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Keynotes



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RAISING OUR VISIBILITY AND INCREASING ENGAGEMENT



ART GONZALES
CCSO State President

We've been highly productive at CCSO Headquarters this summer, driven by the renewed sense of connection and optimism about our organization's future that we felt during our annual Conference.

One key way we're building on that momentum is through our new, collaborative working groups. The SRN II working group, which launched earlier this year, is already underway and making progress on addressing concerns raised by our Supervising Registered Nurse II members. We also recently formed a financial review group composed of Board members who review quarterly expenditures, address financial questions and serve as an added safeguard to ensure the organization's fiscal health.

Additionally, we're preparing to assemble a chapter presidents working group this fall that will oversee bylaw revisions and help address specific issues affecting members within their chapters.

The goal of these groups is to increase involvement, encourage shared ownership of the organization and establish a hands-on approach to addressing the issues we face by delegating

I'm really excited about the potential our working groups have to strengthen both the services we offer and the representation we provide to our membership.

responsibilities more broadly. I'm really excited about their potential to strengthen both the services we offer and the representation we provide to our membership.

Along with our working groups, we're also focused on raising CCSO's profile and increasing our visibility across the state by

participating in and supporting more community and chapter events. We want our members to know that your organization is always representing you — whether it's at a staff appreciation event, fundraiser or other special gathering, we'll be there. We also aim to continue supporting organizations and programs that resonate with our members. Recently, we sponsored and supported the Women in Law Enforcement Symposium and have been actively involved in Bring Your Child to Work Day and various health care events. We're also proud to be co-sponsoring CDCR's upcoming Medal of Valor Awards.

This kind of exposure is important because, in many cases, labor organizations aren't always visible in their communities. I believe it's vital for CSSO to show up at these events and demonstrate that we're more than just a labor organization — we're here to support everyone.

In order for us to show up for our members, fellow organizations and community in this way, our finances need to be solid. As I've shared in previous messages, we were awarded a lump sum in the walk-time case. I'm happy to report that we've been investing that money in a wealth management account to grow alongside our organization. This move will, without a doubt, help strengthen

us financially. In the past, we kept our funds in a variety of banks, but that approach didn't allow the money to grow. By partnering with a wealth management group, we're now able to better manage our funds and work toward a more profitable return. The Board receives quarterly updates on the account, and so far, I'm pleased to share that the investment has proven to be very successful over the past year.

Last, but certainly not least, we're excited to announce the establishment of a health care program specifically for our custody members. In the past, CCSO did not have such a program, while our counterparts did. As a

smaller organization, creating a viable health care option has been challenging. We are now proud to be partnering with the Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC) and its Insurance and Benefits Trust (IBT) to offer a solid plan for custody members and retirees.

After discussing the proposal with our chapter presidents, they voted to approve CCSO moving forward. One of the key benefits of this plan is improved support for members working in rural institutions where health care options are limited. It also provides out-of-state coverage for members who relocate outside California and is more cost-effective than some

plans currently offered by our counterparts.

I want to emphasize that, for now, this plan is intended for custody members. We will explore the option for non-custody members if we see an expressed need; however, in many cases, our non-custody members have access to better health care coverage than custody members.

As we move into the fall season, we will continue working hard to strengthen our organization, and I will keep you updated on the progress of our ongoing initiatives. Thank you for your continued support, your involvement and your trust in me. Together, we'll take CCSO to new heights. 🗝️

