



County of Orange

County Executive Office

August 13, 2025

Honorable Maria D. Hernandez
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Subject: "Health Care Agency: Providing Care for Orange County" Grand Jury
Response

Dear Judge Hernandez:

Per your request, and in accordance with Penal Code 933, please find the County of Orange response to the subject report as approved by the Board of Supervisors. The respondents are the Orange County Board of Supervisors and the Orange County Health Care Agency.

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Fernandez of the County Executive Office at 714-834-7219.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

4A6A58B44D8F4FC

Michelle Aguirre
County Executive Officer

Enclosure

cc: 2024-25 Orange County Grand Jury Foreman
Lisa Fernandez, Director of Performance Management and Policy
Elizabeth Guillen-Merchant, Director of Performance Management and Policy

Responses to Findings and Recommendations 2024-25 Grand Jury Report:



Health Care Agency: Providing Care for Orange County

SUMMARY RESPONSE STATEMENT

On June 10, 2025, the Grand Jury (GJ) released the report titled "Health Care Agency: Providing Care for Orange County" on June 10, 2025. This report includes findings and recommendations directed to the Orange County Board of Supervisors and Orange County Health Care Agency. Below are the responses.

FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

F1. The County's hiring process sometimes limits the HCA's ability to hire the best-qualified candidates.

Response: *Disagrees wholly with the finding*

The County of Orange (County) hiring process is designed to ensure fairness and transparency while focusing on candidates' competencies and qualifications. The County Board of Supervisors' (Board) established Mission Statement includes a commitment to "creating a positive, service-oriented culture which attracts and retains the best and brightest." Additionally, one of five Board Strategic Plan Priorities is to "Simplify/increase flexibility of administrative policies and procedures." The County's Chief Human Resource Services Officer implemented tools such as same day hiring fairs to expedite hiring and revised selection rules to ensure the County's hiring practices are competitive with private industry while remaining in compliance with laws applicable to the hiring of government employees and the Board's mission and priorities.

F2. Not all HCA employees fully cooperate with the HCA Office of Compliance.

Response: *Disagrees partially with the finding.*

While it's possible that some individuals may not fully engage with the Office of Compliance, there are other ways for employees to similarly communicate such as with their manager/supervisor and County Counsel. HCA is committed to maintaining a culture of collaboration and trust and, in support of this effort and in light of this finding, the County Procurement Office is engaging an outside consultant to assist in review of HCA's compliance policies and practices for consistency/compliance with legal and regulatory standards.

F3. Correctional Health has built and maintains a collaborative relationship with the Orange County Sheriff's Department, benefiting the County, its employees, and the incarcerated population.

Response: *Agrees with the finding.*

F4. Behavioral Health is undergoing and anticipating major funding changes and prioritizes their services in a reactive manner driven by State mandates.

Response: *Agrees with the finding.*

Behavioral Health Services (BHS) responds to funding changes made by the state as soon as information is provided by the state.

F5. Public Health Services does not routinely disseminate information to the Orange County public on communicable diseases, if any.

Response: *Disagrees wholly with the finding*

The County Health Officer / Public Health Services holds an annual State of Public Health for the general public and shares information with the public when communicable diseases occur, as outlined in statute.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES

R1. The Grand Jury recommends that the HCA continue to collaborate with County HRS to further streamline the recruitment and processing of applicants through additional job fairs and other recruitment efforts including, but not limited to, one-day hiring events. (F1)

Response: *The recommendation has been implemented.*

HCA continues to work with County HRS to make the recruitment and application process more efficient including update of selection rules and the continued use of job fairs and one-day hiring events.

R2. The Grand Jury recommends that all levels of HCA management refresh their knowledge of compliance requirements on a semi-annual basis effective December 31, 2025. (F2)

Response: *The recommendation has been implemented.*

In addition to Annual Compliance Training (ACT), HCA management refreshes knowledge through regular emails pertaining to compliance requirements and general program guidance.

R3.The Grand Jury recommends that whenever any HCA employee has compliance-related questions or concerns, they take those concerns to their supervisor and to the Office of Compliance. This should be reinforced by leadership sharing this recommendation in regular communication channels, such as monthly town halls and weekly senior staff meetings, commencing September 30, 2025. (F2)

Response: *The recommendation has been implemented.*

In 2024, HCA began holding agencywide monthly townhalls and quarterly leadership meetings at which the Office of Compliance (OCC) makes presentations / participates to ensure employees are aware of the role of and procedure for communicating with OCC.

