



2023 Kern County Recruitment & Hiring Plan for Kern County Sheriff's Office





Our Team

Kern County Human Resources Sheriff's Office

Jim Zervis, Chief Administrative Officer
Stacy Kuwahara, Chief Operations Officer
Tracey Eldridge, Chief Human Resources Officer
Brenda Guerra, Deputy Chief Human Resources Officer

Sheriff Donny Youngblood
Undersheriff Larry McCurtain
Chief Deputy Erik Levig
Chief Deputy David Kessler
Carmen Gonzalez, Human Resources Manager



Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Part I – Current KCSO Staffing	5
KCSO Staffing Status	5
Kern County Community Demographics	6
Resignations and Retirements	7
Part II – Historical Context and Data	8
Recruitment and Retention	8
Historical Recruitment Practices	9
Recruitment Data Analysis	10
Hiring Components Data Analysis	13
Part III – Recruitment Plan	20
Changes Implemented To Date	20
Kern County – Recruitment Objectives	25
Kern County – Ongoing Tracking and Analysis	37

Introduction

The landscape for recruiting to fill public sector jobs has changed dramatically in the past four years. There are more and more vacancies to be filled by fewer and fewer candidates. Governmentjobs.com reports that in 2022 public sector employers posted 45% more jobs and yielded 56% less applications. The result is 14.3 applicants for each job sought to be filled. This stark reality is felt no more imminently than with law enforcement agencies like the Kern County Sheriff's Office ("KCSO") struggling to attract and retain sworn personnel to fill its ranks.

The *Kern County Sheriff's Office Recruitment Plan* seeks to be a roadmap for facing these challenging circumstances. The purpose of this plan is to set clear, strategic goals and objectives and an associated action plan to ensure the KCSO attracts and retains a quality workforce that reflects the diversity of the Kern County Community. Maintaining such a workforce for the KCSO is a key component of delivering excellent public safety services to our community and fostering community partnerships grounded in trust. KCSO and the Kern County Human Resources Division (KCHR) have prepared this Recruitment Plan in accordance with Section VII, A, 101-104 of the Stipulated Judgement.

This document represents the first of what will be periodic updates and revisions to the Recruitment Plan. Recruitment, along with hiring and retention, is an ongoing and constantly evolving challenge, so future iterations of the plan will require improvements in the data collected and presented, the level of analysis conducted by KCSO and KCHR, and additions or revisions to the plan and the action steps required to meet its objectives.

The initial part of this document will provide readers with an assessment of the current state of recruiting for KCSO and an overview of the projected retention number for its current workforce. The second part outlines recent improvements that have been introduced and implemented by KCSO and the County of Kern ("County") with the goal of mitigating the challenges faced in recruiting and retaining sworn personnel. The third part of this plan identifies key goals and objectives aimed toward improving the quality and diversity of KCSO's candidate pool, and specific action steps to be taken to accomplish these objectives. Finally, the plan includes and identifies further tracking and analysis to ensure KCSO and the County continue to achieve the underlying purpose of the plan.





Part I – Current KCSO Staffing

An evaluation of full-time staffing for KCSO was conducted to effectively identify hiring needs. In addition to the review of current staffing, a 5-year retirement projection was compiled. In consideration of current vacancies, typical turnover, fail rates in the academy, and projected retirements, KCSO will face ongoing challenges hiring and retaining adequate staffing to keep up with attrition.

One of the primary challenges in hiring sworn personnel in Kern County is the shortage of candidates. The current vacancy rate at the entry level for both Patrol (-21.1%) and Detentions (-34.4%) are indicative of the challenges KCSO has experienced attracting candidates that meet minimum qualifications for the position, such as passing the examination phase and successfully meeting the screening requirements for the pre-employment background investigation. Both components are an essential part of the hiring process as the standards ensure that all officers selected are physically, mentally, and morally capable of performing the duties of a peace officer.

To prevent this situation from becoming worse, effective recruitment strategies must be implemented that highlight factors that will attract applicants and prompt them to apply, join and stay with KCSO. In addition to generating interest in the position, KCSO must target applicants and develop recruitment plans to draw interest from applicants that mirror KCSO's ideal candidate while appealing to diverse candidates.

KCSO Staffing Status

As of July 25, 2022, when work on the Recruitment Plan began, the Sheriff's Office currently has 1,434 authorized (1,058 filled / 376 vacancies) for both sworn and civilian employees for a **total of 73.7% of all positions filled.**

- 616 authorized (486 filled / 130 vacancies) deputy sheriff positions deployed in patrol, substations, detective, courts services and special investigations units.
 - **Only 78.9% of deputy positions are filled.**
- 356 authorized (234 filled / 122 vacancies) detentions deputy positions deployed in the detention facilities.
 - **Only 65.7% of detentions deputy positions are filled.**
- 462 authorized (338 filled / 124 vacancies) Sheriff's professional support staff assigned throughout Kern County.
 - **Only 73.2% of civilian positions are filled.**



Kern County Community Demographics

We pulled data from the United States Census Bureau to determine the gender, racial, and ethnic makeup of the Kern County community. These tables represent all Kern County residents (of any age) in 2000. ¹

TABLE 1 & 2. COMMUNITY AND SWORN STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS

Race	Census	Deputy Sheriff	Detentions Deputy
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	2.8%	1.2%	0.4%
Asian alone	5.8%	2.4%	1.3%
Black or African American	6.3%	1.2%	3.5%
Hispanic or Latino	56.8%	45.97%	63.2%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander alone	0.3%	.2%	0.4%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	30.4%	48.19%	30.7%
Two or More Races/Other	3.4%	0.8%	0.4%

Gender	Census	Deputy Sheriff	Detentions Deputy
Female	50.4%	10.6%	34.1%
Male	49.6%	89.4%	65.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%

¹ Reference: https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/kerncountycalifornia_US/POP010220#POP010220. The total racial and ethnic percentages do not add to 100% accounting for individuals selecting multiple categories.

Resignations and Retirements

In addition to a shortage of candidates, retention is compounding staffing concerns. Retirement projections indicate that within five years, over 75% of the Sheriff's Sergeant rank will be eligible for retirement while 100% of Command staff will reach 20 years of service making them eligible for retirement. Over 600 employees have retired or resigned from sworn positions within the last seven years. The number of sworn personnel hired over the same duration (395 hires), is not enough to keep up with attrition and staff current vacancies.

As of May 2022, the following is a 5-year retirement projection of all current sworn staff:

TABLE 3. RETIREMENT PROJECTIONS

Rank	Total in Classification	Current Eligible (Meet 20 years of service)	100% Eligible (Meets years and age within next year)	5-year Eligible (20 years of service in next 5 years)
UNDERSHERIFF	1	(1) 100%	(1) 100%	(1) 100%
SHERIFF'S CHIEF DEPUTY	4	(3) 75%	(1) 25%	(4) 100%
SHERIFF'S COMMANDER	8	(5) 63%	(1) 13%	(8) 100%
SHERIFF'S LIEUTENANT	17	(11) 65%	(3) 18%	(15) 88%
SHERIFF'S SERGEANT	51	(21) 41%	(6) 12%	(38) 75%
SHERIFF'S SENIOR DEPUTY	71	(11) 15%	(5) 7%	(30) 42%
SHERIFF'S DEPUTY	340	(24) 7%	(15) 4%	(47) 14%
DETENTIONS LIEUTENANT	7	(6) 86%	(3) 43%	(7) 100%
DETENTIONS SERGEANT	24	(7) 29%	(1) 4%	(14) 58%
DETENTIONS SENIOR DEPUTY	24	(6) 25%	(1) 4%	(10) 42%
DETENTIONS DEPUTY	182	(25) 14%	(10) 5%	(43) 24%
SWORN TOTAL	729	(120) 16%	(46) 6%	(217) 30%

To improve hiring and retention, KCSO must determine the factors, whether internal or external, that are causing employees to separate from the department. Moving forward, KCSO and KCHR will do further tracking and analysis of resignations and retirements both for purposes of forecasting future staffing needs and

identifying why sworn staff may choose to leave the agency and what corrective action may be taken to reduce that turnover.

Currently, there is no formal practice to conduct independent exit interviews to determine the reason for separations. The development of a tool and/or method to gather and track this data is critical to identifying factors that lead to voluntary separations. This may assist the department in pro-actively addressing issues to slow or prevent voluntary separations.

Part II – Historical Context

Part II provides background context and data for each of the stages of the recruitment and hiring process. This represents the information that led to the recruitment plan, which is detailed in Part III.

Recruitment and Retention

Recruitment and retention are two terms that are frequently used by public sector human resources professionals. They are two sides of the same coin and are inextricably intertwined. High retention rates result in less pressure on recruiting functions; whereas volatile turnover and increased vacancies result in a constant recruiting environment. Unfortunately, KCSO and the County have been experiencing the latter circumstances for several years.

For every sworn vacancy within the KCSO, coverage is likely done using existing employee overtime, and in many cases that overtime is mandated. Mandatory overtime policies of the past decade have been necessary due to the high attrition rates within the KCSO to ensure coverage of mandated responsibilities and adequate public safety to the community. However, high rates of mandatory overtime assignments have led to increasing employee burnout and turnover. This means every sworn vacancy within the KCSO in the future exacerbate the reduced level of work-life balance in the force and is leading to further turnover in the ranks.

In addition, the labor market for seasoned and trained law enforcement personnel has become hyper-competitive in California. KCSO has seen several experienced sworn personnel retire early from the County and take a new job with a different law enforcement agency that has a separate retirement system.

KCSO and the County have also seen fewer and fewer candidates for sworn positions in the last decade due to the lack of interest in the profession and the competitiveness of the market.