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NUMBER	INSTITUTION	RANK/NAME
1	SCC	Lt. Tessa Chambers
3	PBSP	Lt. Jeremy Frisk
4	CIM	Lt. Gerard De Los Santos
5	MCSP	Sgt. Joshua Watson
6	ISP	Sgt. John McAllister
7	RJD	Lt. Alexis Gonzalez
8	SOL	Sgt. Tim White
9	CCI	Sgt. James Robinson
10	ASP	Lt. Cristobal Gonzalez Jr.
11	NKSP	Lt. Ismael Quintero
12	VSP	Lt. Beau Bean
13	CAL	Lt. Arturo Alderete
14	CRC	Lt. Paul Trevino
15	CIW	Lt. Rudy Arellano
16	FOL	Lt. Jerald Beasley
17	PVSP	Lt. Christopher Nevarez
18	CEN	Lt. Ricardo Davila
19	WSP	Lt. Lanford Blansett III
20	LAC	Lt. Daniel Schumacher
21	COR	Sgt. Samantha Medina
22	CTC	Sgt. Steven Byers
23	CSATF	Lt. Christian Gray
24	DSH/MSH	HP Sgt. Dalend Biles
25	SVSP	Lt. Jose Cermeno
26	CMF	Sgt. Brad Smith
27	CCWF	Lt. George Roberts
28	SAC	Lt. Terrance Buchanan
29	CTF	Lt. Eric Da Rosa
31	SQ	Sgt. Matthew Gutierrez
32	DSH/ASH	HP Sgt. Ryan Lombardi
34	CMC	Lt. Jason Baker
35	HDSP	Lt. Charlie Hahn
36	KVSP	Sgt. Aunter Haddad
37	CHCF	Lt. Richard Feston
38	CDC HQ	Capt. Jaime Jimenez
39	DSH/NSH	HP Lt. Jessica Heine
40	DAPO	PAIII Jorge Robles
43	DSH/CSH	HP Sgt. Kevin Jones
46	BIU	Sgt. James Caplan
47	IWL	CS II Salvador Ruvalcaba Jr.
48	AIU Central	Lt. Juan Medina
49	DSH/PSH	HP Sgt. Devin Higgins
50	1515 S. St.	Capt. Carlos Santos
51	AIU North	Lt. Josh Bullard



VOTE IN THE CCSO STATE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

GET INVOLVED!

It's your chance to make a difference! The CCSO State Presidential Election is coming up, and your participation is vital in shaping the future of our organization.

Please note: A recent change to the CCSO Bylaws now specifies that only current members of the State Board of Directors are eligible to be nominated and elected as state president.

Be sure to mark your calendars with these key election dates and deadlines:

- **September 5:** Presidential election nomination forms mailed to members. Forms must be received at the Berger & Company office by **October 6**.
- **November 5:** Ballots mailed to members. Completed ballots must be received at the Berger & Company office by **December 5**.
- **December 5:** Election results announced.

Every vote counts, and we encourage all members to take part in this important process!



If you have any questions,
visit ccsonet.org or contact (800) 449-2940.



Cash Pontious

CCSO CELEBRATES DOUBLE SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Honoring Academic
Excellence and Dedication



Craig Sorensen |
CCSO Statewide Recruiter/
Senior Representative

CCSO is proud to spotlight an extraordinary accomplishment that reflects both the dedication of our members and the outstanding potential of the next generation. This year, CCSO is honored to announce that the son of one of our members has earned not one but two prestigious scholarships, a rare and commendable achievement that showcases the very best of our community values.

Each year, CCSO provides scholarships to the children of members through the California Correctional Supervisors Foundation (CCSF). Additionally, through our partnership with the California Law Enforcement Association (CLEA), CCSO members' children have access to other scholarship opportunities. These



The Pontious family

scholarships are designed to support students who demonstrate excellence in academics, leadership and community involvement as they pursue their educational goals.

In 2025, Jason Pontious, a proud CCSO member from Calipatria State Prison (CAL), had the unique honor of seeing his son, Cash Pontious, awarded scholarships from both CCSF and CLEA. This exceptional dual recognition is a testament to the hard work, discipline and drive that Cash has demonstrated throughout his academic and personal journey.

A recent graduate of Eleanor Roosevelt High School, Cash completed his high school education with a remarkable 4.07 GPA, an achievement that speaks volumes about his dedication to academic excellence. But Cash didn't stop there. Amid his rigorous academic workload, he also remained active in extracurricular activities and is set to receive the distinguished rank of Eagle Scout from Troop 1776, based in Chino Hills.

Reflecting on his achievement, Cash shared, "Winning the scholarships felt incredibly rewarding. It took a lot of hard work to maintain my GPA while staying involved in so many activities. Completing the scholarship applications was a challenge, but it was absolutely worth the effort."

