

# NEWS

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## Supervisors strengthen public safety in new budget

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors today solidified its support of public safety and prudent fiscal management in approving a balanced, on-time \$3 billion budget for the fiscal year that begins on July 1.

Strong growth in the county's economy, primarily in the housing market and real estate valuation, fueled the Board's ability to bolster the Sheriff's budget by \$52 million, for a total of \$333 million. The hallmarks of this increase is the addition of three patrol helicopters and 25 patrol deputy positions – with consideration of even more deputies pending the outcome of the state budget process later this summer.

The Sheriff's allocation also includes \$13 million to operate a new jail in Adelanto, which will allow the county to keep more dangerous criminals behind bars and relieve High Desert peace officers from having to transport suspects to jails in Rancho Cucamonga and San Bernardino.

The budget also includes \$4.7 million to fund a concerted effort aimed at gang members and the violence they bring to our communities. Resources from this program will be shared by the Sheriff, the District Attorney, the Probation Department, and the Public Defender. Supervisors also included a \$44 million increase to the County Fire Department for the continued effort to clear county forests of tinder-dry trees affected by the bark beetle.

"Our public safety programs have waited patiently for the county's budget picture to improve, making the most of existing resources," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Bill Postmus. "It is very satisfying for this Board to finally be able to give law enforcement the support it deserves. Our citizens will benefit greatly from this budget."

The budget also includes \$80 million in support for capital projects, primary the purchase of the jail in Adelanto, the purchase of temporary space for the downtown San Bernardino courthouse, and long-delayed repairs to public facilities. Human services programs also received \$45 million in additional support to address the county's continuing growth.