

Urgent Budget Augmentation: Preserving Monterey County Public Safety

Request for Critical Investigator Position Preservation

Monterey County District Attorney's Office
Budget Presentation

April 7, 2026



'Immediate Funding Disruptions'

Two weeks before budget deadline



Social Services Partnership

Social Services Reduction

\$410,000

Two weeks before budget deadline

- Eliminates 2 District Attorney Investigator I positions dedicated to welfare fraud cases
- Specialized DAI I positions cannot be reassigned to other units



Cannabis Regulation

Cannabis Unit Reduction

\$626,252

Two days before budget deadline

- Forces elimination of 2 District Attorney Investigator III positions in regulatory enforcement
- Removes DA's ability to conduct cannabis business inspections and investigations

SYSTEMIC CONSEQUENCES OF CANNABIS POSITION ELIMINATION



2025 ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY

93

Inspections Conducted

11

Active Criminal Cases



REGULATORY VACUUM

- Deletion of two cannabis investigator positions creates a regulatory vacuum
- Illegal operators and violators left unchecked
- No oversight for licensed or unlicensed cannabis operations
- Industry compliance collapses without enforcement presence

Loss of these positions directly endangers public safety and eliminates all cannabis industry compliance enforcement in Monterey County.

CRITICAL IMPACT: LOSS OF INVESTIGATIVE EXPERTISE

Filled DA Investigator III – Position Slated for Elimination Severe Operational Consequences for the Office

Felony Investigations

- Loss of senior investigator severely impairs the ability to conduct complex felony investigations
- These cases demand specialized expertise, sustained continuity, and long-term investigative oversight
- Junior staff cannot readily absorb the depth of knowledge required to manage multi-faceted felony cases

Officer-Involved Shooting (OIS) Investigations

- Independent, experienced OIS investigations are essential for maintaining public trust and ensuring objectivity
- Loss of this expertise exposes the office to credibility risks and potential legal vulnerabilities

- This expertise cannot be quickly transferred, rebuilt, or absorbed by less experienced personnel
- The gap in knowledge continuity will have lasting negative effects on investigative effectiveness

Operational Impact

The elimination of a senior DA Investigator III creates an immediate and lasting void in the office's investigative capacity — one that cannot be filled by seniority-based reassignment alone.

At Risk

- Active felony case continuity
- Independent OIS investigation
- Community trust and investigative credibility

Losing senior investigative expertise is not merely an HR matter — it is a public safety crisis that directly impairs the District Attorney's ability to serve Monterey County.

WELFARE FRAUD INVESTIGATORS



INVESTIGATORS

Welfare Fraud & Financial Crimes Division investigates public assistance fraud and financial crimes that directly impact County, State, and taxpayer-funded resources.

\$400,000+

in fraudulent County funds
prevented from release



MURDER INVESTIGATION

- Identified 30+ fraudulent EBT cards linked to suspects connected to a fentanyl and cocaine drug trafficking ring
- EBT cards were used to pay drug runners and exchange for drugs
- Public benefits exploited to support broader criminal activity

Eliminating this position reduces the County's ability to detect fraud, prevent continued losses, and hold offenders accountable.

Negative Gender Equity Impact

100% of investigators slated for elimination are women

Why This Matters:



- Women represent 100% of investigators facing layoff.
- Sharply reduces female representation in the DA's investigative force.
- Undermines the County's commitment to gender equity & diversity in law enforcement.
- Reverses hard-won progress in building a representative investigative team.
- Sends a troubling message about institutional support for women in public safety.

Positions Affected



Women (3)

3 in 3 (100%) positions held by women

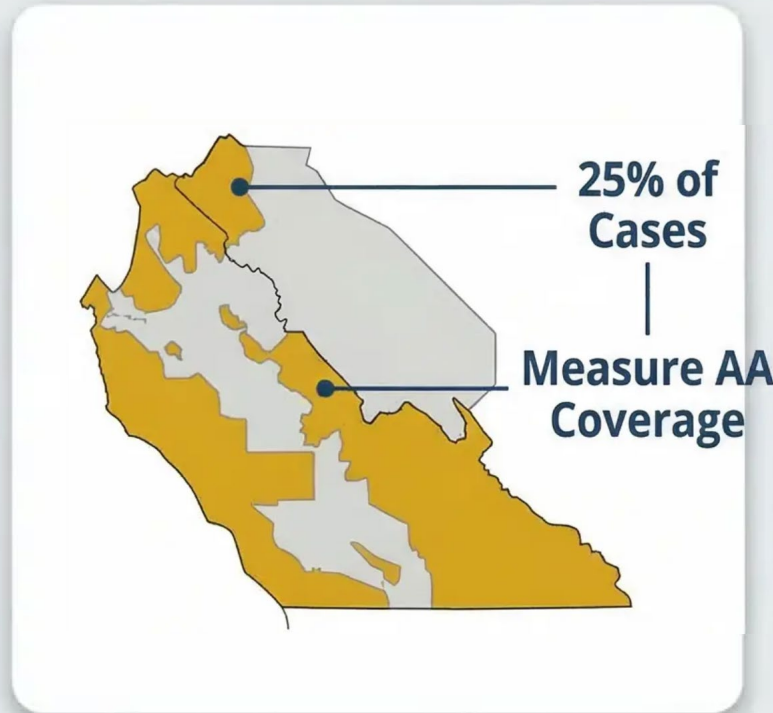
Strategic Funding via Measure AA

Measure AA Revenue: A Perfect Match for Public Safety Needs

The Connection



- Measure AA supports services in unincorporated areas
- Voter-approved for general government purposes
- Includes public safety and community protection
- Designed for visible, impactful investments



The Justification



- 25% of DA caseload originates in unincorporated areas
- Over 3,750 cases annually require investigation
- Proportional use aligns with voter intent
- Direct benefit to the communities that fund it



From 15,000+ cases reviewed annually

Targeted Investment = Protected Communities



A Targeted and Proportional Request

PROPORTIONAL SHARE



\$5,849,701

General Fund work
performed for
unincorporated areas

25% of total DA caseload

15%

ACTUAL REQUEST



\$842,347

Budget augmentation
requested is only 15% of
proportional share

**REQUESTING ONLY \$842,347
to Retain All 3 Critical Investigator Positions**

WELL BELOW OUR PROPORTIONAL SHARE

Conclusion: Protecting the Justice System



We urge the Budget Office to approve this modest augmentation to prevent the reduction of essential public safety functions and ensure continued accountability for Monterey County residents. This is not expansion—this is preservation of core justice functions.

- Preserve 3 Filled Critical Investigator Positions
- Protect Public Safety
- Uphold Constitutional Mandate

Potential Request
(Full Share)

\$5,849,701

Our Actual
Request

\$842,347

(Only 15% of Share)

