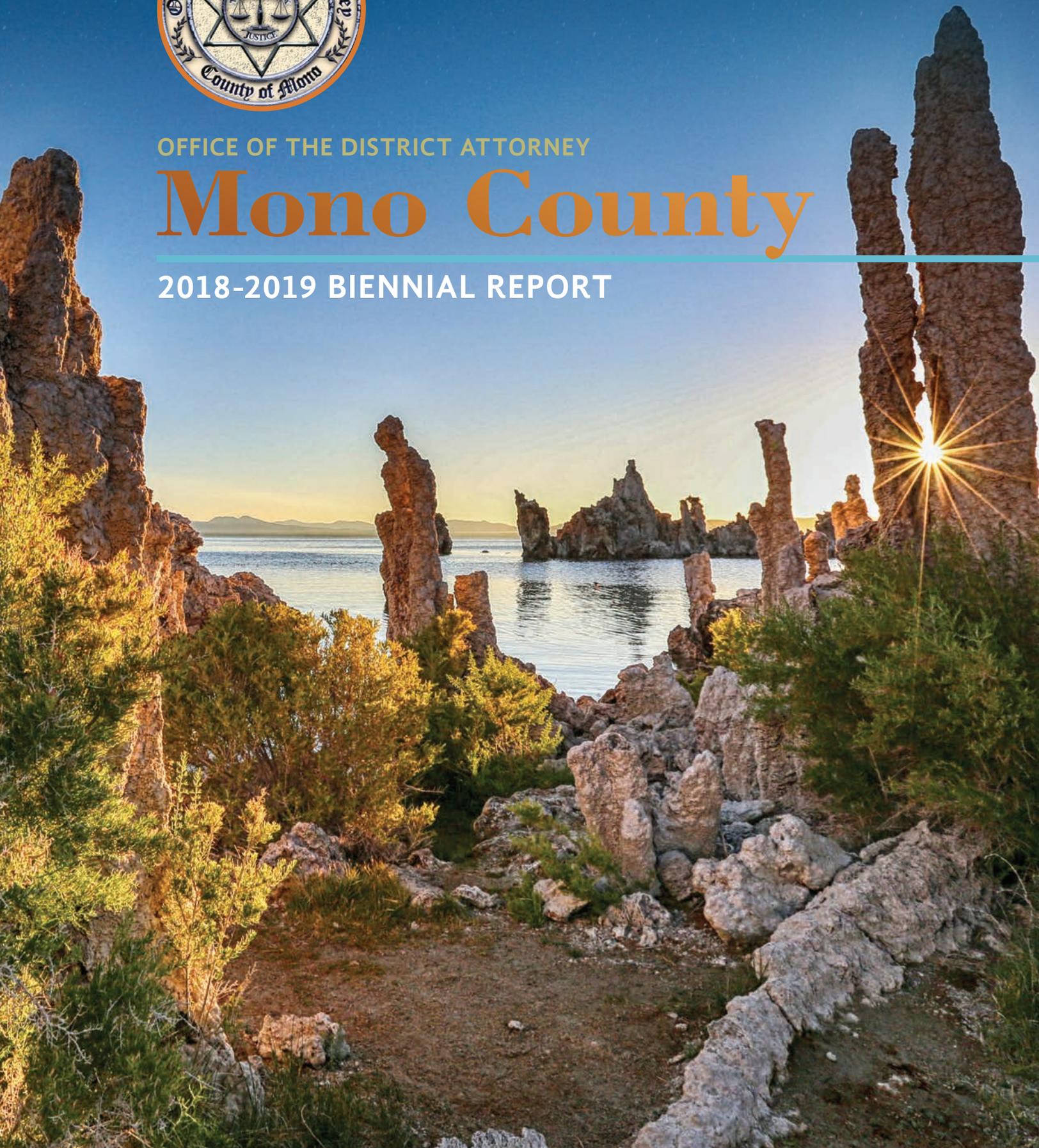




OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Mono County

2018-2019 BIENNIAL REPORT





Welcome to the Biennial Report for the Office of the District Attorney. The purpose of this report is to educate our citizens about the Office of the District Attorney and to inform the public of activities which have occurred during the 2018 and 2019 calendar years.

This is part of our continued commitment to be transparent in our activities and to keep our citizens informed and involved in the justice system.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic the publication of this report was delayed. It is with great pleasure that we are able to provide the report to the public at this time.

The Mono County District Attorney's Office provides many services and advice to the general public. If you need assistance or have questions about the office, please contact us.

North County Office (Bridgeport)
760.932.5550

South County Office (Mammoth Lakes)
760.924.1710

DistrictAttorney@mono.ca.gov
MonoCountyDistrictAttorney.org

A FEW OF OUR PARTNERS

Mono County Sheriff's Department
Mammoth Lakes Police Department
California Highway Patrol
Marine Mountain Warfare Training Center
US Forest Service
US Park Service
Bureau of Land Management
California Department of Justice
California Governor's Office
California District Attorneys Association
Eastern Sierra Unified School District
Mammoth Unified School District
Mono County Office of Education
Mono County Superior Court
Mono County Social Services Department
Mono County Probation Department
Mono County Behavioral Health Department
Wild Iris
Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra
Town of Mammoth Lakes
Mammoth Resorts

Publication of this report was paid through a special fund comprised of fines and fees collected from criminal defendants.

