

Matthew Cate
Executive Director
California State Association of Counties



Matthew Cate began serving as the Executive Director of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) on November 12, 2012, after serving for more than four years, under two governors, as Secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. In that role, he was instrumental in implementing sweeping reforms to the Department that resulted in reduced recidivism, the end of the prison overcrowding crises, reduced prison spending, and the historic realignment of many public safety services from the State to the County level. During the Brown administration, Mr. Cate also served as Chairman of the Board of State and Community Corrections and the Prison Industry Authority. In addition, in 2010, Mr. Cate was elected by his national peers as Regional President of the Association of State Correctional Administrators.

Prior to his appointment as Secretary, Mr. Cate served for four years as the California Inspector General where he was responsible for public oversight of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Since 2007, he has also served on the California Rehabilitation Oversight Board and, was responsible for reporting to the state legislature on the progress made by the Department in fulfilling its obligation to provide effective rehabilitative programs to California's inmates and parolees.

Prior to becoming California's Inspector General, Mr. Cate served as a state and local prosecutor. From 1996 to 2004, he held the position of Deputy Attorney General at the California Department of Justice. He supervised a team of trial and appellate prosecutors, managed a criminal trial caseload of political corruption matters, and provided counsel to county grand juries. In 2003, while working on federal fraud and corruption matters, Mr. Cate was cross-designated as a Special Assistant United States Attorney. From 1994 to 1996, Mr. Cate was a Deputy District Attorney for Sacramento County, last serving in a special assignment prosecuting juvenile rape and murder cases. Prior to joining the public sector, Mr. Cate worked as a business litigation attorney with the law firm Downey, Brand, Seymour & Rohwer. He has also held several positions as an instructor of legal and law enforcement-related topics, including standards training for peace officers.

Mr. Cate recently joined Stanford University School of Law as a Law and Policy Fellow. In that role, his work focuses on collaborating with local government leaders to determine the impact of Public Safety Realignment on the front-end of the criminal justice system, including reentry services and developing effective strategies to address post-realignment challenges.

Mr. Cate earned his Doctor of Jurisprudence from the University of Oregon School of Law and a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from Linfield College, where he was a National Scholar Athlete. He is a member of the California State Bar.