Historical Recruitment Practices

Like many government agencies, the County posts job openings through an online applicant tracking system – Governmentjobs.com. The posting consists of the job description, breakdown of testing components and their scoring weight, and the salary range for the position. For both Deputy Sheriff and Detentions Deputy trainee-level recruitments we have kept the postings open for multiple weeks to develop a sufficient candidate pool. In the past, this recruitment technique yielded enough candidates to have a selection process that would further limit the candidate pool. As noted earlier, over the last decade, government applicants for all positions, especially those in law enforcement, have seen dramatic decreases.¹ In response, KCSO and the County have modified their approach to adapt.

Our job postings are now continuous with qualified candidates being pushed through the hiring process in multiple windows instead of one. The postings focus less on the duties of the specific positions and more on the minimum qualifications. They also list the relevant examination dates to give candidates foresight into the timing of the hiring process.

Despite these efforts, recruitment for both entry-level positions and promotional positions is insufficient and utilizes outdated methods. Over the years, some applicants for both have reported concern over their application being rejected or disqualified from the recruitment process with minimal feedback. Leaving potential applicants discouraged and existing staff uncertain about opportunities to grow or advance in their career. This lack of clarity around the process makes it difficult for applicants to know where they are falling short and a lack of specific or meaningful feedback makes it difficult for existing employees to prepare for advancement.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, KCSO and the County participated in local career fairs to conduct outreach to job seekers. The County used the social media platform LinkedIn to highlight careers in public safety and specific job opportunities with the KCSO. The County also partnered with America’s Job Center to generate interest in positions. News segments were secured for sworn personnel to promote careers with the KCSO. Open house events have been held which include administration of a state standardized entry level law enforcement test (PELLETB) held on the same day for those interested in continuing in the hiring process. The written exam administered is required by the Commission of Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) to ensure peace officers have the same basic standard of reading and writing. Vocational schools that offer POST certified courses or CORE courses have been invited to events specific to them such as San Joaquin Valley College.



In 2017, the department established a volunteer-based recruitment team. The Background Sergeant serves as the team lead. The team consists of staff in various classifications who attend job fairs and community events to promote hiring needs. The department has researched and found recruitment events appropriate for law enforcement needs. Because of overlapping responsibilities of sworn recruitment staff, establishing a consistent point of contact to liaison with community partners has been difficult. The Crime Prevention Unit works with the recruitment team to notify of any community events that should be attended.

Since the limitations of the pandemic have mostly been lifted, we have collectively begun participating in career fairs and events in targeted segments of the community. Most notably, the County held its own Career Expo in September 2022 to highlight all its job opportunities, including those of the KCSO.

Although data was not tracked for these events, the County intends to gather data and track the effectiveness of recruitment outreach efforts. It is critical to ensure that these efforts are reaching the difficult to recruit and/or underrepresented groups.

To drive recruitment efforts, the County and KCSO seek to identify and proactively address factors contributing to difficulties attracting underrepresented groups to careers in law enforcement. The challenges with a shortage in applicants across the board, post COVID, have been compounded by the negative public image of law enforcement agencies nationally and the need to bolster community relationships to strengthen trust. In addition, addressing a lack of representation is key in dispelling misconceptions about law enforcement careers but will also act as a magnet, attracting candidates from various backgrounds.



Recruitment Data Analysis

To get a baseline of our current practices, we reviewed applicant data from the past seven years of recruitments for Deputy Sheriff Trainee and Sheriff’s Detentions Deputy Trainee and compared it to our Kern County community workforce demographics.

Data and statistics for recruitment outreach was not maintained by the County or KCSO from 2015-2021 and therefore, cannot be reported. Anecdotally, it is known that the County and KCSO did conduct recruitment outreach at high schools and junior colleges in this time. Postings for the acceptance of applications were made on the following dates:

TABLE 4. RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY

	Open/Continuous
10/5/15 – 10/23/15	Open
09/1/16 – 09/16/16	Open
09/19/16 – 09/30/16	Open
12/5/16 – 01/6/2017	Open
06/5/17 – 06/16/17	Open
09/11/17 – 10/6/17	Continuous
03/12/18 – 04/13/18	Continuous
03/5/19 – 07/19/19	Continuous
12/16/20 – 10/4/21	Continuous
12/17/21 – 01/25/22	Continuous

Kern County's Applicant Demographics

The best measure of recruitment yields available to Kern County, for the period of 2015-2021, is applicant data from the County's applicant tracking system – NeoGov.

Deputy Sheriff Trainee and Sheriff Detentions Deputy Trainee recruitments resulted in applicants that reflect a closer resemblance to the racial and ethnic diversity found in the community workforce.

TABLE 5. APPLICANT RECRUITMENT DATA

Race/Ethnicity	Community Workforce	Deputy Sheriff Trainee	Sheriff's Detentions Deputy Trainee
Hispanic	55%	58.1%	52.6%
White	33%	33.4%	37.3%
Black	6%	4.6%	6.6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	6%	1.5%	1.5%
Native/Indigenous	3%	1.2%	0.9%
Other/Did not specify	3%	1.1%	1.1%

The recruitment yield underscores the disparities in the minority population representation, with a specific focus on the underrepresentation of Asian/Pacific Islanders within the sworn ranks of KCSO when compared to the community workforce. The Hispanic and White applicant group closely align with the demographics of the community workforce.

We reviewed data contained in our applicant tracking system from 2015 to 2021 for our trainee level classification, Deputy Sheriff Trainee, recruitments – a total of 3,319 applicants that met the employment standards required for the position who are referred to as qualifying applicants. Similarly, we reviewed data from 2015 to 2021 for our Sheriff's Detentions Deputy Trainee recruitments – a total of 2,213 qualifying applicants.

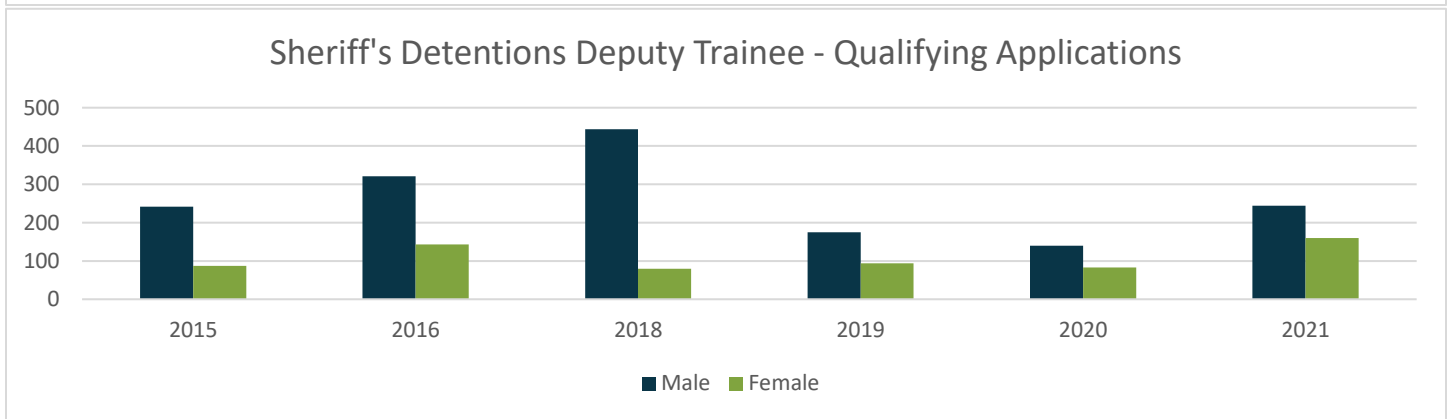
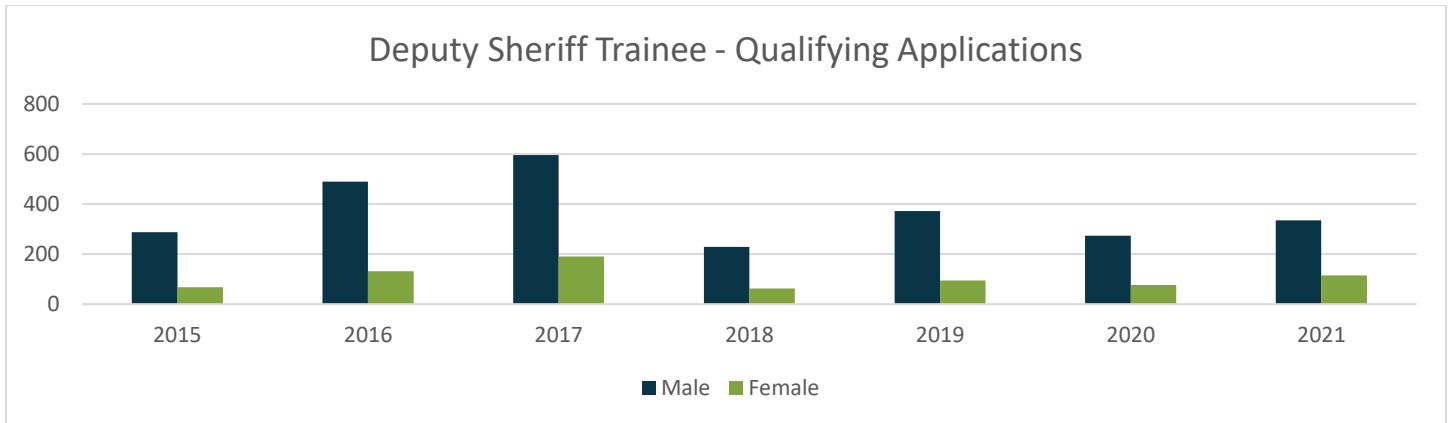
Gender



Applicant data by gender from January 2015 to December 2021.

Deputy Sheriff Trainee recruitments yielded a noticeable gender imbalance with – 78% male, 22% female applicants. The gender makeup of KCSO contrasts with the gender demographics of the community workforce by 27% (896 applicants). Addressing the gender imbalance in KCSO’s sworn ranks will require a proactive approach in which outreach efforts are inclusive and appealing to both genders.

