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# NEWS RELEASE

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**For Immediate Release**

FROM THE OFFICE OF CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER MICHELLE SCRAY BROWN

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## The San Bernardino County Probation Department Response to the December 2<sup>nd</sup> Terrorism Incident

The probation department's response to the December 2<sup>nd</sup> Terrorist Shooting was significant. Approximately (21) twenty one officers were first responders. These officers began arriving in groups as early as eight (8) minutes after the initial radio traffic of an active shooter incident was broadcast. The Probation Department utilizes Sheriff Dispatch, and as a result, officers heard the radio traffic immediately. Additionally, there are 5 Probation buildings within approximately 1 mile of the Regional Center.

The first four (4) probation officers arrived in the Regional Center parking lot directly outside the site of the shooting. There was one plain-clothes San Bernardino Police Officer present at the time. SWAT officers began staging several minutes later. The probation officers immediately encountered a large group of survivors hiding between vehicles in the parking area, many of whom had suffered critical gunshot wounds.

These probation officers determined there was a need for immediate medical evacuation. Believing the shooters may still be present, probation officers took defensive positions in the parking lot to cover the evacuation. They immediately loaded victims in their two vehicles and began evacuating them. Other probation officers began arriving by the minute.

A probation officer who arrived separately established an evacuation site in the golf course driveway across the street for further triage and medical support. He was able to guide fire department personnel to this point and keep Waterman Avenue open for emergency traffic.

An additional force of probation officers, police officers, deputies, and SWAT personnel arrived. While SWAT marshalled to search the buildings, probation officers and police officers entered the conference room and began extracting the critically wounded victims lying there. Probation officers checked the deceased and carried the non-ambulatory wounded to probation vehicles. The large number of these vehicles on scene allowed officers to establish a caravan to quickly evacuate the critically wounded to the triage area.

In the north Regional Center building, probation officers entered and took barricade positions in the hallways and staircases to cover the evacuation of employees from that site.



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While exfiltrating the wounded, an evacuee reported to probation officers that a subject who fled across the street knew the identity of the shooter. Probation Officers located this witness and directed arriving police officers to detain him. The witness subsequently identified the shooter. This led to the early initial investigation that spotted the terrorists and ultimately led to the officer involved shooting in which they were killed and an officer wounded.

Following the extraction of the wounded, probation officers escorted witnesses across the street to the evacuation sites on the golf course. One officer was driving a witness to be interviewed when the witness realized she had been shot. He transported her directly to the hospital.

The remaining probation officers in the parking area were divided into multiple five-man teams with other law enforcement agencies. The intent was to search the buildings in support of the SWAT operation and look for additional victims or survivors. Re-entry of the buildings was called off due to the discovery of explosive devices. Therefore, the teams searched the parking lot adjacent to the incident to ensure there were no further victims or witnesses who may have fled to their cars.

Additional probation officers finished clearing the north Regional Center building, searched the evacuees, and then escorted them to one of the evacuation sites. Probation Officers maintained perimeter security on the golf course and attended to the needs of the witnesses and evacuees until they could be removed to the Rock Church.

Probation Officers assisted at the Rock Church, staffed a security perimeter around the Regional Center, responded to numerous other locations in the community where suspicious circumstances were reported, and provided for traffic control surrounding each of the terrorism related sites.

Probation administration established a command post staffed by the Chief, Assistant Chief and a Deputy Chief. Additional administrators were deployed to the Regional Center command post and Sheriff's HQ command post. A separate location was utilized for peer support/counseling and redeployment.

Once the Hernandez Center had been established as a reunion area for evacuees and their families, probation officers were directed to respond to the center. They established oversight and assumed control of operations. Numerous probation officers provided security, arranged for ministerial and mental health support, and offered a considerable amount of crisis counseling themselves.

An additional half dozen probation officers manned the perimeter at the Redlands home of the terrorists, including one probation officer who assisted with Arabic translation for the FBI.

Throughout the night of December 2<sup>nd</sup>, probation officers continued to provide perimeter security at the Regional Center and Redlands crime scenes, until relieved by federal agents the following day.



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Additional Probation Officers from the desert offices were sent home earlier in the day in order to prepare for overnight deployment. Many officers remained on standby for redeployment if additional officers were requested. By mid-afternoon on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, all officers were relieved and the Probation Department was placed on stand down until further assistance was requested.

The total mobilization of probation personnel was 263. This included 165 Probation Officers who were deployed to the site or the incident or surrounding community incidents in the four hours immediately after the terrorist attack; and, 21 first responders who assisted in carrying injured victims to safety.

The Department is preparing for an upcoming awards ceremony.

The department's public information unit is available to provide further, detailed information upon request.