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## Sheriff's Department Making Significant Strides in Jail Suicide Prevention



The San Diego County Sheriff's Department is committed to providing high-quality medical and mental health services to inmates in our custody.

Over the last several years the Sheriff's Department has worked towards this goal by developing and implementing programs such as Enhanced Observation Housing and seeking accreditation with the National Commission on Correctional Health Care. In addition, the County of San Diego contracted with Lindsay Hayes, a nationally-renowned suicide prevention expert, to review and assess our policies, procedures and training in 2018.

Mr. Hayes' evaluation of our suicide prevention system is documented in a [report](#) which included 32 recommendations. We have addressed 26 of the recommendations by Mr. Hayes and continue to research and evaluate the remaining recommendations. Mr. Hayes noted in his report "...there has been a dramatic decrease in the number of inmate suicides in the San Diego County Jail System during the past few years."

To see the complete list of recommendations and read Mr. Hayes' full report visit [www.sdsheriff.net/response](http://www.sdsheriff.net/response).

Here's a quick look at some of the changes the Sheriff's Department has made based on Mr. Hayes' recommendations:



- Implemented new mandatory suicide prevention and mental health training for sworn, professional and contractual employees.
- Designated private interview spaces at booking facilities, the San Diego Central Jail and Las Colinas Detention and Reentry Facility, to ensure privacy and confidentiality during the booking process. Planning is underway for a private interview space at the Vista Detention Facility.
- Updated screening and intake procedures.
  - Intake screening questions were revamped to include open-ended and not time-sensitive questions to identify those having suicidal thoughts
- Enhanced monitoring based on the level of suicide risk.
  - Mental health triage and referral protocols
- Quality assurance process and communication for staff
  - Facility mental health team meetings to manage the treatment needs of suicidal and mentally ill patients for continuity of care
  - Creation of the Suicide Prevention Focused Response Team (SPFRT) to track self-harm incidents, attempted suicides and suicides

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