One of the elements contributing to the gender gap was the physical agility test. This component of the testing process was identified as more challenging for females and dissuading potential female applicants from applying or retesting. Additionally, marketing materials unintentionally appealed more to one gender contributing to the imbalanced gender pool.



Applicant data by gender from January 2015 through December 2021.

A year-by-year breakdown provided a detailed overview of the gender demographics for the group of individuals submitting applicants which is referred to as the applicant pool. The review revealed the gendered share of applications for the Deputy Sheriff Trainee classification remained steady across all years of the study. From 2015-2021, female applicants made up 21.9%, +/- 2.3%, of all Deputy Sheriff Trainee applications. 2021 represents the largest share of female applicants for the classification at 25.6%; however, it cannot be said for certain if this is a trend or a statistical outlier.

Gender trends in the Detentions Deputy Trainee classification have improved significantly. From 2015, female applicants made up an average of 24.2% of applicants, but from 2019-2021, approximately 37.3% of Detentions Deputy Trainee applicants were female.

In summary, there has been a positive shift in female applicants, with a noticeable increase in recent years. It is acknowledged that it is too soon to discern if this is a developing trend or a statistical outlier.

Overall

The fluctuations in recruitment and interest declined in the first three years of the look back period. The decline may be attributed to a reduction in recruitment activity as applications were accepted for a duration of one month during 2018. However, the annual average has grown recently by 21.5% suggesting a positive change in interest in sworn positions. The Sheriff's Detentions Deputy Trainee test group, on the other hand, has experienced less volatility. From 2015-2021 eligible applications have grown by an average of 14%.



Hiring Components Data Analysis

We also evaluated our examination and hiring process data to understand if there are further obstacles to gender, racial, or ethnic candidate pools. With underrepresented candidate pools limited already, it is imperative that Kern County and KCSO ensure that the selection process does not further limit opportunity to improve the diversity of our KCSO sworn workforce.

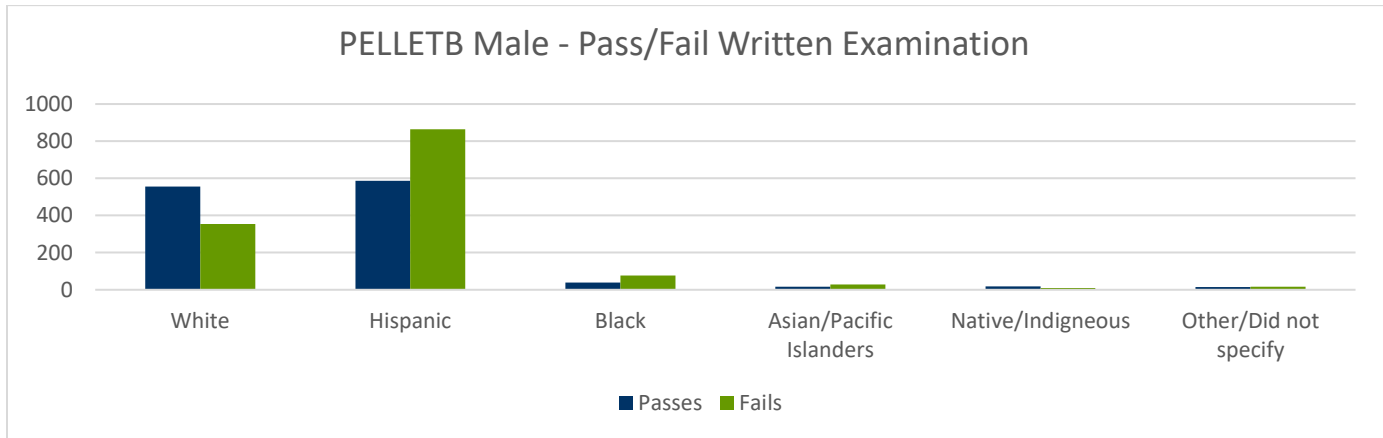
We reviewed data related to those successful in the recruitment and hiring process between 2015 and 2021 for sworn positions within KCSO. The data is separated into different ethnicity categories and by gender. The data was then broken down by gender, ethnicity, and education for those that were successful in the process or those that failed to move beyond each examination step. The following examination steps were looked at discretely: (1) written examination (POST confirmed that the PELLETB exam has not been revised in 20 years) (2) oral examination, (3) physical agility test, and 4) the applicant's status of those successful in having their name placed on the list of names eligible for hire referred to as an eligible list.

Examination Data Findings

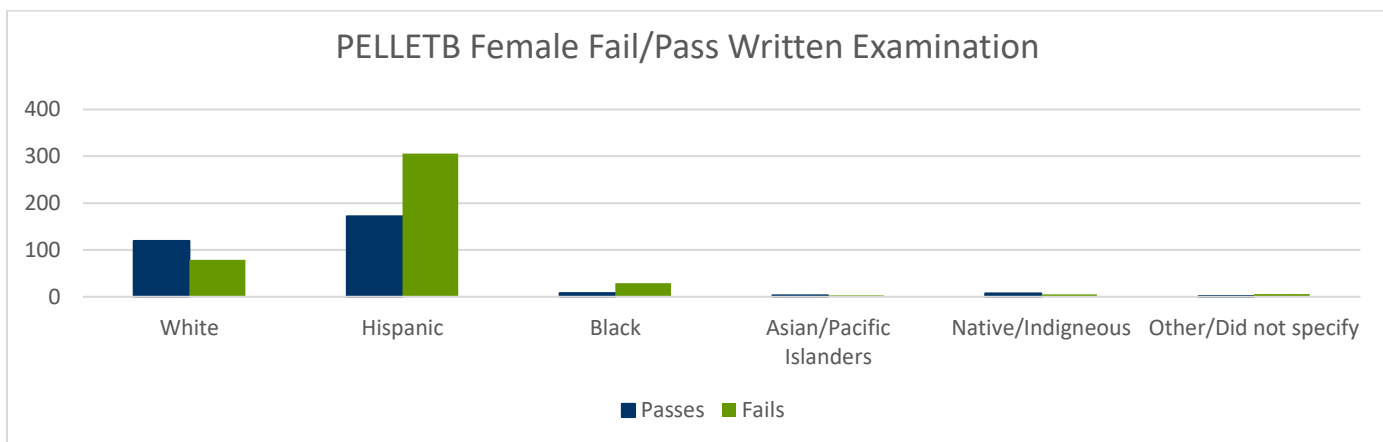
The data related to examination pass/fail rates indicates there are variations among the applicant population with differences related to ethnicity, education levels and gender. The County and KCSO have taken steps to further review the examination materials to address any disparity and promote equity in the testing process.

Patrol Deputies

Pass Rates: The data revealed minority candidates failed the written the POST PELLETB exam at a higher rate. White candidates, both male and female, had a higher pass rate of 60% compared to Hispanic candidates (male and female combined) by an average of 22%, and compared to Black candidates (male and female combined) by 33%. The total pass rate between the groups fluctuates slightly throughout the look back period. But one consistent trend is that minorities have higher fail rates.



Examination results by ethnicity and gender from January 2015-December 2021.



Examination results by ethnicity and gender from January 2015-December 2021.

The Human Resources Division in conjunction with Sheriff's Office Subject Matter Experts (SME), reviewed written exam materials from an exam vendor for the Sheriff Deputy Trainee applicant group. Exam materials from the vendor were administered for a period of three months. At the initial 3-month review, it was learned that applicants were failing at a higher rate of 63% compared to those that took the PELLETB. Due to the high fail rate, the County resumed administering the POST PELLETB exam for the Deputy Trainee classification.

The County and KCSO continue to explore alternatives to the POST PELLETB. KCSO has proposed recommendations for evaluating additional exam providers and has also identified Counties that utilize the services. County HR is currently in the process of verifying that the exam materials comply with POST standards in addition to contacting Counties utilizing services to obtain feedback and/or data related to the applicant group.

Pass Rates by Gender: The pass rate between genders differs by 5.7% with males passing at a higher rate.

Pass Rates by Education: Fifty-one percent of candidates successful in the recruitment process indicated they possessed some college. Testers reporting some college comprised 41% of the fails. Candidates reporting High School as the highest-level education comprised 36% of the fails.

In comparison of examination results for both groups (Deputy/Detentions Trainee), the pass rate of the applicant groups fluctuates slightly throughout the seven-year review period with minorities failing at a higher rate. Thirty-four percent of candidates successful in the recruitment process indicated they possess some college. Testers possessing a High School Diploma comprised 39% of the fails in addition to testers with some college comprising 38% of the fails. The 1% difference between the fail groups with some post education and those with HSD/GED is not enough to consider either group to be at a disadvantage.

Detention Deputies

Detentions Unit Data: A review of the data related to those successful in the examination process was also conducted for the Detentions Unit. That data revealed that minorities failed the written exam at a higher rate. White candidates both male and female comprised 37% of the test group with a pass rate of 81%. The pass rate of this group is an average of 17% higher than both male and female Hispanics and 10% higher than Black females and males combined.

The data indicates that the minority applicant groups earned higher scores on the Corrections exam in comparison to the POST PELLETB. The differences may be attributed to the updated exam materials for the Detentions classification. The written examination for Detentions Trainee classification was revised in August 2020 while the PELLETB has not been revised since approximately the 1990s. The data suggests the updated content or the format of the exams may attribute to a higher pass rate.

Physical Agility Test

The data for the Physical Agility Testing (PAT) indicates that females fail at a rate of 52% higher than males. There was no discernable difference in the pass rate for the PAT between males of different racial and ethnic backgrounds; however, we note that Hispanic females failed at a rate 14% higher than white females. Although data was captured related to the pass/fail rate, we do not have data for each particular segment of the test. From our experience in administering this test, we have seen females typically fail the portion simulating a jump through a window or at the run.