This fall, Cash will take the next step in his academic

journey at the University of California, Irvine, where he has been accepted into the anthropology program. His aspirations and work ethic serve as a shining example to others within the community and beyond.

His father, Jason, expressed heartfelt pride in his son's accomplishments, stating, "I'm so very proud of all the hard work Cash put in to get to this point. Taking AP classes and participating in extracurricular activities at the same time is not easy, but he managed it with focus and maturity. I'm proud to see him grow into a productive member of society with a bright future ahead."

CCSO believes that supporting our members means investing in their families as well. These scholarship opportunities not only provide financial assistance but also serve to encourage the pursuit of higher education and personal growth.

We extend our warmest congratulations to the Pontious family for this well-earned recognition and wish Cash continued success as he embarks on his journey at UC Irvine. His achievement is a proud reminder of the values we hold dear: dedication, service, education and leadership. 🗝️

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BUILDING BRIDGES FOR REFORM

CCSO Leaders Engage With Senator Bob Archuleta on Mental Health and Officer Training Initiatives

Dalend Biles | DSH Metropolitan Chapter President

In a landmark show of interdepartmental collaboration, CCSO leaders from both the Department of State Hospitals (DSH) and Adult Parole Operations recently met with Senator Bob Archuleta to discuss critical issues affecting the future of public safety and mental health response in California.

DSH Metropolitan Vice President Ernest Archuleta and I joined forces with Adult Parole Operations Chapter President Jorge Robles to advocate for forward-thinking policy changes aimed at enhancing officer safety, service delivery and training standards.

The meeting centered on proposed reforms to officer training and certification, as well as coordinated law enforcement response protocols for Mental Health Village (MHV). DSH Metropolitan has already begun implementing SB 1336 and a proposed legislative pathway for POST certification specific to hospital police. These developments align with the efforts of CCSO leadership to champion safety-first policies and innovative reforms, while also exploring





strategic training and statewide engagement to support these reforms.

Senator Archuleta was not only receptive but actively engaged in the concerns raised, particularly regarding staffing shortages and officer safety. He pledged his continued support by committing to a follow-up

The meeting underscored the strength of CCSO leadership in shaping policy through unified advocacy and action.

meeting and offering to engage with additional key stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive and successful path forward.

The meeting underscored the strength of CCSO leadership in shaping policy through unified advocacy and action. The prospect of legislative partnerships is shaping the professional standing and operational readiness of California's correctional and hospital law



enforcement officers — setting a clear path toward long-term reform and impact. 🔑



CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR MEN HOSTS FIRST-EVER JUNIOR PEACE OFFICER ACADEMY



Craig Sorensen |
CCSO Statewide Recruiter/
Senior Representative

The California Institution for Men (CIM) recently hosted CDCR’s first Junior Peace Officer Academy, an innovative and engaging event tailored exclusively for the children of CIM staff. Held on June 25, this academy offered a unique twist on the traditional “bring your child to work day” by immersing participants in the values, responsibilities and teamwork that define California’s correctional professionals. It gave children a deeper understanding of the daily challenges their parents face while serving in various roles across the institution.

Approximately 108 children, ages 8 to 18, took part in the day-long event, which featured a wide array of interactive activities and demonstrations. Staff from custody, administration, medical, fire and the Prison Industry Authority (PIA) volunteered their time to bring this immersive experience to life. However, it was CCSO’s support that appeared to stand out as the most generous during the event.

CCSO’s leadership and generosity elevated the event to new heights. In addition to sponsoring the academy, CCSO provided essential materials and memorable takeaways for each child in attendance. This included lanyards for participant gate clearance passes, high-quality event T-shirts for all 108 children and a wide range of merchandise such as cups, first responder-themed coloring books, charging cords, bracelets, stickers and





teddy bears. CCSO's contributions were not only generous but also reflective of its ongoing commitment to the well-being of staff and their families.

