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OIG | OFFICE of the INSPECTOR GENERAL

Independent Prison Oversight

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2026–2030 Strategic Plan



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A Message From the Inspector General

The California Office of the Inspector General (the OIG) is committed to providing independent oversight of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (the department). Our dedicated staff of professionals ensure we bring transparency to the public and provide sound recommendations to improve the department's processes and procedures. We have increased our monitoring of the department's staff misconduct investigation and discipline process to ensure the department holds staff accountable for their actions, from allegations of staff sexual assault to excessive use of force. Our audits and special reviews have provided numerous recommendations to improve the department's operations and conditions in its prisons. We conduct medical inspections to provide independent feedback to the court and stakeholders to improve medical care in prisons. Finally, we have significantly expanded our Intake Processing Unit to timely respond to an increasing number of complaints we receive from the incarcerated population and stakeholders.

The department has undergone significant changes since our prior strategic plan. Over the past five years, the department has navigated prison closures, the delegation of health care authority for 27 prisons from the court-appointed federal receiver back to departmental staff, and a significant management restructure from mission-based to region-based organization. The department has also made significant changes to how it responds and processes staff misconduct at its prisons. The department continues to prioritize rehabilitation and programs based on the California Model initiative. The OIG continues to assess and enhance its own processes to identify new strategies to provide meaningful oversight as the department changes the processes the OIG monitors. We must set goals that maximize the quantity of reporting and quality of our oversight to provide transparency to the public regarding the State's correctional system. I believe this strategic plan will accomplish this goal.

The OIG seeks opportunities for efficiency and continuous improvement. This strategic plan forms the foundation for these goals and provides the path to continue our success. Of great importance in this plan is our focus on embracing information technology to leverage our goals for this agency. This plan we now present to the public was built with the input of our staff and, therefore, represents the shared goal of providing effective oversight of the State's correctional system.

—Amarik K. Singh
Inspector General

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The Inspector General's Responsibilities

Audits and Special Reviews

- Perform audits or special reviews into departmental policies, practices, and procedures. An audit or special review can be initiated by the Governor, Legislature, or the Inspector General.

Critical Incident Monitoring

- Monitor the department's response to critical incidents.
- Respond on-site to specified critical incidents, such as large-scale riots and uses of deadly force at the State's adult prisons, in-custody deaths, and similar incidents in the community involving correctional staff.

Employee Discipline Monitoring

- Monitor and evaluate investigatory and disciplinary processes conducted by the department's Office of Internal Affairs and assess the legal advice provided by department attorneys throughout the disciplinary process.

Staff Complaint Monitoring

- Monitor the department's process for reviewing grievances to ensure grievances that contain allegations of staff misconduct are referred for investigation. Monitor investigations into allegations of staff misconduct that incarcerated people raise through the grievance process and any disciplinary processes that are instituted when misconduct has occurred.

Use-of-Force Monitoring

- Monitor the department's process for reviewing and investigating use-of-force incidents.

Sexual Misconduct Monitoring and Investigations

- Monitor the department's review and investigation of allegations that staff committed sexual misconduct against an incarcerated person. In limited situations, the OIG may also exercise its discretion to investigate allegations of staff sexual misconduct.

Ombudsperson for Sexual Abuse Complaints

- Serve as the Ombudsperson for complaints related to the Sexual Abuse in Detention Elimination Act (SADEA), California's response to the requirements set forth in the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). Review allegations of mishandled sexual abuse investigations within prisons.

Intake Processing and Hotline

- Maintain a statewide complaint intake process to address concerns from any individual regarding allegations of improper activity within the department.

Medical Inspections

- Evaluate the quality of medical care at the State's adult prisons using a unique combination of quantitative and qualitative health care data analysis methods.

Warden Vettings

- Review the qualifications and backgrounds of the governor's candidates for appointment to serve as wardens in the State's prisons and provide the governor with a recommendation as to the candidate's qualifications.

Our Strategic Planning Process

We developed the OIG Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) in July 2025 to update our strategic plan. The SPC included staff members from nearly all of our operational teams, who provided valuable feedback for our strategic plan. The SPC surveyed managers, supervisors, and staff to identify specific goals from each unit to provide the direction for our 2026–2030 strategic plan. The SPC further performed a Strengths–Weaknesses–Opportunities–Threats (SWOT) analysis on each of the proposed goals our SPC team received from each unit. The SWOT analysis provided the SPC with a stronger understanding of the OIG’s current work environment and established processes, as well as the direction this agency needs to take in the future to harness strengths and opportunities while remaining cognizant of and building protections from weaknesses and threats.