Kern County does not conduct a PAT for Detentions Deputy Trainee. This step in the examination process for Deputy Sheriff Trainee was eliminated in 2022 and replaced by a physical assessment conducted by the

department. The physical fitness assessment consists of an evaluation which allows Training Officers to provide physical fitness advice to candidates. Adequate training is provided to all recruits during the POST academy to ensure they are successful in passing the POST PAT required prior to graduation from the academy.

Oral Examination

The oral examination referred to in this section is a component of the Kern County Civil Service examination process and is distinct from the hiring interview conducted by KCSO.

The oral examination component was the final step reviewed in our examination process. The data did not show any disparate impact as there were very few candidates whose rank was greatly impacted in a positive or negative manner. This step in the examination process for Deputy Sheriff Trainee was eliminated in 2021 because of the low fail rate.

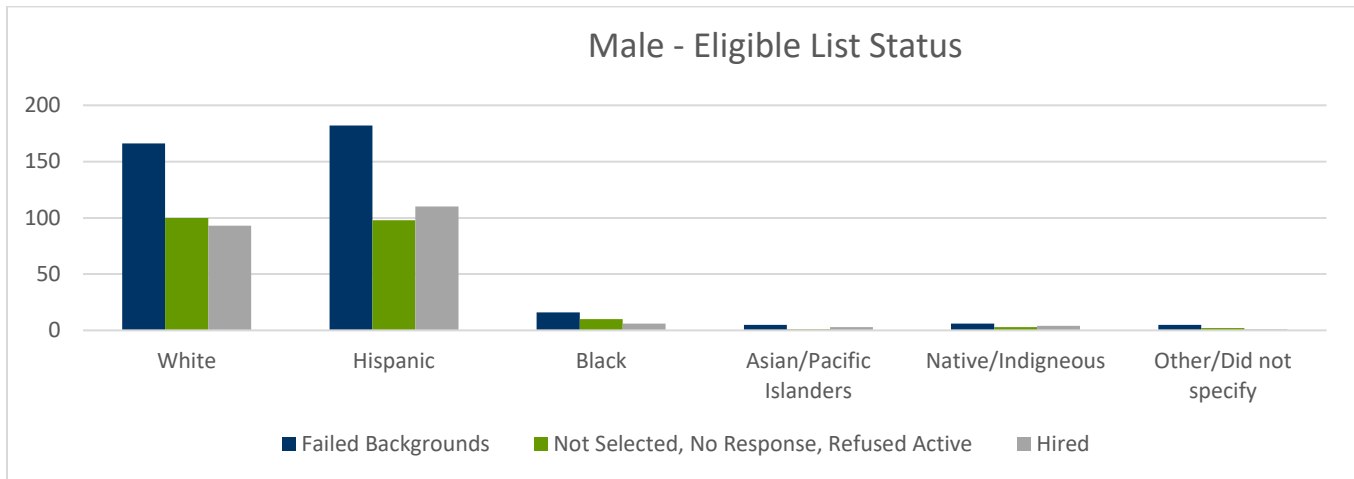
Kern County does not conduct an oral examination as for Detentions Deputy Trainee applicants. The oral examination referred to in this section is a component of the Kern County Civil Service examination process and is distinct from the hiring interview conducted by KCSO.



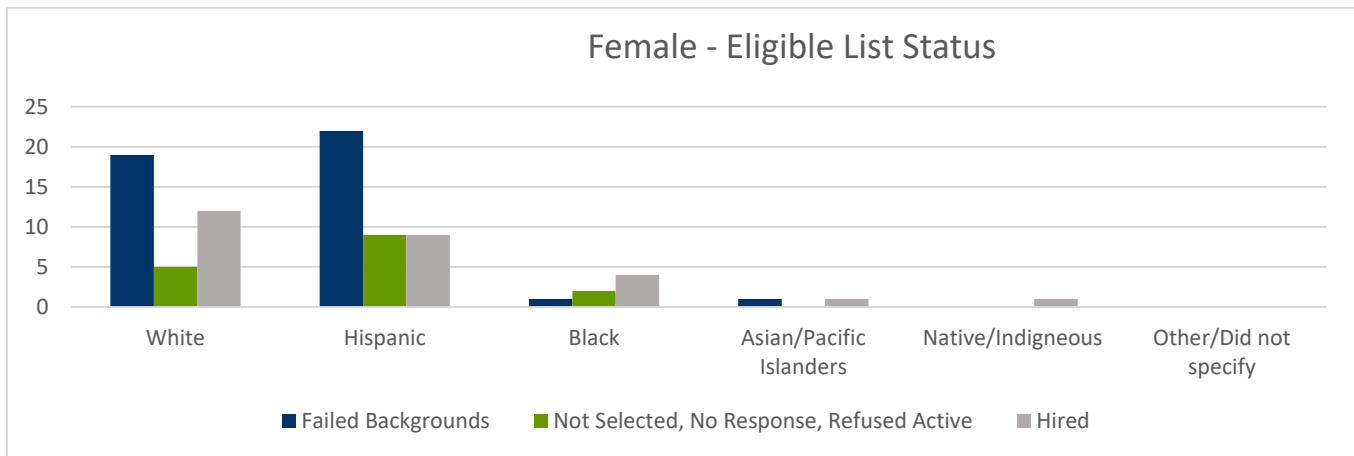
Eligible List Demographics

After the examination process is completed by Kern County’s Human Resources Division, a list of candidates eligible for hire is established for KCSO selection.

Patrol Deputies



Candidates placed on eligible list by ethnicity and gender from January 2015-December 2021.

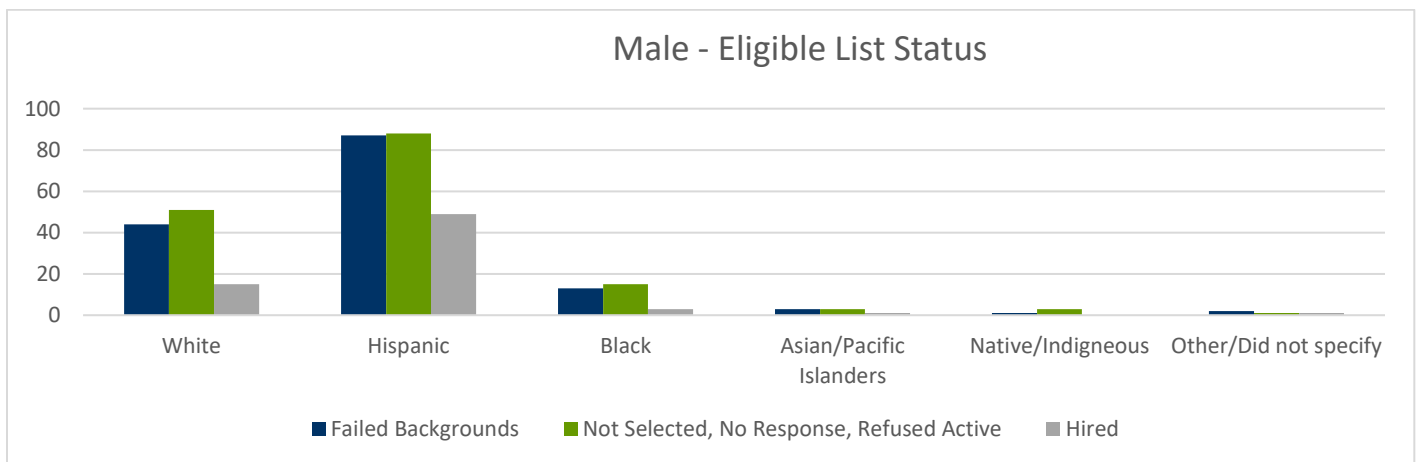


Candidates placed on eligible list by ethnicity and gender from January 2015-December 2021.

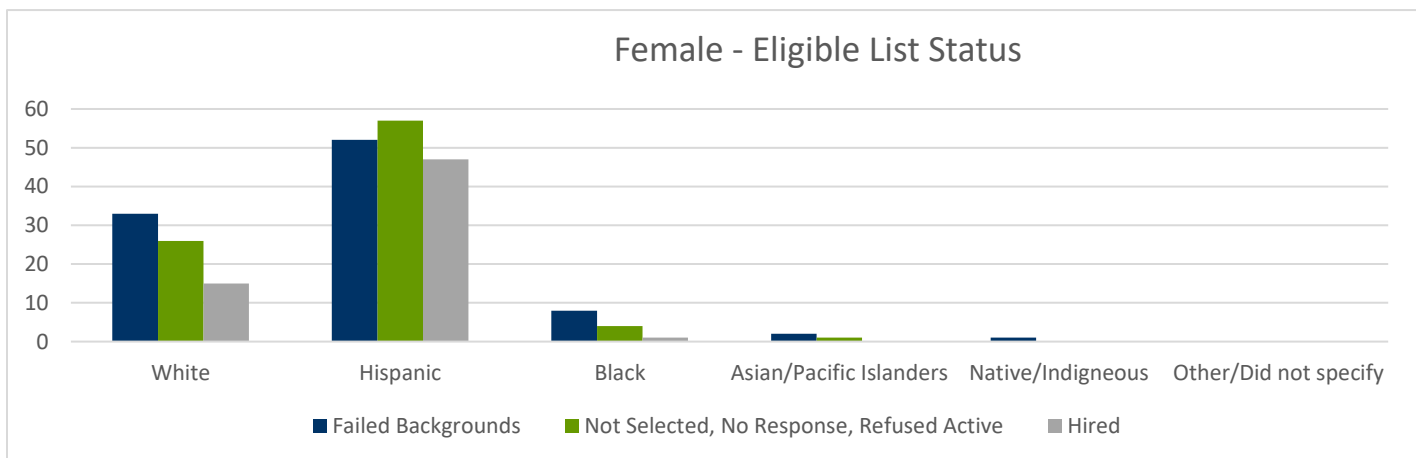
The data revealed that the hire rate of eligible candidates is low, with only 7.4% securing employment. This indicates a need for potential improvement in the hiring process to increase opportunities for qualified candidates.