The academy featured a series of dynamic and educational stations spotlighting institutional operations. Highlights included baton training with the red man suit led by the IST team, mock cell searches and an inert MK-9 OC spray demonstration. A water balloon toss added an element of fun and teamwork. ISU conducted a K-9 demonstration showcasing contraband detection, while CRT hosted a Q&A session about its tactical responsibilities. Additional features included a PIA Dive School display, a Southern Transportation bus tour and

an interactive fire hose demonstration courtesy of the CIM Fire Department. The Medical Department presented informative sessions on Narcan, proper handwashing using black light, CPR basics and an Incident Command Post demonstration led by Administration.

This groundbreaking event, made possible in large part by CCSO's unwavering support, reflects CIM's broader commitment to employee wellness, family inclusion and community engagement. Since 1941, CIM has led the way in building a culture of connection and service, and with events like this, it continues to raise the standard for outreach and youth engagement across CDCR. 

PAROLE CHAPTER

A DAY OF APPRECIATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT FOR DAPO SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS



Jorge Robles | DAPO Chapter President

August 12 was a day filled with gratitude, camaraderie and pride. The CCSO Parole Chapter hosted a luncheon dedicated to honoring the supervisors and managers of the Division of Adult Parole Operations (DAPO) and highlighting CCSO's ongoing advocacy for our members.

More than 36 supervisors and managers attended the event. A food truck served a variety of delicious meals, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere where colleagues could reconnect, share stories and build new bonds. It was more than a meal — it was a celebration of leadership, service and teamwork.

Keynote Speakers Who Inspired

DAPO Acting Director Heather Bowlds opened with heartfelt thanks to supervisors and managers for their daily dedication and professionalism. She shared updates on the Division's priorities, acknowledging that the success of DAPO's mission depends on the strength and leadership of its supervisors and managers.

California State Senator Bob Archuleta followed with an inspiring message about service, integrity and the vital role parole professionals play in protecting communities while supporting rehabilitation. In a highlight moment, Senator Archuleta presented two Certificates of Recognition:

- To Acting Director Heather Bowlds — honoring all supervisors and managers across California for their unwavering dedication, leadership and commitment to public safety
- To the CCSO Parole Chapter — recognizing our steadfast advocacy for supervisors and managers and our ongoing partnership in advancing public safety and leadership statewide

CCSO Parole Chapter Special Presentation

In a gesture of gratitude, the CCSO Parole Chapter presented Senator Archuleta with a plaque of appreciation for his unwavering support of CCSO, his commitment to law enforcement professionals and his dedication to the mission of public safety in California.

A Message From CCSO Parole Chapter Leadership

As chapter president, I had the privilege of speaking alongside Vice President Ricardo St. Louis-Franklin and Board member Eduardo Sanchez. We reaffirmed CCSO's dedication to advocating for safe workplaces, fair policies and the professional respect our members have earned.

More Than a Luncheon

The day underscored that leadership is a shared responsibility, that recognition fuels morale and that strong partnerships — with division leadership, legislators and our CCSO family — are essential to our success. The day ended on a high note, with a shared sense of unity and pride in the work being done to protect communities and support the men and women who lead in parole operations.

To every supervisor and manager who attended: Thank you for your leadership, your service and your unwavering commitment to the people of California. It was a good day for CCSO, a good day for DAPO and a great day for public safety.

A special thank-you goes to all the CCSO chapter presidents statewide and to the CCSO executive leadership and staff whose dedication, teamwork and commitment make this organization a success. 🗝️



CALLING ALL CCSO MEMBERS



Share your stories and photos in print!

- Do you have photos from a recent event held at your institution?
- Do you have an experience you want to share with fellow members?

Send us your updates to be published in *Keynotes*!
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HEALTH & WELLNESS

FUELING THE FORCE: HOW NUTRITION TRANSFORMS HEALTH, PERFORMANCE AND LONGEVITY



An Interview With Jim Reyes, a Lifelong Bodybuilder and Nutritional Consultant

Correctional officers operate in high-stress environments where both physical resilience and mental clarity are crucial. While strength and training are often prioritized, one of the most powerful tools for long-term health and performance is often overlooked: *nutrition*.

We sat down with Jim Reyes, a veteran in the field of nutrition and bodybuilding, to understand how food fuels performance, improves mental health and can even help reduce or eliminate reliance on medications. Here's what he had to say.

From Skinny Teen to Nutritional Authority

Q: What's your background in health and nutrition?

