

Summary of OC Sheriff's Comprehensive Constitutional Safeguards

The OCSD has established rigorous protocols that ensure the ethical and responsible use of custodial informants. These protocols include:

- Systemic changes: The Custody Intelligence Unit (CIU) exclusively handles all informants, intelligence, and investigations from within the jail. The CIU is a Bureau within the Investigations and Special Operations Command. Removing the CIU entirely from the Custody Operations Command ensures built-in safeguards and checks and balances because there are two distinct supervisory structures.
- Systemic changes within the Custody Operations Command: OC Sheriff created the Population Management Unit (PMU), responsible for inmate housing and movement within the Orange County jail facilities. The PMU is a separate Bureau from the Classification Unit, which determines each inmate's safety and security risk. Separating housing and classification teams adds an additional protection against misuse of established protocols.
- Systemic changes within the Custody Operations Command: Custody Command personnel cannot initiate the use of or handle any Informants. CIU is the exclusive unit that can handle any Informants inside an OC Jail facility.
- Systemic changes: The Sheriff must approve the use of any Informant inside an OC Jail facility. If there is an exigency and the Sheriff is unavailable, the Undersheriff may approve the use of the Informant. OC Sheriff's policies do not allow for any other exceptions to authorize the use of custodial informants inside an OC Jail facility.
- Detailed Documentation: OC Sheriff's maintains thorough records on all persons who are Sources of Information or Informants, including their backgrounds, prior criminal history, and any arrangements made with them. This level of documentation ensures transparency and accountability in every interaction.
- Robust Training Programs: All personnel handling informants receive extensive training beyond California POST requirements and more comprehensive than any other law enforcement agency nationwide. OC Sheriff's training emphasizes constitutional protections, ethical considerations, and best practices for informant management.
- Checks and Balances: The OC Sheriff's policies are subject to regular internal audits regarding informant and classification decisions and external audits regarding information sharing in conjunction with the Orange County District Attorney's Office. These audits ensure compliance with best practices and promote transparency within the Orange County criminal justice system.