In November 2025, using the SWOT analysis of the objectives and goals the team identified, we began drafting this strategic plan. The SPC also found the existing 2020–2025 strategic plan established four solid objectives for the OIG, which the SPC maintained as the four primary agency objectives with minor updates. We did, however, revise the goals for each agency objective to best support the new specific unit goals for the OIG to accomplish over the next five years. The SPC established the revised goals for each of the four objectives, with consideration of the SWOT analyses, and identified measures and tangible outcomes for each goal.

Since the last strategic plan was developed, the OIG has adapted to changes in our statutory mandates, specifically the elimination of the California Rehabilitation Oversight Board and our monitoring of the department’s Blueprint reforms, as well as enhancements to our staff misconduct and discipline monitoring, particularly for staff sexual misconduct investigations. The SPC reflected on these changes as we analyzed each goal identified.

We are confident this strategic plan will provide a solid roadmap for the OIG to fulfill its mission and vision over the next five years.

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Our Vision, Mission, and Core Values

Vision

To serve as a model oversight agency, which ensures transparency and accountability within California's correctional system by providing clear, objective, and reliable assessments, accompanied by well-supported recommendations that promote systemic improvement. We are committed to strengthening public trust and delivering exemplary service to our stakeholders through diligent monitoring and impartial evaluation.

Mission

To safeguard the integrity of the State's correctional system by providing oversight and transparency through monitoring, reporting, and recommending improvements to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Core Values

OIG FIRST

Fairness	<i>The OIG is objective, balanced, and unbiased.</i>
Integrity	<i>The OIG is honest, ethical, and principled.</i>
Respect	<i>The OIG honors the rule of law, and values people and their ideas.</i>
Service	<i>The OIG is devoted to duty and committed to the public good.</i>
Transparency	<i>The OIG operates with openness, and provides thorough and accurate reporting.</i>

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Our Strategic Plan

Objective 1

To achieve an open and trusted flow of accurate and well-supported information, both within the OIG and with outside stakeholders of California's prison system, to ensure our independent oversight meets the highest standards.

1. The OIG will strive to achieve effective communication with the department and other stakeholders to build and maintain professional relationships.

Measure: OIG staff will practice active listening, ask relevant questions, and clarify information prior to finalizing findings or opinions. OIG managers and supervisors will ensure staff are updated on current departmental changes and events through regular meetings to ensure staff can properly and accurately communicate with stakeholders.

2. The OIG will look to innovative solutions to improve the flow of data and information between the OIG and the department to enhance the accuracy of our oversight results.

Measure: The OIG's Information Technology Unit (ITU) will collaborate with the department to create infrastructure to improve data communication between the agencies and identify processes that can be automated to better share information and increase the OIG's awareness of departmental changes.

3. The OIG will strive to remain a dynamic organization and maintain flexibility to adapt as changes occur at the department, so we can best provide transparency to stakeholders and the public.

Measure: The OIG will ensure we remain educated on structures, processes, and mandates the department implements and ensure we adapt our oversight to best reflect the department's current processes.

4. The OIG will strive to issue reports that meet the highest standards, in accordance with our monitoring mandates, by ensuring the information we provide is accurate and well supported, and we maintain appropriate neutral independence from the department and stakeholders in our oversight.

Measure: The OIG will look to proven resources, including academic resources, to identify innovative oversight processes. Managers and supervisors will ensure they have

staff training programs in place to promote the accuracy and objectivity of staff monitoring activities as well as a process for quality control of information we provide to stakeholders.

- a. The OIG Medical Inspection Unit (MIU) will enhance the usefulness of the reports published by increasing pacing, restructuring indicators to meet the needs of stakeholders, and providing external dashboards to enhance stakeholder understanding of our medical inspection reports.

Measure: The MIU met with stakeholders to identify areas to enhance the accuracy and pacing of Cycle 8 inspections and will work with the OIG's ITU to create external dashboards to better illustrate and communicate findings. The MIU will meet with stakeholders again before initiating Cycle 9.

- b. All OIG units will coordinate with the Publications Unit to enhance report readability.

Measure: Each OIG unit will coordinate with the Publications Unit to establish report goals for clear and concise writing, clarify reports' purposes and results, and implement visual aids to enhance report comprehension.

- c. All OIG units will coordinate with the Publications Unit to provide standardization and cross-agency consistency to OIG publications.

Measure: The OIG will revise and update the OIG Style Guide to promote consistency for all units.

Outcome

These measures will increase all stakeholders' understanding of the data, results, and recommendations in our reports and further strengthen stakeholders' confidence in the accuracy and professionalism of our oversight.

Objective 2

To provide transparent understanding of how the OIG conducts effective oversight and reporting.

1. The OIG will maintain and explain standards and processes for conducting our oversight activities to ensure confidence in the eyes of stakeholders.

Measure: The OIG will continuously update processes and public-facing platforms to ensure transparency in our monitoring methodologies and metrics.