"I started out as a skinny high school kid who just wanted to build muscle. I realized early that to grow, I had to learn how to eat properly. I was also a picky eater, so I began studying nutrition on my own in high school. Later, I

majoring in nutrition in college — but I found the curriculum to be outdated and basic. Most of what I've learned has come from taking classes from all over the world and applying real-world experience."

Despite not finishing his degree due to the limitations of the 1980s academic landscape, his dedication to lifelong learning shaped a deep, practical understanding of nutritional science.

From Bodybuilding to Holistic Health

Q: Where has your knowledge of nutrition taken you?

"I became a competitive bodybuilder and gained over 100 pounds of muscle over time. That was my original goal — but the deeper I got, the more I fell in love with the science behind how food affects the body. In the last 15 years, my focus shifted from just muscle gain to long-term health, functionality and longevity."

Today, his mission is not only helping athletes but empowering everyday people to regain their health, vitality and energy — through food.

Why a Healthy Diet Matters for a Lifetime

Q: What are the biggest long-term benefits of a healthy diet?

"I've never had a dramatic weight loss story. I've always tried to stay healthy. I'm now in my 60s — I still have visible abs, I'm functional and I can keep up with people half my age. The greatest anti-aging tool we have is exercise, and nutrition is the fuel that makes it possible."

For correctional staff who may be working long shifts and navigating unpredictable stress, maintaining this kind of health means more energy, sharper focus and greater resistance to chronic disease.

Restoring Health When Medicine Falls Short

Q: Have you helped others overcome health issues through nutrition?

"Absolutely. I've helped people with digestive issues that went unresolved for years despite medical treatment. In many cases, poor nutrition was the root cause. I've also coached people to win world-class bodybuilding competitions. But honestly, the most rewarding thing has been helping people reclaim their everyday health."

One powerful example? "I had a client on nine medications — and through nutritional changes, he was able to get off all nine. That's the power of using food as medicine."

Popular Diets Explained: What Works and Why

Q: What are the most common diets people follow?

Here are the top five modalities:

1. **Plant-based diets** emphasize vegetables, legumes, grains and fruits.
2. **Keto diets** are low-carb, high-fat and encourage ketone-based energy.
3. **Carnivore diets** are extreme elimination diets, consisting only of animal products.
4. **Carb cycling** alternates between high- and low-carb days to fuel workouts.
5. **Low-carb diets** reduce carb intake without going full keto.

Each approach has its benefits depending on goals, lifestyle and body response.

Adapting to Diet Change: Metabolic Flexibility

Q: How does the body react to carb-restricted diets like keto?

"At first, people often feel terrible — it's called the 'keto flu.' Your body is switching from using glucose to using ketones for energy. That's a big shift. But with time, your body adapts. This is called *metabolic flexibility* — your ability to efficiently switch between fuel sources."



Jim Reyes

Tip for the transition? "Don't overly restrict calories in the beginning. Eat more fats to help your body adjust and maintain energy levels."

The Gut–Brain Connection

Q: How does diet affect your gut health?

"Your gut biome is like its own ecosystem — more bacteria than human DNA. Processed foods destroy that balance. Natural, whole foods, especially fermented and high-fiber foods, support a healthy gut. And a healthy gut directly impacts your mental health."

For correctional officers, where stress is high and rest can be limited, gut health isn't just about digestion — it's about emotional resilience and mental clarity.

Meat, Plants and Nutrient Density

Q: Can vegans and vegetarians get all the nutrients they need?

"They can, but it's tough without supplementation. Nutrients like B12, K2 and taurine are abundant in animal products and harder to find in plants. It takes planning and intentionality, but it's possible."

Interestingly, red meat, often criticized in mainstream health narratives, remains one of the most nutrient-dense foods when sourced and prepared properly.

Final Thoughts: Discipline Is the Real Superpower

The takeaway for correctional officers is simple: *You don't need to be a bodybuilder to benefit from better nutrition.* Whether your goal is more energy, improved digestion, better mental focus or long-term vitality, your plate plays a massive role.

"You don't have to wait until something breaks to start taking care of your body," Reyes says. "Your job already demands so much — make sure your fuel is serving you, not working against you."