The Superior Court of California, Bridgeport is the state's second oldest courthouse. It has been in continuous use since it was built in 1880, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.





*photo: The Jon B. Lovelace
Collection of California
Photographs in Carol M.
Highsmith's America Project,
Library of Congress*

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Office of the District Attorney

“ My commitment to the County is to serve the position of the District Attorney with the utmost honesty, integrity and honor. I will enhance the public’s safety and welfare and create a sense of security in the community.

– District Attorney Tim Kendall



Message from the District Attorney

“

I am honored and privileged to have served Mono County as the District Attorney for the past eight years, as well as Mono County Assistant District Attorney and Deputy District Attorney for 18 years prior.

During this time, I have seen many changes that create new and significant challenges to prosecution, such as the recent adjustments to California’s criminal justice landscape. The reduction of many felonies to misdemeanors and the limiting or elimination of custody for certain crimes have forced us to take new and challenging approaches to maintaining the balance of holding people accountable for their crimes and ensuring the public is safe.

Despite these changes, we continue to put victims first by vigorously investigating and prosecuting crimes. We seek the most appropriate punishment possible while treating all persons involved in the criminal justice system with fairness, dignity, and respect.

Since our last Biennial Report, the Office has handled several significant and serious prosecutions which are highlighted in the pages that follow. We have modernized our office by installing a new case management system which allows our office to operate in a paperless environment, saving time and money while preserving the environment. We have had several staff changes and additions in order to enhance our Victim/Witness Program and provide services to victims and witnesses of crime throughout the criminal process. We also continue to build relationships with our community by participating in community events and solution groups, as well as providing resources, education, and outreach to the community.

It is our goal to build upon our accomplishments and continue to serve our community in a way that makes it as safe as possible and creates security for you and your family. My commitment to the County is to serve the position of District Attorney with the utmost honesty, integrity and honor. I will enhance the public’s safety and welfare and create a sense of security in the community.

– *District Attorney Tim Kendall*



District Attorney's Mission Statement



**VINDICATE THE RIGHTS OF CRIME VICTIMS,
WITNESSES, AND PERSONS ACCUSED OF CRIME**

•
SEEK AND ACHIEVE IMPARTIAL JUSTICE

•
**ENSURE THAT THE GUILTY ARE PUNISHED
AND THE INNOCENT FREED**

•
SAFEGUARD THE RULE OF LAW

•
**TREAT ALL PERSONS INVOLVED IN THE
CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM WITH FAIRNESS,
DIGNITY, AND RESPECT**

About the Mono County DA's Office

The position of District Attorney is a Constitutionally Independent Elected Officer who operates solely for the well-being of Mono County and its citizens. As a representative of the People of the State of California, the District Attorney's Office has the critical responsibility to investigate and prosecute all criminal matters in the County of Mono.

We collaborate with every component of the criminal justice system as well as the entire community. We strive to earn and hold the trust and confidence of our community by performing our jobs at the very highest level of professionalism. We accomplish this by approaching every situation with integrity, compassion, mutual respect, open communication, and the highest ethical standards when engaging with everyone from fellow employees to community members.

We attempt to minimize the impact of the criminal justice system upon the lives of victims, witnesses and their families by helping them to overcome the effects of crime.

