

**PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES BUREAU (PSB)
LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**

**OVERVIEW OF
PURPOSE, OPERATIONS, AND PRINCIPAL STAFFING**

Purpose of the Bureau:

The purpose of the Bureau, and its reason for existence, is to provide services to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department that are grounded in the practice and science of psychology and the behavioral sciences. These services can be grouped into three primary functional units: 1) Employee Support Services Unit (**ESS**); 2) Organizational Development Unit (**ODU**); and 3) Operations Support Unit (**OSU**).

Bureau Operations:

The activities of each of the Bureau's units are described in the accompanying chart. Approximately 50% of the Bureau's operations are devoted to the Employee Support Services Unit. Another 30% are devoted to the Organizational Development Unit, and 20% are devoted to the Operations Support Unit. These percentages reflect the calls for service the Bureau receives, related to both employee and organizational needs. The actual allocation of staff time between employee directed and organization directed services is about equal. Due to its relatively small size in terms of staffing, Bureau staff are not assigned to only one functional unit, but provide services across one or more units as noted in their duty statements and class specifications.

Bureau Staffing:

Budgeted Bureau items (current and anticipated as of FY 17-18) include a Director, two Assistant Directors, eight Law Enforcement Psychologists, ten Industrial/Organizational Consultants, two Bonus I Deputy Sheriffs, nine Administrative and Clerical Support staff, and one Student Worker. Total budgeted staffing is 33 items.

The Employee Support Services Unit is primarily staffed by the Law Enforcement Psychologists and Deputy Sheriffs (one assigned to the Substance Use Resource Service, and one assigned to coordinate the Peer Support Program). These items staff the four clinic operations devoted to providing these services to Sheriff's and Probation Department employees. At the same time, all of these items serve as instructors at Sheriff's or Probation Department academies and specialized schools (depending on assignment), as part of the Organizational Development Unit. Some of these items, depending on specialized training and skill, provide services to the Operations Support Unit as well.

The Organizational Development Unit and the Operations Support Unit are primarily staffed by the ten Industrial/Organizational Consultant items. These items are primarily responsible for developing behavioral science based programs and specialized training programs to promote and support organizational efficiency in conducting specific law enforcement missions. Two of these Industrial/Organizational Consultant items are Sub-unit assigned to the Custody Training and Standards Bureau to train Custody personnel in the new Crisis Intervention Training (DeVRT) program. Two additional items are assigned to develop and deliver a similar (LASD-CIT) program to all field operations personnel. The remainder of the items are assigned to bureaus and units throughout the Sheriff's Department on a continuing or as needed basis, e.g., Criminal Intelligence Bureau, Special Victims Bureau, Human Trafficking Bureau. At the same time they allocate a portion of their time to support the Law Enforcement Psychologists in clinic operations.

All Law Enforcement Psychologist and most Industrial/Organizational Consultant items participate in the 24/7 On-Call Emergency Response Service available throughout the Department. This service responds at any time of day or night and may be employee, organizational, or law enforcement mission specific.

CURRENT TRENDS AND LOCAL HISTORY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT PSYCHOLOGY

Current Trends in Law Enforcement Psychology (Police and Public Safety Psychology):

In 2011, the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP) recognized "*Police and Public Safety Psychology (PPSP)*" as a distinct specialty within the field of professional psychology, and commenced an examination and board certification process for recognizing specialists in the field. Shortly thereafter, the American Psychological Association also recognized PPSP as a specialty area of professional psychology practice.

The specialty of Police and Public Safety Psychology is comprised of four major domains of practice: Intervention, Organizational Development, Operational Support, and Assessment. The Bureau is actively engaged in practice and/or research in three of these four domains, as defined by each of its functional units. The only domain in which the Bureau does not provide service is Assessment, which comprises the practice of pre-employment and fitness for duty psychological evaluations of peace officers and peace officer candidates. Nonetheless the Bureau's active research program has, and will continue to have potential impact on how the Assessment domain of the specialty is practiced. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department currently staffs one of the largest Law Enforcement Psychology services in the country, and is seen as a leader in utilizing psychology and the behavioral sciences to enhance the welfare of its employees, its organizational efficiency, and its law enforcement mission. The Department has also started making a number of these services available, through an MOU, to the Los Angeles County Department of Probation.

The History of Law Enforcement Psychology in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department:

The history of Law Enforcement Psychology began almost 50 years ago, with the first psychologist hired as a full time employee of the Los Angeles Police Department in 1968. The profession has been referred to in the literature as "Police Psychology", "Law Enforcement Psychology", and "Public Safety Psychology". The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department has employed psychologists since the mid 1970's to provide services to its sworn and civilian employees and their families. Over the years, the Department has employed and/or trained a number of the psychology profession's nationally recognized specialists and experts in Law Enforcement Psychology.

In the early stages of its development, the Bureau was named the "Psychological Services Unit". It was staffed by 1-2 psychologists and varying numbers of post-doctoral psychology trainees. Staff items were adopted using the County's classification system for psychologists already serving in other departments, and were titled "Clinical Psychologist II", or "Clinical Psychology Intern" (referring to the unlicensed psychologist trainees).

In the late 1980's or early 1990's, the Unit's name was changed to "Employee Support Services Unit". At that time it was believed that the word "psychological" carried a negative connotation and deterred employees from voluntarily seeking such services because of the "stigma" associated with seeking mental health care, particularly for peace officers. Also, the term Employee Support Services, despite obscuring the psychological nature of those services, did reflect the majority of service provided by the Unit to the Department. Nonetheless, and despite the name change, the Bureau has always been known and referred to by many in the Department as "Psych Services".

In the mid 1990's as Law Enforcement Psychology was beginning to receive greater recognition as a specialty, the Unit reclassified its Clinical Psychologist II items to reflect the specialized skills and additional competencies required of psychologists working in a law enforcement agency. These positions became classified as "Law Enforcement Psychologist" and "Industrial/Organizational Consultant" items. The Industrial/Organizational Consultant items were added to focus specifically on organizational development needs. This expansion into the organizational development realm diversified the unit's activities and helped the unit achieve recognition as a distinct bureau within the Department, and subsequently became "Employee Support Services Bureau".

Over the past 15 years, the Bureau has increased the size of its psychology staff, diversified their specialty areas of practice, and their involvement in a variety of organizational development and law enforcement mission support activities. Each functional unit within the Bureau represents a specific domain and a different set of professional competencies within the Police and Public Safety Psychology specialty. No single unit adequately defines the breadth of the Bureau's professional psychology activities. Consequently, the Bureau was re-designated as the *Psychological Services Bureau* in 2015.

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PERSONNEL COMMAND
PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES BUREAU (PSB)**