To learn more about Jim Reyes, visit bodybyjimreyes.com. 🔑

LEGAL

YOU JUST RECEIVED A NOTICE FOR AN OIA/ AIU OR AG INTERVIEW — WHAT DO YOU DO?



Gary G. Goyette | Goyette Law West, APC, Founder

It's never fun to receive a notice that you will be interviewed as part of an investigation by the CDCR Office of Internal Affairs (OIA) or the Allegations Investigation Unit (AIU) — or, for that matter, by the California Attorney General (AG). And right after you ask yourself, “But what could I have done wrong?” comes the next question: What should I do? *You should take, at a minimum, the following three steps.*

1. Contact CCSO Immediately and Ask for an Attorney to Represent You

When you receive a notice to be interviewed — *even if* you were noticed as a witness, and not as a subject — you should contact CCSO right away and arrange for one of the attorneys CCSO has on retainer to represent you. Maybe you have been through one or more interviews previously, you think you “know the drill” and don’t need any representation,

or you may think just a fellow co-worker and CCSO member can attend the interview with you. How complicated could it be, right? Wrong. Get an attorney through CCSO right away. Call CCSO directly at (800) 449-2940 or ask your local CCSO chapter president to assist you in contacting CCSO to request representation. *Why?* Because you never know what can arise at a subject *or* witness interview, and CCSO attorneys are experienced and trained to handle all issues so that you are as protected as possible under the law.

2. Understand How Long You Have to Obtain Legal Representation and Take the Necessary Time to Obtain That Representation

While CDCR OIA/AIU and the AG are usually reasonable, at times a CCSO member may receive an interview notice with the interview scheduled for the very next day (this has happened). You need to understand one basic truth: *you have as much time as you need to obtain the attorney of your*

choice to represent you. Period. Why is this true? Because years ago (in 2002), CCSO attorney Mike Lackie secured a court-issued “stipulated judgment/permanent injunction” — and by “stipulated,” that means CDCR agreed to this “permanent injunction” — requiring CDCR to allow CCSO members whatever time they need to obtain legal representation for investigative interviews.

Sometimes you may hear that the allowed notice period is “five days”; that is not correct. The reference to “five days” simply comes from part of the stipulated judgment/permanent injunction, which clarified that if CDCR provided at least five *working* days from the date the interview notice was given (and the date the notice was actually handed to the employee to be interviewed) to the date of the interview, *then* CDCR would automatically receive an extension of the one-year time period specified in Government Code §3304(d) for the same number of days the chosen representative is unavailable, without the need for a written stipulation. This one-year period is the allowed time from when CDCR learns of possible

You have as much time
as you need to obtain the
attorney of your choice to
represent you. Period.

misconduct by an employee to the completion of the investigation into such alleged misconduct and the issuance of a letter of intent to impose discipline (the intent to issue a notice of adverse action). In other words, *if* CDCR provided at least five working days from handing the employee the notice of interview to the date for the interview stated on the notice, and the employee needed 20 days to obtain the legal representation of their choice, *then* CDCR would have one year and 20 days to complete their investigation and issue a letter of intent from the day they learned of the possible misconduct to be investigated.

