

## Budget Reductions and Staffing Challenges Shape Regional Public Safety Spending in FY 2022-23

In Fiscal Year 2022-23, the Region's public safety expenditures of approximately \$2.72 billion saw a decrease of 2% compared to the previous year (adjusted for inflation) with almost half of those funds spent on law enforcement activities. Alongside the strain on resources is the consistent exceeding of budgeted overtime, attributed to higher-than-average attrition and retirement rates, and a dwindling candidate pool. In tandem with these challenges, the region's ratio of 1.32 sworn officers per 1,000 residents remains notably lower than the national average of 2.4.<sup>1</sup> Such financial and staffing challenges emphasize the need for comprehensive strategies to address recruitment and retention within regional law enforcement agencies. These and other highlights are discussed in further detail in SANDAG's [Public Safety Allocations in the San Diego Region FY 2022-23](#).

### Highlight 1: Less resources allocated to law enforcement activities

The San Diego region spent \$2.72 billion on local public safety efforts in FY 2022-23, the third consecutive decrease, and around the same amount spent in FY 2017-18. This amount was 2% lower, when adjusted for inflation, than what was spent the previous year. Nearly half (49%) of the public safety dollars spent (around \$1.33 billion) were allocated to law enforcement activities, 3% less than the previous year (around \$1.37 billion). The remaining half of the public safety dollars was divided across six categories, a distribution that has remained relatively stable over the years.

Figure 1: Allocations of public safety expenditures (FY 2022-23)



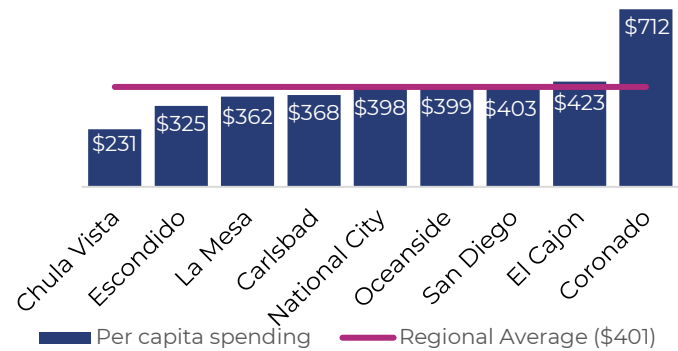
SOURCES: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities' Expenditures

<sup>1</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation (2022). Crime Data Explorer. Clarksburg, West Virginia: U.S. Department of Justice. Available at: <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/le/pe>. Note: this is the most up to date data on the national average of sworn officers

**Highlight 2: Regional average per capita spending on law enforcement was \$401**

Annual law enforcement expenditures varied greatly across jurisdictions, ranging from \$16.21 million to \$553.87 million among agencies with their own police departments. On average, local jurisdictions spent almost one in every three of their general fund dollars towards law enforcement expenditures. The regionwide average per capita spending on law enforcement was \$401, ranging from \$231 in Chula Vista to \$712 in Coronado.

**Figure 2: Per capita law enforcement spending by jurisdiction (FY 2022-23)**

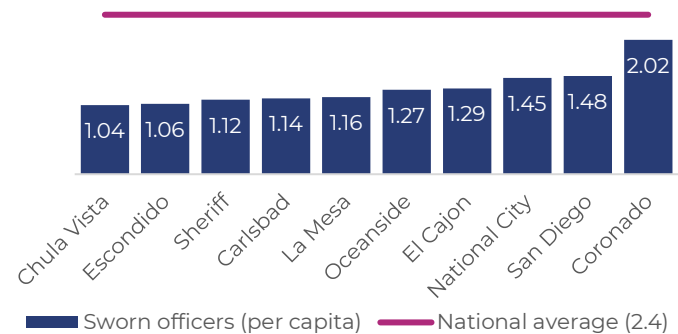


SOURCES: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities' Expenditures

**Highlight 3: Regional staffing-related challenges persist**

There were 6,064 law enforcement-funded staff positions across the eleven law enforcement agencies in the region in FY 2022-23. Of these, 4,376 (72%) were sworn officers. Regionally, there were 1.32 sworn officers per 1,000 residents (ranging from 1.04 to 2.02 among the eleven agencies), significantly less than the national average of 2.4. All but one agency in the region (Coronado) reported challenges filling or maintaining sworn staff.

**Figure 3: Per capita sworn officers by jurisdiction (FY 2022-23)**

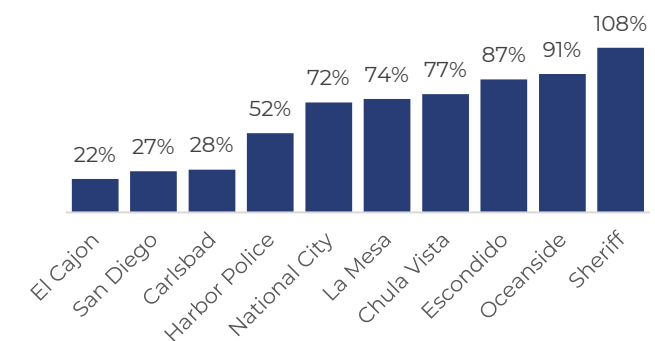


SOURCES: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities Authorized Staffing

**Highlight 4: Overtime exceeds forecasts amid staffing challenges**

Across the eleven law enforcement agencies, a total of \$98.49 million was budgeted for overtime expenses and \$163.61 million was spent (66% more). The difference between budgeted and actual overtime ranged widely, with Coronado staying within budget and the Sheriff's Department exceeding its budget by 108%. This excess in expenditures is attributed to challenges with higher attrition and retirement rates, and a decreasing candidate pool.

**Figure 4: Percentage of excess in expenditures for overtime by jurisdiction (FY 2022-23)**



NOTE: Coronado not shown because they did not exceed budgeted overtime. SOURCES: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities' Expenditures

Free Language Assistance | Ayuda gratuita con el idioma | Libreng Tulong sa Wika

Hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí | 免费语言协助 | 免費語言協助 | مساعدة لغوية مجانية | 무료 언어 지원 | کمک زبان رایگان  
 無料の言語支援 | Бесплатная языковая помощь | Assistència lingüística gratuïta | मुफ्त भाषा सहायता  
 Assistance linguistique gratuite | ជំនួយភាសាឥតគិតថ្លៃ | ఉచిత భాషా సహాయం | ການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອດ້ານພາສາສາມາດ  
 Kaalmada Luqadda ee Bilaashka ah | Безкоштовна мовна допомога



[SANDAG.org/LanguageAssistance](https://www.sandag.org/LanguageAssistance) | 619.699.1900