

NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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County moves toward GPS tracking of sex offenders

The County of San Bernardino today moved closer to becoming the first county in the state to initiate a satellite-based tracking system for high-risk sex offenders.

The Board of Supervisors today unanimously approved an agreement with Irvine-based Sentinel Offender Services to provide a global positioning satellite tracking system, as well as traditional electronic monitoring, for use with adult probationers at no cost to taxpayers through mid-2008. The probationers will be charged for the cost of the equipment, monitoring, and associated costs.

Participants will wear a tamper-proof monitoring device that will allow officials to see where they are at all times. Geographic parameters will be set for each participant so that whenever they approach a restricted area – such as a school or playground – an alarm will immediately alert authorities, who can then apprehend the subject within minutes.

"I have no doubt that the citizens of San Bernardino County will feel safer and be safer as a result of the county adopting this technology," said Fourth District Supervisor Gary Ovitt.

"Sex offenders who are up to no good will have nowhere to hide," added Board of Supervisors Chairman Bill Postmus. "We'll be able to watch every move they make, and they'll know it."

Sentinel was recommended to the Board of Supervisors following a competitive public proposal process in which nine potential vendors attended a proposal conference and three ended up submitting proposals. A committee made up of representatives from the county's various public safety agencies as well as the Purchasing Department reviewed the proposals and selected Sentinel.

Additional information is available on the attached report and from Chief Probation Officer Jerry L. Harper at (909) 387-5692.

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
AND RECORD OF ACTION**

REVISED
AGREEMENT

May 17, 2005

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FROM: JERRY L. HARPER, Chief Probation Officer
Probation Department

SUBJECT: CONTRACT FOR ELECTRONIC MONITORING SERVICES

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Receive presentation by the Probation Department and **Sentinel Offender Services, LLC**, regarding proposed contract services and demonstration of available electronic monitoring **and global positioning satellite (GPS)** products and services.
2. Approve Agreement with **Sentinel Offender Services, LLC**, to provide **electronic monitoring and GPS** tracking services for use with adult probationers and other serious high-risk offenders, and radio frequency electronic monitoring for low-risk offenders as a custody option, at no cost to the County, from **May 17, 2005** to June 30, 2008.
3. Authorize the addition of one new position classified to Probation Officer II, Specialized Peace Officer Unit, R54 (\$46,197-\$58,968), pending classification review.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The Probation Department's electronic monitoring confinement program was initiated in September 1991 and was expanded in April 1996 through the purchase of equipment to monitor adult offenders in-house. One Probation Officer II currently performs related casework. The existing program monitors approximately 70 offenders, and expenses for the program are offset with fees paid to the County by participating probationers. However, the equipment has become obsolete and the warranty and maintenance period for all equipment has expired.

On February 1, 2005, the Board of Supervisors authorized the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for electronic monitoring/home detention/GPS services. Upon approval, notice of the RFP was mailed to twelve (12) vendors. The RFP was also posted on the County's Internet site. Nine (9) vendors attended the proposal conference and three (3) vendors responded with a proposal by the deadline.

A committee comprised of one representative each from the offices of the District Attorney, Public Defender, Purchasing, Sheriff, Superior Court, and two representatives from the Probation Department evaluated the proposals. Additionally, separate Probation staff made further contact with the respondents for the purpose of gathering more information through site visits, surveys and equipment testing. The County Auditor/Controller also reviewed the financial statements submitted by respective vendors.

The criteria for proposal evaluation included a comprehensive review of qualifications, experience, and the ability to meet specific evaluation criteria such as a proposed client enrollment process, a sliding fee scale based on a participant's ability to pay, and service locations. Based upon these and other criteria, including the results of equipment testing, **Sentinel Offender Services, LLC**, (**Sentinel**) was chosen by the committee to be the most qualified to provide electronic monitoring/home detention/GPS services to the County.

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Approval of Recommendation No. 2 would allow Sentinel to provide continuous radio frequency electronic monitoring services, including training, administration of the program to offenders, collection of setup and daily monitoring fees, reporting, and the provision of hardware, software and related maintenance. Services would also include real-time GPS equipment and monitoring services, for use with serious or high-risk adult probationers. All referrals for electronic monitoring or GPS tracking would be made through an order of the **San Bernardino County** Superior Court. Offenders would be required to report to one of several County-approved provider locations throughout the County. The contractor would report electronic monitoring violations the next workday and GPS tracking violations immediately for offenders placed on active monitoring status.

Program fees would be assessed and collected by Sentinel based upon a participant's ability to pay pursuant to a sliding scale that is included in the contract. Fees from the program would offset the contractor's program costs, and the contractor would reimburse the Department a monthly fee of \$6,590 to the County on behalf of one (1) Probation Officer II position for the first several months of the program. Approval of Recommendation No. 3 would provide an additional program position beginning approximately six (6) months after program startup, wherein Sentinel would pay a monthly fee of \$13,180 for the length of the contract for both positions to perform all necessary court and fieldwork with offenders. This amount is less than the original estimate of \$15,925 per month, due to reduced services and supplies costs associated with the positions.

The processes and procedures used to monitor participants assigned to the program and those used to maintain participant file records would be explained in an operations manual to be jointly developed by Probation and Sentinel.

Under the terms of contract, the County may terminate the contract in part or in whole immediately for cause or on thirty (30) days notice for County convenience. Sentinel may terminate for cause or request to terminate the Contract only in its entirety and only on the basis of economically infeasibility.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: This item has been reviewed and approved as to legal form by County Counsel (Rex Hinesley, 387-5480, Chief Deputy County Counsel) on May 11, 2005; Human Resources (Diane Ure, 387-5571, Human resources Division Chief), on April 27, 2005; Purchasing (Allen Sanchez, Contracts Analyst, 387-2065) on May 4, 2005; and by the County Administrative Office (Laurie Rozko, 387-8997, Administrative Analyst) May 10, 2005.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Offender fees collected under this agreement will be retained by Sentinel and the Department will be paid initially \$6,590 per month to offset salary and benefit costs for approximately the first three (3) to six (6) months of the contract. Thereafter, or at such time that two Probation positions are filled to respond to the work of this contract, Sentinel would pay a monthly fee of \$13,180 for the length of the contract. Appropriations and revenues reflected in this contract are included in the 2005-06 proposed budget. Any incidental staffing costs associated with the Department's response to violations will be funded within the Department's existing budget allocation.

SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT(S): All