



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Ian Parkinson *Sheriff-Coroner*

January 22, 2025

San Luis Obispo Civil Grand Jury
P.O. Box 4910
San Luis Obispo, CA 93403

Dear Grand Jury:

I have received your request for an update on the 2023-2024 "Growing Pains". Please see the responses below.

R3. The Sheriff's Office should conduct an analysis of its background-check process to identify areas where cost savings could be realized to reduce the background-check fee and be in alignment with other counties by December 31, 2024.

The Cannabis Compliance Team, in coordination with Sheriff's Fiscal Services personnel, conducted a review of the fee schedule and workflow associated with each fee to ensure the fees most accurately reflect the time spent per fee area, and ultimately, to ensure the fees are properly structured pursuant to the Board of Supervisors directive of full cost recovery. Specifically, this analysis was conducted based on San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors Budget Priority #21 which states, "county departments will review fees annually to ensure that they meet statutory requirements, fall within the range of fees being charged by comparator counties and achieve cost recovery" and is conducted by any county department that maintains a fee schedule on an annual basis.

The review was completed by the Sheriff's Office Team, submitted to the County Administrative Office, and was included as part of the Fee Schedule B Changes submitted to the Board of Supervisors by the County Administrative Office and presented on November 12th, 2024, during the Fee Hearing for Calendar Year 2025 and Fiscal Year 2025-26.

A comparison of the Sheriff's Office fees to the fees of other jurisdictions was also completed. The compared jurisdictions included: City of San Luis Obispo; City of Morro Bay; City of Lompoc; City of Salinas; City of Grover Beach; County of Monterey; City of Fresno; City of San Diego; County of Santa Cruz; County of Santa Barbara; Imperial County; Alameda County; City of San Bernadino; City of Merced; City of Redding; County of Mendocino; County of San Benito; and Nevada County. The analysis revealed significant differences in the types of fees collected, the manner upon which they arrived at those fees, how the jurisdictions funded their compliance units or equivalent unit, the composition of the units, and the roles and responsibilities of the unit with regards to cannabis enforcement and monitoring in their respective jurisdictions. Further, other jurisdictions have business types that are not permitted in San Luis Obispo County, and San Luis Obispo County permits business types that are not permitted in other jurisdictions.

Based on those factors, a direct comparison across jurisdictions is not feasible. Although the fees of the SLO County Sheriff's Office were among the highest compared, this does not account for the variety of factors previously mentioned that materially impact the calculation of the fees. It is worth noting that as a consolidated unit, the Sheriff's Office Cannabis Compliance Team provides a whole systems approach to the legal business process by conducting in-depth criminal history and financial status checks on all applicants, providing robust security assessments to the business owners, conducting thorough quarterly monitoring inspections on active businesses, and monitoring environmental factors such as water and power usage by businesses. The CCT also has the efficiency and ability, with our in-house planner, to craft policy and make project modifications. An example of this is in July of 2024, in collaboration with the Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector's office, cannabis businesses holding three or more licenses were approved to convert their licenses to a microbusiness license, saving them thousands of dollars per year.

Respectfully,



Ian S. Parkinson
Sheriff-Coroner