

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Strengthening Oversight: Why San Mateo County Needs an Inspector General with Subpoena Power

*San Mateo County Independent Civilian Advisory
Commission on the Sheriff's Office*

August 12th, 2025

Agenda

01

Introduction to ICAC

02

Our Recommendation

03

Independent Oversight That Is Effective

04

Subpoena Power: The Backbone of Oversight

05

Moving Forward

ICAC Commissioners

There are currently **nine (9)** commissioners appointed, consisting of seven (7) Members and two (2) Alternates. These commissioners were sworn in at the first meeting, on July 16, 2024.

- District 1 – Vacant
- District 2 – James Simmons
- District 3 – William McClure (Vice Chair)
- District 4 – Rob Silano
- District 5 – Kalimah Salahuddin (Chair)
- At-Large Member – Shirley Melnicoe
- Member Nominated by Sheriff - Vacant
- Alternates
 - Rebecca Carabez
 - Alexis Lewis

Mission Statement & Areas of Focus

- ICAC Mission Statement
 - The mission of the Independent Civilian Advisory Commission on the Sheriff's Office is to provide recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding the Sheriff's Office to enhance public confidence and foster mutual respect and trust, internally and externally. We recommend policies, programs, and practices that reflect community needs to uphold accountability, transparency, and justice.
- Goal Setting Retreat on January 11, 2025
 - Three areas of focus:
- Community & Staff Engagement
- Improving Communication Between Inmates and Families
- **Transparency and Accountability**

Recommendation

The Establishment of a Permanent Inspector General to Oversee the Sheriff's Office with Full Subpoena

Key Benefits of a Full-Time Inspector General

Independent Investigations

- Internal and External Complaints

Policy and Operation Reform Recommendations

Legal and Fiscal Safeguards

Support for BOS & ICAC

Proactive vs Reactive

Independent Oversight That Is Effective

Supporting Current Oversight Systems

Conducting Investigations

- Impartial investigations into allegations of misconduct both internally and externally
- Review internal investigations for fairness
- Support ICAC with issues brought to our commission

Engage with the public and build trust

- Support ICAC with community engagement work
- Ability to follow up and respond to inquiry
- Data and Reports
 - Assist in elevating what is currently available

Policy and operation reform recommendations

- Ability to see trends
 - Ability to learn the county's and department's culture and needs
- Monitor current policy and procedure to ensure effectiveness
- Gauge where additional support is needed

Legal and Fiscal Safeguards

Board of Supervisors

- The “Supreme Court” of this governance body
 - Having independent oversight support can help with impartiality and accusations of bias
- County is complex
 - Amount of time devoted to singular issue can possibly take focus from other key areas
 - Having additional support from ICAC in concert with the Inspector General

Financial Impact

- Prevents civil rights violations and misconduct
- Identifies risk **before** it leads to litigation
- DOJ report: Multiple layers of oversight reduces liability exposure
 - Full Report <https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter/RIC/Publications/cops-w0865-pub.pdf>
- **Comprehensive oversight isn't just ethical—it's economical. Lawsuits from misconduct can cost millions. Prevention is far cheaper than litigation.**

Subpoena Power: The Backbone of Oversight

Why Subpoena Power is Essential

Ensures access to records and testimony

Allows work to happen without having to start and stop

- Waiting for BOS meetings to happen to request subpoenas

Prevents obstruction

Enables thorough investigations

Supports the legal and fiscal accountability

Fulfills the promise of AB 1185

Proactive vs Reactive

Our Recommendations

01

Establish a full-time Inspector General

02

Ensure the IG has full subpoena power under AB 1185

03

Provide resources for independent investigations

04

Support community engagement and transparency

Recommendations for IG Evaluation

Staffing Levels, safety and operational integrity at Sheriff's Correctional Facilities (January 2025-Current)

Assessment of the Professional Standards Bureau Internal Affairs practices, timelines, transparency, accountability, and disciplinary action, including any pending (2022 – Current)

Review of Deaths of inmates housed in Sheriff's Correctional Facilities (2023 – Current)

Assessment of the Professional Standards Bureau Complaint practices timelines, transparency, accountability, and disciplinary action, including any pending (2022 – Current)



Reseeding Trust

Questions

Thank you