OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

San Luis Obispo County · Dan Dow, District Attorney

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
FY 2026-27 Budget Hearing · May 19, 2026

The District Attorney's Office respectfully requests approval of five (5) positions necessary to fulfill the DA's legally mandated investigative and prosecutorial functions under the California Constitution and state law. While the Office has seen modest personnel growth since 2014, that growth has not kept pace with exponential increases in workload — particularly the surge in digital evidence, body-worn camera footage, and in-car video that has transformed case preparation. Notably, no Paralegal position has been added since 2014, even as that workload has grown exponentially.

REQUESTED POSITIONS — RANKED BY PRIORITY

Priority	Position	Type	FY 2027 Cost (Step 1)	Why It Is Needed
#1	**Paralegal**	NEW BAR	**$121,661**	Zero paralegals added since 2014; workload has grown exponentially with body-worn cameras, in-car video, and digital evidence demands. Frees DDAs/investigators for court; supports CAC obligations.
#1	**Victim Witness Advocate II**	RESTORE	**$115,723**	Restores position cut in prior budget cycles. Provides mandated crime victim notifications, Marsy's Law rights assistance, and court accompaniment — core statutory obligations.
#2	**Admin. Assistant III (4th Reception / Front Desk)**	RESTORE	**$100,495**	Restores front-desk coverage eliminated by prior cuts. Reduces interruptions to legal and investigative staff; improves public access and office security at the entry point.
#3	**Deputy District Attorney IV (General Felony / Misdemeanor)**	RESTORE	**$259,980**	Restores trial attorney capacity lost to prior reductions. Prevents case backlogs and avoids dismissals driven purely by workload; strengthens outcomes in high-level felony cases.
#4	**Deputy District Attorney IV (Elder Abuse — Vertical)**	NEW BAR	**$259,980**	Dedicated vertical elder abuse prosecutor from report through sentencing. Elder abuse is among the fastest-growing crime categories in SLO County; specialization improves outcomes.

TOTAL: 5.00 FTE | FY 2026-27 Step 1 Cost: $857,839 | Maximum (Step 7) Cost: $1,108,592

3 positions restore prior cuts · 2 are new BARs · Modest office growth since 2014 has not kept pace with exponential workload increases

LEGAL AUTHORITY & FORMAL NOTICE TO THE BOARD

Gov. Code § 25303

The Board's authority over positions "shall not be construed to affect the independent and constitutionally and statutorily designated investigative and prosecutorial functions of the district attorney" and the Board "shall not obstruct the investigative and prosecutorial function of the district attorney."

Cal. Const., Art. V, § 13 · Gov. Code § 29601

The DA is the constitutionally mandated public prosecutor. Courts authorize judicial intervention when budgetary action "eliminates the ability of an official to perform his or her mandated duties."

Controlling Case Authority

Hicks v. Orange County — A budget that materially impairs mandated functions crosses from legitimate fiscal decision-making into unlawful interference with the DA's constitutional duties.

Scott v. Common Council of San Bernardino — Elected officials may seek judicial relief — even absent an outright cut — when underfunding materially impairs performance of mandated duties.

FORMAL NOTICE TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Adoption of the County Executive Officer's Recommended Budget without approval of these five Budget Augmentation Requests would materially impair the District Attorney's independent investigative and prosecutorial functions. Consistent with Hicks v. Orange County, Scott v. Common Council of San Bernardino, Government Code §§ 25303 and 29601, and the California Constitution, the District Attorney hereby places the County Executive Office and the Board of Supervisors on formal notice that a budget failing to fund these requests crosses from a legitimate fiscal decision into an action that unlawfully impairs the Public Prosecutor's constitutionally and statutorily mandated duties.

Our Mission: "To bring justice and safety to our community by aggressively and fairly prosecuting crime and protecting the rights of crime victims."

This Office has demonstrated what fully funded prosecution looks like. Recent years have produced landmark convictions, including the murder of Kristin Smart (People v. Paul Flores), the murder of Nancy Woodrum (People v. Carlos Fuentes Flores), multiple successful prosecutions of human sex trafficking of juvenile victims, and significant consumer and environmental protection victories through our Special Prosecutions Unit. These results were achieved through the dedication of our attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and support staff — the same team we are asking the Board to fully fund today. Approving these five positions is an investment in justice, in victims, and in the safety of every person in San Luis Obispo County.