



ORANGE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

SHERIFF-CORONER DON BARNES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sgt. Dennis Breckner – Public Information Officer

DBreckner@ocsd.org | C: 714-904-7042

Mitigation efforts prove successful in decreasing the number of positive COVID-19 cases in Orange County Jail

SANTA ANA, Ca. (February 5, 2021): The Sheriff's Department has seen a dramatic reduction in the number of positive COVID-19 cases in the Orange County Jail system in the last month as a result of the department's robust mitigation efforts. On January 5, 2021, 1,109 general population inmates were COVID-19 positive. As of the morning of February 5, 2021, nine general population inmates are COVID-19 positive.

"Since early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has proven to be challenging for everyone, and the Orange County Jail system has not been immune from this challenge," said Don Barnes, Sheriff-Coroner. "Although in December we saw an outbreak in our facilities, we remained steadfast with our strict health and safety protocols, which have proven to be successful throughout the year. This has been accomplished without releasing serious and violent offenders who may pose a danger to Orange County residents."

Since the pandemic began in March 2020, the Orange County Sheriff's Department Custody Operations Division and the Orange County Health Care Agency's Corrections Health Services (CHS) have worked collaboratively to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within the Orange County Jail system. These mitigation efforts include regular temperature checks of staff and inmates, mandatory masks for staff and inmates, regular testing, diligent hygiene and cleaning practices, release of low level sentenced offenders, pausing public visiting and halting non-essential services.

"We are confident that our efforts will result in the continued successful mitigation of COVID-19 in our jails," Barnes said. "We will continue to meet the challenges of navigating this pandemic with the health and safety of our staff, contract partners and inmates remaining our top priority."

###