The hire rate for applicants that initiated the background process by submitting a personal history statement is 31%. The number of eligible candidates who were not successful in passing the background process is 46%. The group of eligible candidates who were either not selected, failed to respond to the notice of interview, or requested to remain active on the list of those eligible for hire is 23%.

Detention Deputies



Candidates placed on eligible list by ethnicity and gender from January 2015-December 2021. Eligible list data not available for 2016.



Candidates placed on eligible list by ethnicity and gender from January 2015-December 2021. Eligible list data not available for 2016.

A review of the data for those that were placed on the eligible list reveals that 6.8% of Detention Deputy Trainees applicants were hired. Individuals who were successful on the written exam and followed through with the submittal of a personal history statement to initiate the background investigation were disqualified from the process at a rate of 38%. Candidates who were placed on the eligible list but failed to engage in the background process comprised 38% of the group as well. Overall, White candidates were hired at a rate of 32% less than minorities. The Hispanic population accounted for 63% of the hires between 2015 and 2022. There was not enough data for the following applicant groups to determine if there was disparate impact in the ratio between those that were hired and those that were unsuccessful in being appointed: Black, Asian/Pacific Islanders, Native/Indigenous, Other/Did not specify.

The data for the sample group consisting of White and Hispanics indicates that the groups are disqualified from the background investigation step at a rate that differs by 33%. Although the Hispanic population was disqualified at a higher rate they also applied and were appointed at a similar rate.

Further review of the applicant's status after their name was sent to KCSO for hiring consideration, resulted in the creation of new classifications to address issues with applicant retention. The duration between the time the candidate names were certified and completed background was approximately 6-months or more. In addition to the time pending during background, applicants then waited for the commencement of the POST or STC Academy held by the department. KCSO lost candidates that cleared background, accepted conditional job offers and were awaiting appointment as a Deputy Sheriff Trainee or Detentions Deputy Trainee to competing agencies. As a mechanism to retain candidates, the creation of a Sheriff's Cadet and Sheriff's Detentions Deputy Cadet classifications were developed to onboard candidates who cleared background and were pending hire due to the commencement of the next scheduled POST academy. The position also allows the department to hire self-sponsored students and promote employee longevity. In addition to creating the classifications to maintain applicants engaged, the academy start dates are being staggered and a partnership with Bakersfield College has been established to conduct STC academies. This allows KCSO to recruit students that attend the course through Bakersfield College.

Background Checks and Hiring Decisions

KCSO conducts a background check on eligible candidates. KCSO does not have itemized data for analysis to evaluate why each candidate failed the background process.

Although itemized data is not available, the overall fail rate of candidates in the 7-year look back is 46%. During the look back period, the number of background disqualifications peaked in 2017 at 65%. Most recently, the number of individuals disqualified pertaining to unacceptable items in their background has decreased to 47%. This is an indicator that additional information is needed to sort disqualifications by KCSO from those that voluntarily withdraw from the process. KCHR has implemented mechanisms to capture data related to candidates who voluntarily withdraw from the process to keep this group engaged in the process.

Our examination and hiring process must balance the need for speed with the equally important goal of selecting quality candidates. Recently, we have taken steps to expedite the examination process to assist KCSO with their need to fill several vacant positions. We have eliminated the physical agility testing and oral examination from the process managed by the Human Resources Division. We have also begun to accept written POST PELLETB examination scores from tests conducted outside of our internal testing process dating two years back. The downside to eliminating some of these components is that there are potentially candidates placed on the eligible lists that are not quality candidates who are likely to be hired. The time gained in the examination process may end up being lost in the background process. Kern County should consider reimplementing modified versions of its former testing components to ensure that all eligible candidates are of a caliber that the department and community desires. Kern County must also continue to evaluate the current written examination and consider alternatives where legally permissible to alleviate any disparate impacts from this component. Additionally, Kern County should make resources readily available to disparately impacted groups to assist them in successfully taking and passing all examination components.

KCSO must keep accurate recordings of why each candidate fails the background process to further evaluate any potential disparate impact caused by certain aspects of the process.

Changes Implemented to Date

Since January 1, 2021, KCSO and the County have worked diligently to implement the following changes with the goal of mitigating the challenges faced in recruiting and retaining sworn personnel:

Deputy Sheriff Compensation Changes

- November 2021 – implemented a 5% equity adjustment bringing Deputy Sheriff classification series salaries competitive with other local law enforcement agencies.
- November 2021 – increased entry-level Deputy Sheriff salary 13.25%.
- November 2021 – increased the sign-on bonus for new employees from \$10,000 to \$15,000.
- March 2022 – implemented a moving allowance for lateral Deputies of \$5,000.
- July 2022 – provided a 2.5% Cost of Living Adjustment.
- October 2022 – implemented a \$2,000 per month housing allowance for sworn law enforcement personnel living in the response areas of the Kern Valley, Mojave, Boron, Ridgecrest, Rosamond, and Frazier Park Substations.
- December 2022 – restructured the \$25,000 lateral bonus to be paid up front with a 5-year commitment to KCSO.
- April 2023 – restructured \$15,000 sign-on bonus for new employees to be paid up front with a 5-year commitment to KCSO.
- July 2023 – provided a 4% Cost of Living Adjustment.

Detentions Deputy Compensation Changes

- November 2021 – implemented a 5% equity adjustment bringing Sheriff's Detentions Deputy classification series in line with average of comparable counties.
- November 2021 – increased entry-level Sheriff's Detentions Deputy salary 20%.
- November 2021 – increased the sign-on bonus for new employees from \$10,000 to \$15,000.
- July 2022 – provided a 2.5% Cost of Living Adjustment.
- January 2023 – restructured the \$15,000 sign-on bonus to be paid up front with a 5-year commitment to KCSO.
- January 2023 – implemented a 22% equity adjustment bringing Sheriff's Detentions Deputy classification series in line with average of comparable counties.
- July 2023 – provided a 4% Cost of Living Adjustment.

Classification Changes

The following are also classification changes made since January 2021 that directly impact the KCSO's ability to recruit and retain quality sworn personnel:

- Revision of the Deputy Sheriff Trainee, Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff's Lieutenant, Sheriff's Commander, and Chief Deputy Sheriff classifications to incorporate AB 846 (California Assembly Bill requiring screening materials to identify explicit and implicit bias during the hiring process of peace officers) of the compliant language.
- Revision of the Deputy Sheriff Trainee classification increasing the minimum qualifying age from 18 to 21 years of age for peace officers.
- Created a new job classification titled Community Services Technician developed to relieve Deputies from responding to non-emergency calls for service.
- Created a new job specification titled Sheriff's Cadet to facilitate the retention and hire of candidates who cleared background and are awaiting commencement of the academy.
- Created a new job specification titled Sheriff's Detentions Cadet to facilitate the retention and hire of candidates who cleared background and are awaiting commencement of the academy.
- Revised Senior Deputy Sheriff job classification to include completion of FTO with the Sheriff's Office.
- Revised the Sheriff's Office Detentions Deputy job specification to allow completion of the PC 832 Firearms and Arrest Certificate within one year of employment instead of at time of application.
- Salary increases for the Special Deputy and Per Diem Background Investigator classifications to ensure adequate and consistent staffing with the background process.
- Reallocation of permanent full-time positions for the Detentions Officer classification to capture STC students that do not possess a PC 832 at time of graduation from the academy.

Revenue Sources

- Measure K established a 1% sales tax to fund vital law enforcement, fire, and medical services.

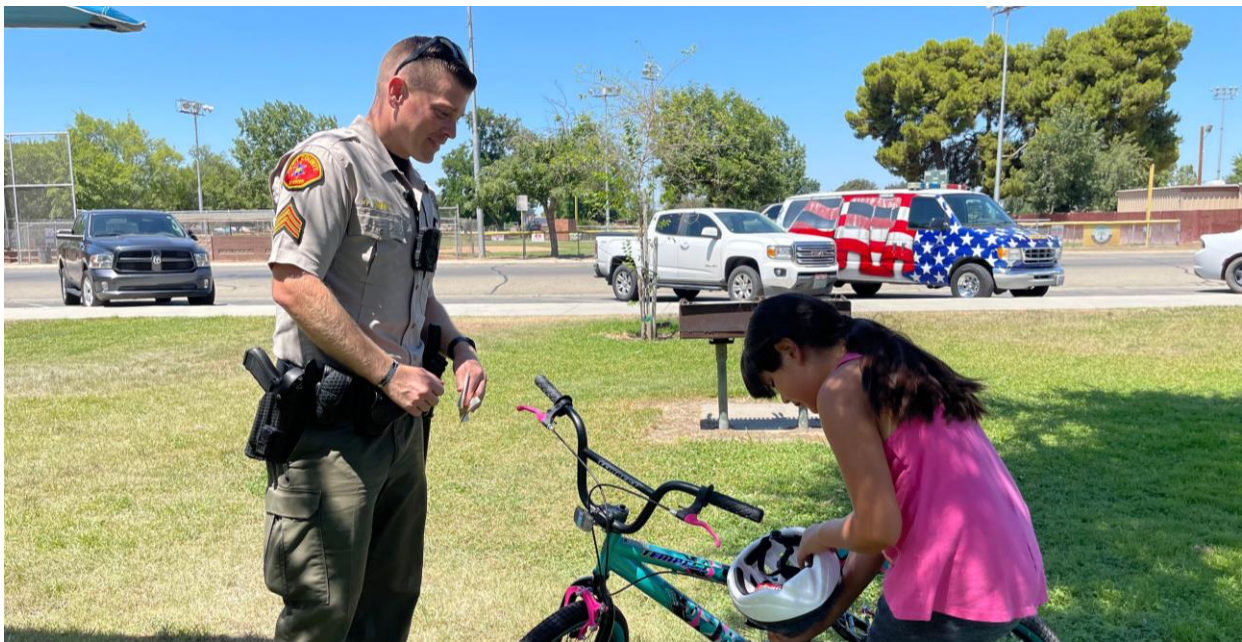


Adjusted Recruitment Practices

The data compiled for recruitment in a 7-year look back period indicates 5,532 applicants yielded 395 hires. KCSO currently has approximately 250 vacancies for sworn personnel. Outreach designed to attract high probability prospects is critical to the success of staffing and retaining personnel.

