



# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

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## February 4, 2019 Report Summary

### Methodology

- The OIG reviewed the Department's current and draft force-related policies, training materials, and information related to particular uses of force and the reviews that followed. OIG staff visited every juvenile facility where the use of OC spray is authorized, and spoke with more than 45 youth, more than 30 line-level Department staff, managers, and executive leadership, as well as mental health providers and union representatives. The OIG also reviewed 21 use-of-force incidents (including video) identified by a Department audit.
- The Department maintained an open and collaborative approach throughout the OIG's review, identifying many of the issues addressed in the OIG's review from the outset. Furthermore, input from Department members contributed to the development of OIG recommendations.

### Select Recommendations and Findings

#### *Accountability and Reporting*

- The Department should dedicate appropriate resources to finalize and implement its comprehensive use-of-force accountability improvements.
  - The Department's use-of-force reporting and review practices were not comprehensive and appeared to omit necessary information. Additionally, some training materials may inadvertently encourage undesirable practices.
- The Department should improve its Internal Affairs processes by increasing staffing and revising its investigations training.
  - Department-provided information suggests its IA unit is understaffed and overburdened. Department leadership has identified this need and is continuing to work to address these issues.
- The Department should introduce cameras in all of its facilities and require supervisors to view relevant videos of incidents.
  - Department facilities do not have the necessary technology infrastructure to ensure that all use-of-force incidents are captured on video.
  - Staff reported that when videos exist, they are difficult to access and view.
  - Department policies governing the review of critical incidents do not require the review of relevant videos.

### *Training*

- The Department should address staff concerns regarding inadequate use-of-force training, and should assess and enhance training for staff who interact with youth with mental health and behavioral needs, and youth in acute mental health crises.

### *Department Policies*

- The Department should establish a unified training and policy-development team to ensure that all policies and trainings are clear, consistent, and provide staff with the necessary tools to maintain safety.
- The Department should ensure that its use-of-force policies clearly define keystone concepts that help personnel determine when force is necessary.
  - Current and draft use-of-force policies do not provide clear and workable definitions for terms that relate to when staff are allowed to use force.
- The Department should ensure its draft use-of-force policy prohibits delayed or ineffective decontamination practices.
- The Department should require staff to act appropriately when observing policy violations and deviations from training.
  - Several incidents reviewed by the OIG involved staff who did not intervene in troubling violations of Department policy.
- The Department should assess its implementation of its HOPE Centers to ensure that it is an effective alternative to isolation of youth with problematic or dangerous behavior.
  - Conversations with staff and youth suggest that the Department's HOPE Centers may not be achieving their intended goals.

### *Staffing*

- The Department should continue assessing its staff resources, with an emphasis on ensuring that sufficient and effective supervision is provided to line-staff and youth.
  - Department leadership and staff expressed a concern with day-to-day staffing levels, and as a result, the availability of experienced and effective supervisors during shifts.
- The Department of Mental Health should work with the Department to identify specific mental health staffing needs and increase provider-to-youth ratios.

### *Culture*

- The Department should continue to implement measures that ensure its practices are consistent with its core values, and to ensure that staff at every level work to create a safer environment in its juvenile justice facilities.