



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SHERIFF-CORONER DON BARNES

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OC Sheriff Public Affairs, 714-904-7042

OC Sheriff promotes Assistant Sheriff, Commander

SANTA ANA, Ca. (March 21, 2025): The Orange County Sheriff's Department today promoted seven personnel, including an assistant sheriff and a commander.

Assistant Sheriff Nate Wilson was selected to oversee the Department's Custody Operations Command. He will lead initiatives to continue providing safe and secure facilities for incarcerated persons; including programming focused on re-entry services and integrated services for inmates with mental health and substance use disorders.

Assistant Sheriff Wilson's promotion comes after the retirement of Assistant Sheriff Andy Stephens, who committed nearly 32 years of dedicated service to the community.

"Assistant Sheriff Wilson is an effective, pragmatic and well-respected leader within our organization who has extensive experience in custody operations," said Don Barnes, Orange County Sheriff-Coroner. "He has established himself as an expert in navigating the challenging issues we face in our custody system, and I look forward to the contributions he will make."

Commander Christopher McDonald also was promoted, along with five lieutenants, in a ceremony held at the Orange County Sheriff's Regional Training Academy. All personnel begin their new assignments today, March 21.

Assistant Sheriff Nate Wilson

Assistant Sheriff Wilson started at the Sheriff's Department in 2000 after dedicating six years of military service — three in the United States Army as a specialist and three in the Army Reserves, where he served in aviation operations.

In his tenure with the department, he has worked in the custody, patrol and administrative services commands. As a deputy, he worked patrol in the city of Stanton, was a field training officer and was assigned to GRIP, where he worked with at-risk youth to increase school attendance and decrease gang activity.

Assistant Sheriff Wilson was promoted to sergeant in 2012 and worked in custody, patrol and internal affairs.





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He promoted to lieutenant in 2016, was first assigned to the Central Jails Division and then as the department watch commander, overseeing daily patrol operations. In 2018, he was selected as the Chief of Police Services for the city of Stanton.

As captain, Assistant Sheriff Wilson led the Behavioral Health Bureau, working collaboratively with the Health Care Agency and other stakeholders to increase crisis intervention services in Orange County. As part of that assignment, he also managed the development of the department's Crisis Intervention Training and homeless outreach efforts.

He was promoted to commander in 2021 and assigned to the Intake Release Center, a maximum security facility that houses incarcerated persons with acute mental health and substance use disorders. His command also included the transportation division and the fugitive warrants and extradition detail.

Assistant Sheriff Wilson has a bachelor's degree in American Studies from California State University, Fullerton. He also attained certification as an American with Disabilities Act coordinator and completed the University of Southern California's Public Safety Leadership Program.

Commander Christopher McDonald

Commander Christopher McDonald joined the Orange County Sheriff's Department in 1999. In his time with the department, he has served in custody, patrol and investigations at the Orange County Intelligence Assessment Center (OCIAC) and the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force.

As a supervisor, Commander McDonald worked in Custody Operations, the Crime Analysis Bureau and as a patrol supervisor in the city of Stanton. Additionally, he served an ancillary duty with the Crisis Negotiations Team.

He was promoted in 2022 to lieutenant and was assigned to the Theo Lacy Facility, overseeing daily operations and special projects. Commander McDonald was then selected as Chief of Police Services for the city of Mission Viejo, where he served until April 2024.

Most recently, Commander McDonald worked as the captain of the Real-Time Operations Center (RTOC), which employs a wide-range of technology and publicly available data to aid law enforcement response to crimes in progress or crimes that recently occurred.

Commander McDonald has a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice Administration from National University.