R4.The Grand Jury commends CHS and the Sheriff's Department for their excellent working relationship and recommends that this be set forth in a written memorandum of understanding to extend beyond the terms of the current leadership. (F3)

Response: *The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.*

HCA agrees that CHS and the Sheriff's Department have and will continue to have an excellent working relationship, which is already documented in the current written memorandum of understanding.

R5.The Grand Jury recommends that BHS leadership engage in proactive planning on an annual basis to align their priorities with funding changes by June 30, 2026, and yearly thereafter. (F4)

Response: *The recommendation has been implemented.*

The County's annual 5-Year Strategic Financial Plan development process is used for this purpose and BHS modifies its spending plan as new information is received from the state.

R6.The Grand Jury recommends that PHS generate an informational report to the general public on communicable diseases known to HCA by December 31, 2025, and at least quarterly thereafter. (F5)

Response: *The recommendation has been implemented.*

The Public Health Officer will continue to produce the annual State of Public Health and summary report and provide real time updates to the public when communicable disease outbreaks occur.

ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

MINUTE ORDER

August 12, 2025

Submitting Agency/Department: County Executive Office

Approve proposed response to FY 2024-25 Grand Jury Report "Health Care Agency: Providing Care for Orange County"
- All Districts

The following is action taken by the Board of Supervisors:

APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☒ OTHER ☐

Unanimous ☒ (1) NGUYEN: Y (2) SARMIENTO: Y (3) WAGNER: Y (4) CHAFFEE: Y (5) FOLEY: Y

Vote Key: Y=Yes; N=No; A=Abstain; X=Excused; B.O.=Board Order

Documents accompanying this matter:

- ☐ Resolution(s)
- ☐ Ordinances(s)
- ☐ Contract(s)

Item No. 52

Special Notes:

Copies sent to:

CEO – Lisa Fernandez
Superior Court
Grand Jury

8/25/25



I certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Minute Order adopted by the Board of Supervisors, Orange County, State of California.
Robin Stieler, Clerk of the Board

By: Alessandra Esquivel
Deputy DocuSigned by: B3412D28E08E475...



Agenda Item

AGENDA STAFF REPORT

ASR Control 25-000571

MEETING DATE: 08/12/25
LEGAL ENTITY TAKING ACTION: Board of Supervisors
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DISTRICT(S): All Districts
SUBMITTING AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: County Executive Office (Approved)
DEPARTMENT CONTACT PERSON(S): Dr. Veronica Kelley (714) 834-7024
Liz Guillen-Merchant (714) 834-6836

SUBJECT: "Health Care Agency: Providing Care for Orange County" Grand Jury Response

CEO CONCUR Concur	COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW No Legal Objection	CLERK OF THE BOARD Discussion 3 Votes Board Majority
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Budgeted: N/A **Current Year Cost:** N/A **Annual Cost:** N/A

Staffing Impact: No **# of Positions:** **Sole Source:** N/A

Current Fiscal Year Revenue: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

County Audit in last 3 years: No

Levine Act Review Completed: N/A

Prior Board Action: N/A

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

1. Approve proposed response to FY 2024-25 Grand Jury Report entitled, "Health Care Agency: Providing Care for Orange County."
2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to forward this Agenda Staff Report with attachments to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court and the FY 2024-25 Grand Jury no later than September 8, 2025.

SUMMARY:

Approval of proposed response to FY 2024-25 Grand Jury Report entitled "Health Care Agency: Providing Care for Orange County" will fulfill the County's required response to the Grand Jury.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On June 10, 2025, the Orange County Grand Jury released a report entitled "Health Care Agency: Providing Care for Orange County". The report directed responses to findings and recommendations to the Orange County Health Care Agency and the Board of Supervisors. Attachment B is the County's proposed response to the Grand Jury.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

N/A

STAFFING IMPACT:

N/A

ATTACHMENT(S):

Attachment A - Grand Jury Report

Attachment B - Draft Response

Attachment C - Draft Transmittal Letter