2. The OIG will pursue increased transparency in our monitoring activities through the use of dashboards to publish metrics and data points collected from our monitoring activities on our public website.

Measure: Managers and supervisors from each unit will collaborate with the executive management team to identify key metrics to publish as well as with the ITU to develop dashboards to publish on the OIG's website.

3. To ensure transparency, the OIG will ensure our report findings and recommendations, and the department's response to our recommendations, are publicly available on our website.

Measure: Managers and supervisors for each unit will ensure all reports that include recommendations are current and updated on the website. Managers and supervisors will also work with the ITU to improve reporting.

4. The OIG's Intake Processing Unit (IPU) will continue to educate the incarcerated population and staff, as well as the public, on the role of the OIG.

Measure: The IPU will continue to meet with incarcerated people to understand their issues and concerns, and will continue to report high impact cases to identify the results of OIG complaints received from the incarcerated population, staff, and the public.

Outcome

Stakeholders' awareness of the OIG's independent oversight processes and the value this oversight provides will increase through the OIG's enhanced transparency, which will pave the way for improving the clarity of communication.

Objective 3

To proactively build our workforce with accomplished and highly skilled staff who are capable of meeting our Objective 1 and 2 goals.

1. The OIG will employ strong recruitment and hiring practices, as well as good succession planning, to hire and continuously retain the most capable oversight and inspection staff.

Measure: OIG management will evaluate current interview screening criteria and questions to ensure they are tailored to selecting the best candidates for each position, explore new recruitment and hiring practices, and develop and implement hiring guidelines to ensure continued excellence in hiring.

2. The OIG will work to provide a comprehensive onboarding process and training to ensure we have a highly skilled and competent staff to carry out our monitoring activities.

Measure: The OIG will provide staff with robust training. The Training Unit and OIG management will collaborate to establish training for new staff as well as ongoing training to promote continuous learning and knowledge base management.

3. The OIG will train staff to maintain professionalism and effectively communicate with department employees and the incarcerated population during all oversight and monitoring activities to meet our Objective 1 and 2 goals of accuracy and transparency.

Measure: The OIG will clearly identify expectations of highly professional conduct and thorough preparation for engagement with the department and will provide interview and communication techniques training to staff who interact with stakeholders.

4. The OIG IPU will strive to review and respond to all complaints the OIG receives within 30 days.

Measure: The IPU will maintain and update our desk manual to ensure staff are aware of and understand expectations and processes to reduce any potential backlog of complaints. The IPU will use the OIG's tracking and reporting system to track on a real-time basis the status of complaints completed.

5. The OIG will work to increase communication between units and teams regarding issues identified within the department.

Measure: The OIG will work with units and teams to establish processes to improve cross-team communication and collaboration to enhance the knowledge base for all staff.

6. The OIG will maintain good succession planning to ensure continuous retention of the necessary skills and knowledge base for our oversight.

Measure: OIG management will evaluate current succession planning and update to identify knowledge retention needs over the next five years.

Outcome

OIG will increase staff's ability to provide the highest levels of accuracy, relevance, and customer service by enhancing staff skills and knowledge at each step of our oversight processes, further enhancing our stakeholders' confidence in our results.

Objective 4  To support innovative, effective, efficient, and fiscally responsible work processes.

1. The OIG will ensure our reporting processes result in relevant and timely inspection reports to provide meaningful oversight of the department.

Measure: OIG managers and supervisors will establish project management processes to ensure reports are relevant and timely.

2. The OIG will work to improve tracking and reporting systems needed to enhance internal project management and efficiencies between teams and units through sharing data and ideas within those technology systems.

Measure: OIG managers and supervisors will work with ITU to identify needed improvements to the OIG's tracking and reporting systems that will enhance our ability to effectively track our monitoring activities and improve efficiencies by sharing data and ideas through the OIG's systems.

3. The OIG will adopt innovative but fiscally responsible technology applications to ensure we effectively communicate

our findings and results to stakeholders through professional and visually engaging publications.

Measure: The Publications Team will work with ITU to identify cost-effective and innovative tools to provide top quality reports and publications for the OIG.

4. The OIG will be an excellent steward of taxpayer money.

Measure: The Business Services Unit will conduct periodic reviews of expenditures and will collaborate with OIG management to identify expenses the OIG can eliminate to ensure our agency is fiscally responsible.

5. The OIG will explore opportunities to implement Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the OIG's work processes to foster innovation and promote efficiency.

Measure: The OIG will research and strategize for how the OIG may effectively respond to AI developments in a safe and cost-effective manner.

Outcome

OIG staff will be better equipped to carry out our oversight functions in an effective manner while maintaining efficiency and fiscal responsibility throughout our monitoring activities.

2026–2030
Strategic Plan

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