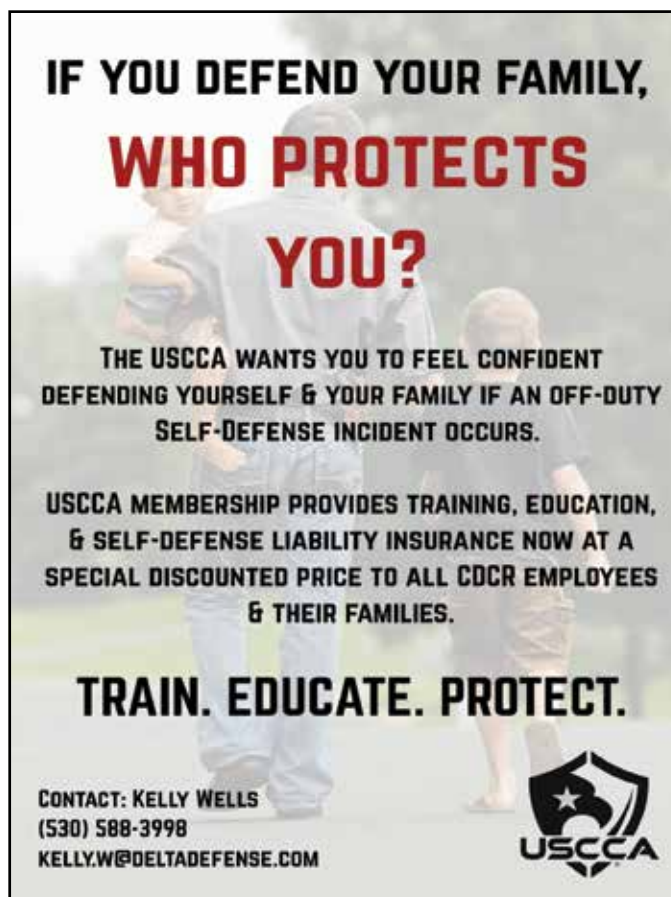
All that said, CCSO members should not, of course, purposely delay the interview for which they received the notice. That is because, in addition to being professional and courteous to OIA/AIU/AG, there is a DOM provision (section 31140.27), which states, “employees may request and *shall be allowed reasonable State time* by the supervisor to contact/secure a representative and to discuss the matter *prior to any meeting/interview* that may lead to adverse action. The employee shall also be allowed

reasonable State time to prepare for the interview/meeting with the representative.” So while, legally, CCSO members have to be allowed sufficient time to obtain the legal representative of their choice, the amount of time used for this should remain reasonable.

Despite these rules, at times OIA special agents or other investigators may insist they have a right to conduct the interview whenever they choose — even one day after the notice is handed to the employee. This happened to a CCSO member I represented recently, and when I dared to tell the agent she was wrong, the agent promptly provided a copy of a March 4, 2011, memo by then-CDCR Undersecretary Scott Kernan, which stated that “any five-day notice requirement for OIA interviews was ‘rescinded.’” Such a memo, of course, carries no weight, and in no manner changed the court-issued stipulated judgment/permanent injunction — a fact that then-CCSO attorney Mike Lackie stated fully in writing in a CCSO letter issued immediately after Mr. Kernan’s memo was issued in 2011.

Bottom line: If you are given an investigation interview notice, you have as much time as you need to obtain an attorney to represent you and to prepare for the interview with that attorney before it takes place, though you

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Continued from page 19

should try to be reasonable about the time you take to obtain representation. And *if* you face an OIA agent who is aggressively pushing you to do an interview before your attorney is assigned or available, tell the agent, “No, I will not agree to the interview until my attorney is available” — *and then* that attorney can put the issue of you being pressured to be interviewed on the record for the interview, in case that is needed to protect you later in the process.

3. Carefully Review the Notice for the Interview, and If You Are Listed As a “Subject,” Make Sure the Notice Is Clear About the Allegations Against You Being Investigated

So you received a notice to be interviewed for an investigation, you called CCSO and you took the necessary time to obtain an attorney to help you prepare for and engage in the interview. Is there anything you should be doing before the interview? *Yes*. You need to carefully read the part of the notice stating the subject matter of the interview, and have your attorney do the same. *Why?* Because you have a right to know the specific allegations against you that are being investigated.



Know that it is very, very common for interview notices to provide certain dates or time periods at issue, and a general description of what incidents, communications or events are at issue — *but entirely fail to provide* enough detail for you to know which “misconduct” or violation of policy you allegedly committed. Such a deficiency is a clear violation of a specific DOM provision that requires CDCR to notify the subject employee of the allegations at issue so they can respond to those allegations in the interview.

DOM Chapter 3, Article 14, subsection 31140.31 covers Internal Affairs investigations, and states that “All departmental employees under investigation and subject to interview by an investigator *shall be informed* of the following before such interview: (1) Name and classification of the investigator; (2) Name and classification of all other persons to be present during

It is common for interview notices to fail to provide enough detail for you to know which “misconduct” or violation of policy you allegedly committed.

the interview; and (3) *The nature of the investigation in sufficient detail to allow the employee to respond to the allegations.*” (Emphasis added.) Accordingly, for CDCR to be compliant with the requirements for notices of investigative interviews, an employee being interviewed as a *subject* must be notified in sufficient detail to respond specifically to “the allegations.”