The review of recruitment data indicates that a diverse applicant group is interested in serving as sworn peace officers. It is acknowledged that a key component of those successful in the process does not represent the applicant group. Therefore, KCHR has modified several elements in the recruitment process to augment the applicant pool which includes removing exam components such as physical agilities and oral boards from the process. The review of the data revealed females were failing PATs at a higher rate. It was also determined that oral boards did not hurt nor help the applicant groups placement on the eligible list. Therefore, oral examinations were removed from the examination process as the information captured or learned regarding community policing is gathered during the departmental hiring interview.

Outreach events have been hosted that eliminate the rigid recruiting exam schedules that can impose barriers to those that are full-time employed or full-time students. A review of data related to the geographical location of candidates attending testing reveals that 23% of the applicant group resides in the outlying areas of the county while 77% reside in areas within Bakersfield. Efforts are being made to meet applicants where they are. Testing in outlying areas has been expanded to help applicants feel more connected and/or comfortable. To increase our reach, KCHR is partnering with the agencies hosting job fairs throughout Kern County. These events have been held in the community and have been recently revived due to a lapse during the pandemic. Historically, Job Fest events received great job seeker turnout and huge media exposure which will assist in promoting positions and the opportunity to test for sworn positions. Recruitment strategies will be centered on determining where diverse applicants job search and meeting them in the community by expanding outreach both inside and outside of Kern to new educational and vocational facilities, churches, local business chambers, attending events sponsored by community groups and targeting locations/events to source high probability prospects.



A model for recruitment events has been developed to be a one-stop for applicants. Applicants are afforded the opportunity to submit their application and have a recruiter review in person, meet background investigators to review pre-screen forms, and attend orientation presented by those in position. These events are being held outside of traditional work hours which are yielding a higher rate of attendance to the written examination as they gain momentum.

To accelerate the duration between the time of application and certification, the exam scheduled has increased to a two-week window from the previous monthly examination schedule. In addition, KCHR and SMEs reviewed written examinations that meet POST criteria. An examination obtained from a vendor was utilized for a 3-month period. However, the first quarterly review revealed that applicants were failing at a higher rate. Therefore, KCHR reverted to utilizing the POST PELLETB. In addition, the expiration date of the PELLETB t-score was extended from 1-year to 2-years.

We have taken steps to evaluate recruitment and recommend changes to remove barriers to increase the success of candidates by offering PELLETB test preparation classes as well as promoting KCSO as an employer of choice. Feedback from applicants that have not been successful in the process indicated the PELLETB study guide available to them is not sufficient to prepare them for the examination. Development of an exam preparation class will assist in keeping applicants engaged and will serve as a mechanism to bolster attendance to the written examination as approximately 33% of the applicants fail to show for the written examination.

KCHR is collaborating with partners such as the Department of Human Services and Employers' Training Resources to promote positions for Deputy Sheriff Trainee by offering the POST PELLETB written examination at job fair events coordinated by these agencies. These events receive exposure from local media outlets as they have been quite successful in attracting applicants from outlying areas. Testing is offered on the same day and at the same venue as these events which are scheduled throughout the County.

In conjunction with the Sheriff's Office, the Human Resources Division will develop a mobile recruitment model to promote careers with KCSO. We have begun to identify community organizations that may assist us in connecting with applicants. With the community's assistance and unified recruitment efforts between the County and KCSO, we envision holding Career Expos by bringing these events to the community we serve.

KCSO has invested in re-branding and developing a website that outlines the recruitment process.

Job and event announcements were communicated to the Community-wide Advisory Council (CAC) Chair for assistance distributing the information. This will resume once a chair has been re-established. The purpose of the CAC within the Stipulated Judgment is to meet with KCSO staff to provide input into policy and procedure, provide insight into the community's concerns and educate the community about their Sheriff's Office.

The data tracked includes an evaluation of the applications that were eliminated during the initial application review, those that failed to pass the written examination components and those that were successful in having their names placed on the list of those eligible for hire. In relation to recruitment, an assessment of the data revealed that a large number of applications were disqualified for incompleteness. Applications that did not contain complete responses to mandatory questions such as the conviction summary or details inconsistent with items applicants documented in their application were rejected. The analysis prompted a change in the protocols related to the review of applications in an effort to capture as many candidates as possible in the

recruitment phase. To accelerate the duration of time between application and the written examination, it was decided to accept applications lacking details related to work history. It is acknowledged that this information is vital in evaluating a candidate's skill set. However, the information is captured during the interview and/or background phase of the hiring process.

Historically, applicants who were successful in passing the examination components were placed on an eligible list in rank order based on their exam score. An unofficial eligible list was provided to the Sheriff's Office to assist the Background Unit in reaching out to applicants to initiate the background process. At times candidates that were certified were not necessarily the first to clear background and were placed in a hold status. In an effort to decrease the time between the candidate's name being placed on the eligible list and certification of their name, eligible lists are no longer ranked based on the applicant's examination results. This facilitates KCSO's ability to make conditional job offers to candidates clearing background. However, candidates were still lost to competing agencies as they were awaiting commencement of the academy. As a mechanism to retain candidates, the Cadet classifications were developed to assist with retaining candidates.

The County is now issuing the background pre-screen forms to candidates at the time they are notified they have been successful in the examination process. This allows candidates up to two weeks to complete the form prior to being contacted to meet with an investigator.

As part of outreach, it is important to highlight the various career paths afforded by KCSO. The department offers various assignments that can provide latitude to employees that are interested in building their skill set. Deputies are afforded the opportunity to take assignments in the Detectives Unit, Bomb Squad, Crisis Negotiations, Training Officers, Background or Internal Affairs Unit, Search and Rescue or Narcotics Unit. In addition, KCSO offers positions in which females have been hired for non-traditional employment such as Aircraft Mechanics.



It has become necessary to pursue every avenue to fill vacancies. The County will air promotional videos of Kern County in San Francisco. In addition to this, KCSO is exploring radio, billboard and social media blitz and has revamped KCSO's website to promote KCSO as an employer of choice. The County is seeking to engage and establish a presence at local events held in the community to market the various opportunities within the Sheriff's Office.

Bringing a talent pipeline into view will require the County and KCSO to approach this task in a manner that is built on ongoing engagement with the community. The development of internships will allow students or members of the community to learn about KCSO. Coordination with youth engagement programs will serve as a foundation for building future talent pipelines not only for sworn classifications but also for generating interest in civilian positions. The investment in the intern program will garner positive interactions with the public and who will be more likely to seek out employment with KCSO.



Kern County – Recruitment Objectives

We now present the Recruitment Plans key objectives along with the action steps required to achieve them. These objectives and action steps are already in motion. Subsequent reports will update progress on and add additional objectives and/or steps, as needed.

1. Evaluate Job Specifications to Mitigate for Bias & Emphasize Community Oriented Policing (Section VII 101, 103. 106-107)

Kern County Human Resources and the Kern County Sheriff's Office are committed to creating job descriptions and ideal candidate profiles that reflect values and vision of the community and the department. We are reviewing and updating our current job descriptions within KCSO to ensure Knowledge, Skills & Abilities (KSA's) are relevant to critical functions of the job, incorporate inclusive language and expressly communicate the Department's commitment to embracing and promoting principles of community-oriented policing. These changes are aimed at appealing to high-quality talent while also setting the tone for departmental priorities.

KCSO – Desired Outcome:

To effectively communicate KCSO's commitment to increasing diversity within its ranks and building an organization that represents the diversity of the community we serve. Job specifications will emphasize a culture of community policing and promote constitutional, effective policing at all ranks. Develop and emphasize an ideal candidate profile, emphasizing core values and desired KSA's, as well as minimum standards for entry level and promotional opportunities.

1.1 Conduct job description analysis to mitigate bias.

Actions	Resources Committed	Indicators	Timeline	Implementation Plan	Status	Lead
1.1.1 Review and update required and preferred job qualifications for open positions including development of an ideal candidate profile	KCSO HR KCSO Recruitment Unit	Date of last job description update/review	2023 Q3	Draft Specifications and approve through labor unions Update class specifications in Neogov Update Websites with ideal candidate profiles	Partially completed pending union concurrence; draft candidate profile Draft/created ideal statement (see attachment "Exhibit A")	KCHR – Recruitment Team
1.1.2 Review and update Knowledge, Skills & Abilities (KSA's) to reflect necessary skills to perform the duties of the position in an effort to attract, hire and retain qualified sworn officers	KCSO HR KCSO Recruitment Unit	Date of last KSA update/review	2023 Q3	Draft Specifications and approve through labor unions Update class specifications on Neogov	Partially Completed, pending union concurrence	KCHR – Recruitment Team
1.1.3 Incorporate AB 846 compliant language that places increased emphasis on community policing, interaction and collaborative problem solving	KCSO HR KCSO Recruitment	Compliant language included and emphasized (Y/N)	2023 Q2	Draft Specifications and approve through labor unions Update Neogov class specifications	Partially Completed, pending union concurrence	KCHR – Recruitment Team

2. Update Job Bulletins to Increase Transparency in Recruitment Processes & Communicate Commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) (Section VII, 101, 103, 106-107)

KCSO and KCHR are also committed to increasing transparency of recruitment steps in our job bulletins by including detailed information regarding hiring steps and timelines for applicants. We are committed to supporting candidates throughout the process including providing easily accessible resources that can assist them in successfully completing position requirements. We will also convey our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion by incorporating the County's DEI statement into our job bulletins and recruitment materials to appeal to our underrepresented populations.



