



County of Santa Cruz

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Sheriff-Coroner

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Mark Tracy
Sheriff-Coroner

October 9, 2001

AGENDA: October 23, 2001

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: MARIJUANA SUPPRESSION PROGRAM REPORT

Members of the Board:

On June 26, 2001, your Board directed the Sheriffs Office to return with a report in reference to the Marijuana Suppression Program regarding the issue of medical marijuana, possible local regulations and the use of this funding for additional educational activities. This letter is intended to provide a report to your Board regarding these issues.

To address the issue of medical use of marijuana, the Health Services Agency recommends that consideration of additional local regulations be deferred until a federally sponsored research study currently underway in San Mateo County is concluded. This study is being performed by the San Mateo County Health Department and is focused on the outpatient use of medical marijuana for treatment of HIV. There currently exists a general lack of randomized, controlled studies in this area, and it would be helpful to have the research results before considering the need for additional local regulations. In addition, there are two pharmacy studies going on which might also allow for more prescription options for marijuana which would make the issues less complex related to enforcement. The San Mateo Health Officer estimates the research will be completed and analyzed within the next two years.

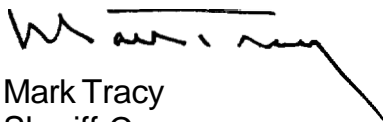
Additionally, the Sheriffs Office has responded to the issue of medical marijuana by implementing a departmental protocol. The language contained in the protocol relates to when a person is found in possession of a small number of marijuana plants and has a serious medical condition, the investigating deputy inquires about the following:

1. The nature of the person's illness.
2. Their doctor's written recommendation (if none exists, the person is asked for the name of the doctor that recommended marijuana use).
3. The deputy obtains a random sample of the marijuana plant(s).
4. The deputy writes a report documenting the incident.
5. And in a case where the deputy locates a medical marijuana case, the patrol contacts a Marijuana Enforcement Team member and advises the team member of the facts surrounding the case.

And finally, to address the issue of educational activities. The Marijuana Suppression Program grant is for enforcement purposes. The grant application allows for an optional 3.9% of the personal services budget of \$218,701 or \$8,529 to be used towards educational activities. The educational portion of the grant specifically addresses that the objective is to provide community education and awareness forums on the dangers of marijuana use as measured by the types of educational forums presented and number of press releases to the media. In 2001, the Sheriff's office has prepared two press releases, presented information regarding the dangers of drugs and violence through the Countywide DARE Program and provided training for the staff at the jail.

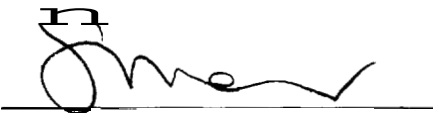
It is THEREFORE recommended that your Board accept and file this report.

Sincerely,



Mark Tracy
Sheriff-Coroner

RECOMMENDED:



County Administrative Officer

cc: Sheriff-Coroner
HSA