Why does CDCR complying with this requirement matter? Because in order for you and your attorney to adequately prepare for the interview — to pull up and review any applicable reports, memos, emails or text messages, or any other information related to the matter at issue — you and your attorney have to know, of course, exactly what you are being accused of. And this is not just to satisfy your pre-interview curiosity, but to allow you and your attorney to prepare all applicable responses and rebuttals which, in the end, may result in the OIA/AIU or AG report containing all facts — which, in turn, could lead CDCR to decide *not* to issue any discipline to you.

You (and your attorney) also want to assess whether specific allegations against you are presented in the

interview notice, since if the allegations are not included, or are not clear, your attorney can object on the record at the start of the interview that the notice is defective and not compliant with DOM section 31140.31 — and such an objection may protect you later in the process and provide more arguments for the appeal of any discipline issued.

Lastly, the interview notice needs to adequately present the allegations against you, because if it does not, you may very well be a “witness” and not a “subject” of the investigation. Especially lately, in CCSO member interviews I handled, CDCR seems to be “erring on the safe side” and classifying employees as “subjects,” even when there are no clear allegations against them. *Why?* Who knows. Maybe laziness — but more likely because, if an individual is classified as a witness, and the interview questions and responses lead the investigator to believe the employee may have committed any misconduct or policy violation, the investigator cannot, as part of a “witness” interview, ask any questions about any possible misconduct. Instead, they would have to reissue an interview notice for the employee as a “subject,” and schedule a new interview at a later date. By calling an employee who should be classified as a “witness” a “subject,” the investigator gains the leeway to ask questions that may implicate the employee in possible misconduct committed by them. This is not a “fair” or

“professional” practice by CDCR, but it happens.

Just recently, I represented a CCSO member who was approached informally (and in person) by an OIA special agent who literally told the member, “Hey, I have just a few questions to ask you as a witness.” Shortly afterward, the agent issued a notice of interview to this CCSO member as a subject. When I objected (via email, prior to the interview) to the notice classifying the member as a subject, the agent responded, “Well, it’s tied to the last time I interviewed her as a subject.” The problem with the agent’s position was twofold: first, the matter on which he wanted to question this member was not related to the matter he previously interviewed her as a subject on; and second, the OIA case for the prior subject interview was closed (allegations found not substantiated)! Needless to say, all of this was put on the record as an objection at the start of the interview, with me stating that the notice was defective and that no answer provided by the employee being interviewed could be used as a basis for any discipline against this employee. The special agent was not happy — but too bad. The CCSO member remained protected.

In sum, *if you receive an investigation interview notice, follow the three steps above* to ensure you are as protected as possible, with your CCSO attorney to guide you and represent you throughout the process. 🔑



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MAKING A DIFFERENCE

CCSO GIVES BACK

As we continue our mission of supporting our chapters in their efforts to make a meaningful and lasting difference in their communities and institutions, here's a look at some of the events and organizations CCSO has recently contributed to and participated in.

Women in Law Enforcement Symposium





Continued on page 24

CEAC Walk-a-Thon and Golf Tournament



PPOA 17th Annual Peace Officer Memorial Golf Tournament



CIM Junior Peace Officer Academy



CNOA 24th Annual Survivors Memorial Fund Golf Tournament



CRC's Bring Your Loved One to Work Day



OPOS Staff Appreciation Event



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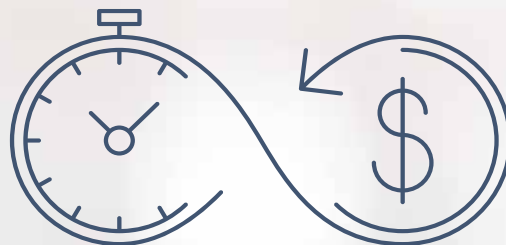
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ANNUAL SUPERVISORY TIME BANK

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