KCSO – Desired Outcomes:

Inform candidates and our community partners with recruitment information including opportunities, compensation, the testing and hiring process and applicable deadlines to encourage a diverse applicant pool. Generate a larger and diverse applicant pool by effectively communicating hiring needs and reducing barriers potential candidates experience that may deter completion of the application process. The Department will also review all promotional processes, via a Promotional Plan and Policy, to ensure that there are no areas that create barriers in the promotion of candidates that reflect our diverse population. This review will benefit applicants at all levels of the promotional process.

2.1 Revamp application process and provide additional information to allow open communication with applicants.

Actions	Resources Committed	Indicators	Timeline	Implementation Plan	Status	Lead
2.1.1 Include application submission end date, application review period, written held by date, PAT and/or Oral by and cut off for PHS statements.	KCHR – Recruitment KCSO HR	100% of Job Bulletins updated for Trainee classifications	2022 Q1	Update Job bulletin template in NeoGov to include info in 2.1.1 Updated testing cycle from 6 weeks to 2 weeks Accepting t-scores from other agencies with exam dates within 2 years	Completed	KCHR – Recruitment
2.1.2 Provide detailed information regarding evaluation methodology (i.e., Pellet B, Physical Assessments including links and introductions to resources that support when available (link to study guides, Kern Literacy Council partnership, etc.)	KCHR – Recruitment KCSO HR	Bulletins include detailed information regarding testing procedures and provide resources	2022 Q1 2023 Q4 2023 Q4	Update job bulletin to include items to include prep guides for written exam and pre-academy physical fitness guide	Completed - added study guide/resources Pending - the developing partnership with Kern Literacy Council Pending - development of Pellet B testing class	KCHR – Recruitment
2.1.3 Host standing open house for the PAT course so applicants and potential applicants can familiarize themselves with exam components and prepare for agility testing	KCHR – Recruitment KCSO HR KCSO	Host open house monthly Track passage rate	Completed 2022	Schedule open house, reserve agility course and demonstrate; possibly utilize BC course	PATs changed from a disqualifying test to a Physical Assessment to inform candidates of relative status and provide recommendations by SO training staff	KCSO
2.1.4 Add County DEI Statement to job bulletins and recruitment materials	KCHR Director of DEI	Job Bulletins & recruitment materials contain this information	2022 Q1	Update Job Bulletins template in NeoGov to include statement	Completed	KCHR Recruitment Team
2.1.5 Leverage employee testimonials	KCHR KCSO	Utilize testimonials from employees including individuals in non-traditional roles	2023 Q3	Share testimonials in marketing campaigns, consider utilizing individuals as mentors or as presenters at public events	Pending	KCSO

3. Reduce Barriers to Entry for Underrepresented Candidates (Section VII, 101, 103, 105-107)

To reach a broader applicant pool and bring a diverse pipeline into view, it is important to outline a clear path to employment and ensure applicants have substantive access to the recruitment team throughout the application and hiring process. Assembling a recruitment team that is selected for their skills in recruiting including good public speaking and/or public relation skills and knowledge of the functions of the position will assist in communicating the various careers paths offered by KCSO. A diverse recruitment team has been formed which not only promotes inclusion but also establishes a foundation to strengthen community relationships and most importantly improves communication with the community.

KCSO – Desired Outcomes:

Reduce frustration applicants experience in the process that drives them to voluntarily self-select out of the process leading to unfulfilled hiring and diversity. Identify and pursue candidates with a direct relationship with the community and those vested in improving it. Develop a recruitment team committed to engaging with the candidate pool by encouraging questions or hosting informational sessions. Build support for candidates throughout the recruitment process to keep them engaged and bolster inclusion.

Actions	Resources Committed	Indicators	Timeline	Implementation Plan	Status	Lead
3.1.1 Provide just-in-time micro-learning on implicit bias for all members of recruitment process with particular focus on evaluators and interviewers	KCHR – Recruitment Team KCSO/KCSO HR Director of DEI	Training requirements identified (Y/N) Training conducted	Q4 2023	Create training matrix for recruitment team, outreach team Develop checklist to track 3.1.1	Development of micro-learning in progress;	KCHR
3.1.2 Engage DEI Director as part of recruitment, evaluation, interview & hiring process to measure effectiveness of training and ensure DEI values are included throughout the process	KCHR Recruitment KCSO/KCSO HR Director of DEI	Continual communication and engagement	2023 Q3	Partially completed; DDEI part of recruitment, evaluation process up to establishment of list; Interviews and hiring process handled by SOHR	Partially Completed	KCSO
3.1.3 Reassess evaluations and interview questions from a DEI perspective to mitigate for potential bias or barriers to entry for underrepresented groups	KCHR Recruitment KCSO HR Director of DEI	Updated questions for interviews, supplemental application questions	2023 Q3	Develop list of vetted questions that can be used by hiring committees; create approval process for new questions	Past questions gathered and are currently under review	KCHR Recruitment KCSO HR
3.1.4 Include racial, ethnic, and gender diversity in interview panels	KCHR Recruitment KCSO HR Director of DEI	Documentation of efforts to include diversity in panel composition	2023 Q3	Develop recruitment checklist that tracks efforts/completion of 3.1.1 and 3.1.4	In progress; checklist in development	KCHR Recruitment & KCSO HR

3.2 Leverage application flow data from recruitment lifecycle to continually re-evaluate recruitment processes.

Actions	Resources Committed	Indicators	Timeline	Implementation Plan	Status	Lead
3.2.1 Conduct an in-depth review of all candidate evaluation mechanisms including validity of existing physical assessment and training to successfully pass PAT administered during academy, background and psychological disqualifiers to look for disparate impact on under-represented populations	KCHR – Recruitment Team KCSO HR KCSO	Data analytics and reporting should be available after changes are implemented	2023 Q3	PATs no longer part of evaluation process; Information to be tracked via academy non-voluntary exits; Upgrade technology to track background and or/mental disqualifiers. Review NeoGov disqualifications post certification; updating NeoGov disqualifying or inactivation reasons post certification	Initial review completed; improved tracking mechanisms for more effective data collection; re-review necessary ; Completed update to NeoGov inactivation reason to engage applicants who voluntarily disc in the BG process	Director of DEI KCSO – HR Commander
3.2.2 Enhance current tracking mechanisms and process to improve reporting capability (recruitment and background investigations)	KCHR KCSO HR	Reportable metric for: Background DQs, PAT Failure,	2023 Q2	Purchase software to assist with compiling, sorting data, templates for background disqualifications, promotion selection	Completed Gathering data on a quarterly basis; background check software purchase completed	DEI Director for HR KCSO Personnel Sgt.
3.2.3 KCHR conduct confidential candidate & employee exit interviews to assess the overall applicant/employee experience with Kern County to identify opportunities to improve retention and engagement (automate dropout feedback survey)	KCHR – Recruitment Team	Review stats and analysis to determine process improvement	2023 Q3 – Develop tool/ method Q3 2023 – should be built into new payroll system	Create exit interview survey template and determine how survey data will be collected, aggregated and shared with department	Reviewing options with NeoGov and developing survey template	KCHR
3.2.4 Conduct annual review with KCSO & KCHR to re-assess and re-evaluate effectiveness of recruitment processes	KCHR/DEI KCSO	Meetings conducted/metric review/report	2023 Q4	Schedule bi-annual meeting	Developing timeframes (end of recruitment cycle or standing date)	KCHR Recruitment Team

4. Attract New, Diverse Talent Pipelines (Section VII, 101,103, 106-107)

As recruitment for law enforcement positions becomes increasingly more difficult, KCSO and KCHR must make pro-active changes to our traditional recruitment practices. The department is actively working on updating and improving its online presence to appeal to prospective candidates. KCSO and KCHR must adopt a two-prong recruitment strategy that focuses on building a pipeline of local, “homegrown” candidates who have traditionally had a history of staying with the department while also expanding our visibility and outreach outside of the Central Valley. This will require dedicated full-time personnel from KCSO and KCHR to actively seek out recruitment opportunities, collaborate with community partners and be present in the community to provide access to the talent pipeline.

In July of 2022, the KCSO hosted an open house for a group of community college students enrolled in Bakersfield College. The student in attendance were enrolled in Criminal Justice studies via the Kern High School District, Early College Program. Areas of study included psychology, law, and administration of justice. Over the course of the event, the KCSO Recruitment Team engaged approximately 40 students. When the students were asked how many had an interest in working in law enforcement, approximately 3 responded with mild interest. Several students wanted to be attorneys, judges, psychologist and forensics analysis. What we found was a group of high performing students who had a poor concept of law enforcement. Department personnel took the opportunity to explain the Sheriff’s Cadet Program for youth. We identified how the Cadet program would provide firsthand experience in their field of interest, accelerate their learning of criminal justice practices, and provide communication and engagement training.

Law enforcement agencies across the nation are competing for immediate hires. The updated website and relevant recruitment videos will assist with attracting current qualified talent. To have a sustained recruitment plan with long term returns, KCSO and KCHR will renew commitment to educate the community on law enforcement goals and programs, partner with stake holders to coordinate recruitment and informational events in all areas of the County and work with educational institutions to promote employment opportunities and hiring processes.

