for medications already provided and invoiced. This waiver and increase in purchase order does not conflict with standing and upcoming contract obligations with Federal Drug Company. The waiver and increase will help ensure necessary medications are provided without delay and help prevent future delays.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

The current blanket purchase order FY2025-26 and an increase for the upcoming FY2026-27 from \$25,000 to \$100,000 are partially budgeted. For current FY2025-26 our blanket purchase order was budgeted and approved for \$25,000. In 2025 our post-released pharmaceutical purchases have exceeded that budgeted purchasing authority amount by \$9,388.00. The Sheriff’s Office has proposed an increase of \$100,000 when submitting our contracts and blanket purchase orders renewals for the FY2026-27 to avoid exceeding this purchasing authority during the upcoming fiscal year.

Fiscal Analysis:

Budgeted: Partially. \$25,000 is included in the FY 25/26 budget, the remaining anticipated \$9,388 will be absorbed through the Sheriff’s Office service and supplies object level. In the FY 26/27 budget, \$100,000 is budgeted, an increase of \$75,000, due to anticipating an increase of medication required for discharged inmates.

Funding Source	FY [2025-26]	FY [2026-27]	Total
General Fund	\$34,388.00	\$100,000.00	\$134,388.00
State			
Federal			
Fees			
[Other Source]			
Total	\$34,388.00	\$100,000.00	\$134,388.00

Special Instructions:

Clerk of the Board, please provide a copy of the minute order to the Purchasing Agent and Commander Cassandra Marking of the Sheriff’s Office. Please provide the signed minute order by email to Commander Cassandra Marking at the following email address: clm3991@sbsheriff.org.

Attachments:

Attachment A – Board Contract Summary Form

Contact Information:

Cassandra Marking
 Custody Commander
clm3991@sbsheriff.org