



Legislation Text

File #: 2024-1172, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): Sheriff's Office
Staff Name and Phone Number: Sheriff Eddie Engram 565-2781
Vote Requirement: 4/5th
Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:
Sheriff's Narcotic's Unit Temporary Program

Recommended Action:

- A) Adopt a Resolution amending the Sheriff's Office Department Allocation List to add 1.0 Time Limited Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Sheriff's Sergeant and 4.0 Time-Limited FTE Deputy Sheriff II allocations, effective November 12, 2024, specifically to establish a time-limited Narcotics Unit Program at the Sheriff's Office.
- B) Adopt a Resolution adjusting the Sheriff's Office FY 2024-2025 Adopted Budget, transferring expenditure appropriations between Divisions for a time-limited Narcotics Unit program at the Sheriff's Office, approved by the Board of Supervisors, for an estimated cost of \$1,450,357 for FY 24-25.
- C) Direct the County Executive to direct the remaining unused funding from the FY 24-25 Incarcerated Person Out of County Agreement with Solano to be set aside during FY 24-25 fiscal year-end close to fund the remainder of the Narcotics Unit program in FY 25-26 (ending on approximately 6/15/26 for a FY 25-26 estimated cost of \$1,873,955).

(4/5th Vote Required)

Executive Summary:

During the County's FY 24-25 Budget Hearings, the Sheriff requested restoration of the Narcotics Unit (SHF-PCR-02) to conduct investigations into narcotic crimes and related activities in Sonoma County, with an emphasis on abating opioids in the community and identifying illicit drug markets. The program was approved on the condition that the Sheriff's Office would not expend 100 percent of the funding allocated for the Incarcerated Person Out of County Agreement with Solano (Solano Agreement) (SHF-PCR-08), which totaled \$4,644,312 of one-time funds. If services were no longer needed from Solano, the unused funding for the Solano Agreement would be used to fund a temporary Narcotics Unit. Approximately 1.5 years of a Narcotics Unit program is projected to cost \$3,324,312 for five full time employees, supplies, training, and equipment. Based on the estimate of used Solano Agreement funds, the temporary Narcotics Unit will be funded for services between 11/12/24 and 6/15/26.

This item requests appropriations and position allocations to proceed with the Narcotics Unit based on the termination of the Solano Agreement, effective October 16th, 2024.

Discussion:
Sheriff's Narcotics Unit

The Sheriff's Office Narcotics Unit was eliminated beginning FY 17-18 because of funding constraints and budget reductions. As a result of this elimination, investigations into illegal narcotic activity were reduced and institutional knowledge of new and dangerous drugs impacting the County stagnated. The Investigations Bureau's ability to conduct investigations and follow up on leads has been diminished, resulting in the Bureau's limited inability to disrupt production and distribution of illegal narcotics throughout Sonoma County. Since 17-18, particularly in light of the national opioid epidemic, the inability to address this workload has become concerning for the Sheriff. The overall effectiveness of the Sheriff's investigative services to the public have been reduced, and the elimination of the Narcotic's Unit has increased the span of control for the remaining sergeants, reducing specialization and capacity.

Restoring the Narcotics Unit within the Sheriff's Investigations Bureau will increase the level of proactive enforcement and large-scale enforcement of narcotics within Sonoma County, likely reducing the amount of narcotics trafficked throughout the County. Specially trained staff dedicated to working drug-related investigations would have the capacity to work fentanyl cases, which is a currently unmet need. The restoration of this Unit would better equip the Investigations Bureau to investigate criminal cases relating to victims of drug overdose, aligning the Sheriff's Office with the efforts of other County Departments such as the District Attorney's Office. Additionally, staff would have the capacity to provide drug-related outreach, such as opioid trainings and awareness campaigns to community organizations and schools within Sonoma County.