KCSO – Desired Outcomes: Redesign existing website or develop a recruitment specific website with a focus on rebranding and emphasizing the desire for candidates that meet or exceed the traits outlined in the ideal candidate profile. Rebranding our website and increased presence on social media through the use of recruitment videos focusing on the highlights of Kern County. For “homegrown” candidates, we as a department will focus on early recruitment in the form of volunteers such as the Cadet program. The program provides career orientation experiences, leadership opportunities, and community service activities for Cadets, ranging from 15 to 21 years of age. The primary goals of the program are to help young adults choose a career path within law enforcement and to challenge them to become responsible citizens of their community. By focusing on early recruitment with the Cadets, we are enhancing the quality and experience of potential applicants. This program provides valuable life experience, emphasizing positive changes in lifestyle habits, which can deter candidates early on from engaging in behavior that might otherwise disqualify them. A byproduct of the Cadet program may instill in them a sense of loyalty and encourages candidates to pursue a career with the Kern

County Sheriff's Office. Even if Cadets decide law enforcement is not for them or they go to another agency, our goal for the program is that every participant leaves with a better understanding of and respect for this agency.

The Cadet Program is named similarly to the classifications created as a mechanism to retain applicants pending the academy start date. The individuals recruited for this program will be considered program participants in a non-paid status. KCSO will track participants through the exit of the program as well as compiling participant demographics. Once the program has been developed, strategic advertising campaigns will be established.



4.1 Revamp KCSO website and marketing efforts to optimize marketing and outreach efforts to appeal to diverse populations.

The Sheriff’s Office has been working to create a recruitment website and has contracted with TOC Public Relations. TOC Public Relations will provide web design and consulting services. The services provided will be focused on creating a standalone recruitment website for the Kern County Sheriff’s Office. TOC Public Relations specializes in digital marketing, strategic communication, and all aspects of public relations. TOC Public Relations will create and maintain a recruitment website and produce three recruitment videos for the Kern County Sheriff’s Office. The contract with TOC Public Relations was completed on May 5, 2022, with a four to six month estimate to launch the website. The recruitment website with link with current social media platforms used by KCSO in hopes to drive more people to the website to learn about current vacancies.

Actions	Resources Committed	Indicators	Timeline	Implementation Plan	Status	Lead
4.1.1 Create workgroup with KCSO, DEI Director, KCHR Recruitment Team and Countywide Communications and Dept PIO to formulate “rebranding” strategy	KCSO HR; KCHR Director of DEI CW Communications and Dept PIO	Development of marketing and outreach materials	2022 Q1-Q2 ongoing	Build on existing relationships of two PIO’s to expand to the committee	Completed Meetings between PIO’s already in progress; monthly meetings scheduled expand workgroup to include KCHR	KCSO
4.1.2 Contract with professional marketing firm, if necessary, as an additional resource in this effort.	KCSO HR; KCHR Director of DEI CW Communications and Dept PIO Outside Consultant procured	# of documents created Launch of new website rebranding # of materials produced	2022 Q2-Q3	CAO & KCSO has approved expenditure; procurement completed (y/n)	Completed - CAO & KCSO has approved expenditure; procurement completed; website developed, rebranding	KCSO
4.1.3 Increase visibility of DEI imagery and language within branding and marketing initiatives to communicate commitment to diversity, inclusion and principles of community policing	KCSO HR; KCHR Director of DEI CW Communications and Dept PIO Consultant	# of clicks, views and shares of newly branded materials # of new brand documents/sites	2023 Q3-Q4 ongoing	Develop strategy with workgroup and provide consultant with clear vision of project goals	Expand workgroup to include KCHR and Director of DEI to formulate vision	KCSO

4.2 Build robust pipeline of potential applicants by collaborating with Kern High School District (KHSD), KCSOS, and neighboring districts, Kern Community College District (KCCD), California State University Bakersfield (CSUB) and other local private colleges. Will continue recruitment through the Cadet Program and Sheriff’s Activities League (SAL) Program.

Actions	Resources Committed	Indicators	Timeline	Implementation Plan	Status	Lead
4.2.1 Partner with Kern High School District’s daytime ROC & CTEC law enforcement program to engage & foster relationships with local youth at an early stage and help expand outreach to underrepresented communities	KCSO/HR Director of DEI KCHR – Recruitment Team	Initial contact made # of engagements # of applicants	2023 Q2-Q3 Ongoing	Director of DEI & KCSO make initial point of contact to articulate goals to leadership of those organizations; KCSO team continually engages for on-site presence	Initial contact made; Schedule follow up with KCSO HR commander	Director of DEI & KCSO HR Commander
4.2.2 Partner with Kern Community College District’s Public Safety Programs Director to engage and recruit program enrollees at Bakersfield College, Cerra Cosso College & Porterville college	Same as Above	Initial contact made # of engagements # of applicants	2022 Q1 Ongoing	Director of DEI & KCSO make initial point of contact to articulate goals to leadership of those organizations; KCSO team continually engages for on-site classroom presence	Ongoing - KCSO coordinated training programs with BC and additional training facilities	Director of DEI & KCSO HR Commander
4.2.3 Engage CSUB’s Center for Career Education & Community Engagement (CECE) and engage with key feeder programs for Public Safety positions	Same as Above	Initial contact made # of engagements # of applicants	2023 Q2-Q4 Ongoing	Director of DEI & KCSO make initial point of contact to articulate goals to leadership of those organizations; KCSO team continually engages for on-site classroom presence	Initial contact made; Schedule follow up with KCSO HR commander	Director of DEI & KCSO HR Commander
4.2.4 Engage San Joaquin, UEI, Santa Barbara Business College, Fresno Pacific, La Verne	Same as Above	Same as above	2023 Q2-Q4 Ongoing	Outreach to San Joaquin, UEI, SBBC, Fresno Pacific, UOP, La Verne	Ongoing - Recruitment event information distributed to agencies	KCHR Recruitment Team
4.2.5 Continue recruitment through the Cadet and SAL program	Same as Above	Same as above	2023 Q2-Q4 Ongoing	Garner interest and participation in programs	Ongoing	KCSO

5. Expand Community Outreach Efforts– Organizations (Section VII, 101,103, 106-107)

Enhancing our community outreach efforts is an integral part of embracing the principles of community-oriented policing and our recruitment and hiring plan. We are committed to developing deliberate and intentional relationships that will help overcome the general lack of trust in the police among young, African Americans and members of other minority populations. These relationships can help build trust and credibility within populations that the department is actively seeking to recruit and serve.



KCSO – Desired Outcomes:

5.1 Continue working with the Community-Wide Advisory Council (CAC) to develop effective relationships with key community stakeholders to build trust and increase legitimacy. Incorporate CAC members into existing processes, where applicable, and actively seek their input. Develop intentional and deliberate relationships with local diverse organizations including community organizations, sororities, fraternities, student organizations, places of worship, cultural community centers etc. to strengthen community outreach and exposure.

Actions	Resources Committed	Indicators	Timeline	Implementation Plan	Status	Lead
5.1.1 Develop & maintain a list of organizations to utilize for community outreach efforts	KCHR & KCSO recruitment team	Initiate contact with organizations and community leaders via active outreach	2023 Q2-Q4 Ongoing	Identify local organizations and active community leaders; dislocated workers	In development; some outreach has begun	Director of DEI
5.2.2 Partner with the CAC for community outreach and recruitment efforts	KCHR, KCSO	DEI Director joined the CAC Community Policing & Engagement Sub-Committee	2023 Q1 – Q4 Ongoing	Solicit input and assistance from CAC to help identify recruitment events with particular focus on underrepresented communities	Completed Initial contact with CAC. Reestablishing connection to provide recruitment event information for distribution to community;	Director of DEI

5.2 Establish partnerships with statewide and national organizations focused on diversifying law enforcement.

Actions	Resources Committed	Indicators	Timeline	Implementation Plan	Status	Lead
5.2.1 Launch a PR campaign to announce new initiative (modeled after 30 by 30) to increase the recruitment, retention and promotion of women in policing	KCSO Director of DEI PIOs	Completed (Y/N) Press release # of applicants	2023 Q3-Q4	Draft program initiative, construct PR campaign to announce departmental objectives	In progress; possible story in Bakersfield Life March Women’s Issue	Director of DEI
5.2.2 Continually seek new opportunities for collaborations with organizations addressing diversity in law enforcement	KCHR KCSO HR KCSO	# of new collaborations/ initiatives	Ongoing	Stay abreast of new initiatives and opportunities to collaborate; engage decision makers timely	In progress; ongoing	Director of DEI KCSO Leadership

Kern County – Ongoing Tracking and Analysis

The establishment of data analytics will be vital to continual improvements in attracting, hiring, and retaining top-tier candidates.

To effectively drive staffing, the use of data will be critical in assessing the progress toward sourcing high probability prospects. The evaluation and re-assessment of the data on a quarterly basis will allow us to discern if there is any disparate impact on under-represented populations on a timely basis. The data gathered will track efforts to yield candidates, timeline constraints and allocating appropriate resources to meet objectives. The data collected for the seven-year lookback period will be used as the baseline in determining the effectiveness and the need to adapt practices.

In depth reviews have resulted in modifications to the coding/noting of a candidate's disposition post certification. Additional fields were added to post certification results to distinguish between candidates that failed background for cause and those that self-selected out for failing to submit a PHS or pre-screen form. The County will reach out to applicants that voluntarily removed themselves to elicit feedback to formulate appropriate modifications in the process or to re-engage them in the process.

One of the tools to be utilized to assess the overall applicant and employee experience with KCSO will be confidential candidate/employee interviews. The data may divulge unknown information that will be valuable in formulating recommendations and/or modifications to current recruitment processes.

There was no data available to evaluate the factors related to applicants that failed to meet background requirements. Moving forward, new software purchased by KCSO will assist in collecting and gathering data for analysis. This will facilitate KCSO's ability to conduct a comprehensive review of the background investigation process to assess gaps in communication and/or address applicant frustrations.

Continual analysis and communication of findings to community members is vital to the success of staffing KCSO with quality sworn personnel who reflect the diversity of the Kern County community.