To demonstrate the importance of this Unit, in August 2024 after the Sheriff's PCR was not selected for immediate funding, the Sheriff reassigned three law enforcement officers and one detective sergeant to specifically investigate Narcotics cases. Since July 2024, the temporary Unit has made 17 arrests, seized approximately 30 ounces of amphetamines, approximately 11 ounces of cocaine, approximately 200 illicit pills (including fentanyl), and 7 ounces of fentanyl, 13 firearms and weapons, provided assistance to 19 agencies outside the Sheriff's Office and assistance to 21 Sheriff's deputies on patrol requiring narcotics related expertise.

The Sheriff is requesting that the \$3,324,312 released funding from the Incarcerated Person Out of County Agreement with Solano be redirected to finance new time-limited allocations for the temporary Narcotics Unit (from 11/12/24 to approximately 06/15/26). Patrol and the other Investigative Units are running short staffed because of the temporary reassignment and cannot sustain the workload much longer. The Sheriff will use the results from the program to evaluate impacts in the community and to be able to provide public outreach and awareness.

The program will consist of five full time employees, one sergeant and four detectives. The available funding of \$3,324,312 will fund the Narcotics Program for a little less than 1.75 years. This amount includes all position costs, overtime, supplies, vehicles, training, special investigative expenses, and equipment. If this request is approved, the program period will be November 12, 2024, through approximately June 15, 2026, requiring the funding be split over two fiscal years.

While the temporary Narcotics Unit is in place, the Sheriff intends to pursue opportunities for long term funding to sustain the Unit, assuming the Narcotics Unit is impacting the production and distribution of illegal narcotics in Sonoma County. The data tracked from the temporary Narcotics Unit will help stakeholders evaluate the significance of the program, and the costs and benefits for funding the program on an ongoing

basis. One potential funding source includes the Opioid Settlement Funds (OSF). These funds are not eligible for certain types of law enforcement activities, but are allowed for prevention, education, research, and abatement activities. The Sheriff will use data from the temporary Narcotics program to determine what portion, if any, of OSF can contribute towards permanently funding the Narcotics Unit. If permanent, ongoing, funding cannot be committed, the Sheriff will begin to hold deputy sheriff allocations vacant so the time-limited employees have positions to fill with the time-limited allocations expire. The Sheriff's Office has averaged 21 separations per year in the deputy sheriff job class, over the past three years.

Solano Agreement

SHF-PCR-08 was approved in the amount of 4,644,312. For FY 24-25, the Sheriff's Office will spend approximately \$1,320,000 from July 1, 2024 through October 16, 2024. This leaves over \$3.3 million in funding available and fund the Narcotics Unit through most of FY 25-26 (through approximately June 15th).

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Racial Equity:

Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?

No

Prior Board Actions:

N/A

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY24-25 Adopted	FY25-26 Projected	FY26-27 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$1,450,357	\$1,873,955	
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$1,450,357	\$1,873,955	
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF	\$1,450,357	\$1,873,955	
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$1,450,357	\$1,873,955	

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The unused Solano Agreement funding is estimated to be \$3,324,312. These funds will be used to fund the temporary Narcotics Unit from November 12, 2024, through approximately June 15, 2026. This timeframe spreads across two fiscal years. The Sheriff's Office FY 24-25 Adopted Budget includes funding necessary to proceed with the requested action. However, funds need to be transferred between budgetary Divisions, which requires Board approval. For FY 25-26, the Sheriff will request the remaining unused funding from the

Solano Agreement be set aside through the year-end close process to continue funding the Narcotics Unit through approximately June 15, 2026.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)
Sheriff's Sergeant	\$10,613.01 - 12,898.40	1.0	
Deputy Sheriff II	\$9,092.89 - \$11,051.30	4.0	

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

Approval of this item will add 1.0 FTE Sheriff's Sergeant and 4.0 FTE Deputy Sheriff II allocations to the Sheriff's Office Department Allocation List on a time limited basis, for the period 11/12/24 through 06/15/26.

Attachments:

FY 24-25 Budget Resolution Sheriff Narcs Program

FY24-25 Position Resolution Sheriff Narcs Program

Sheriff's Narcotics Unit Summary

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

N/A