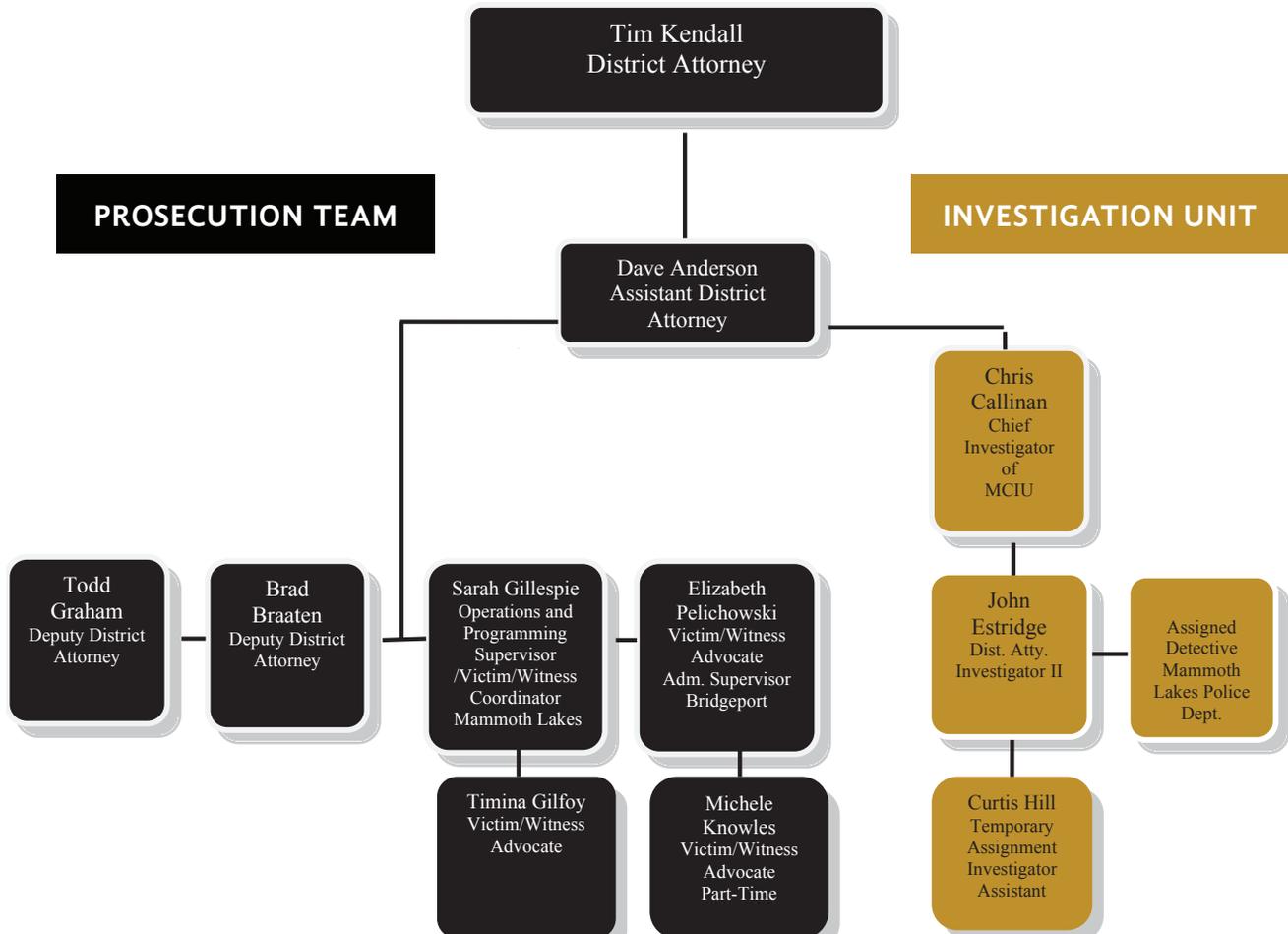
Along with our prosecution duties, the Office of the District Attorney also handles a wide variety of other services for the county and its citizens. Our other responsibilities include providing assistance to victims and witnesses of crimes by assisting in the restraining order process, and providing legal counseling and referrals.

We provide legal and investigative assistance to other law enforcement agencies throughout Mono County. We protect the environment and serve as the Public Administrator for estates. The District Attorney is the Grand Jury advisor and plays an integral part in numerous multi-agency and community solution groups.

The District Attorney has two offices servicing the entire county area: a south county office located in Mammoth Lakes and north county office located in Bridgeport. The District Attorney's Office is central to the law enforcement community in the way that all law enforcement activities regarding the prosecution of crimes in the entire county funnel through the District Attorney's Office. The Office reviews and prosecutes approximately 1,000 cases per year while at the same time handling its other responsibilities.



Organizational Chart



District Attorney Staff

DAVE ANDERSON *Assistant District Attorney*



David Anderson is a twelve-year prosecutor who was born and raised in Huntington Beach, CA. He graduated from Westmont College in Santa Barbara, CA with a BA in Political Science in 2003 and from Chapman University School of Law with a JD in 2007. David joined the Riverside County District Attorney's Office and served in a wide range of divisions. After being awarded the Misdemeanor Prosecutor of the Year in 2008, David was assigned to the Major Crimes/Gang Unit where he served until his departure in 2012. During his time in the Gang Unit, David prosecuted a wide variety of crimes ranging from simple gun possession to capital murder.

From 2009-2012, David and his family lived in the San Jacinto Mountains outside of Palm Springs. In 2012, David was given the opportunity to move to Mono County and continue his profession of being a career prosecutor while being able to live and work in the mountains.

David currently serves as the Assistant District Attorney and handles much of the felony case load that comes through the Office as well as administrative duties. David is happily married with three wonderful children and lives in Mammoth Lakes.

TODD GRAHAM *Deputy District Attorney*



In 1995 Todd Graham graduated law school from McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento and passed the Bar Exam. He immediately began work as a deputy prosecutor for the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office in 1996 and it was there that he found his calling. In 1999 he moved to Mono County and joined the Mono County District Attorney's Office. With the exception of three years spent working at the Riverside County DA's Office, Todd has been with Mono County since 1999. He feels blessed to work with fine people and in a locale with such unparalleled beauty. Todd has specialized in cases involving crimes against women and children. These types of cases involve the most vulnerable people in our communities, and they need a strong advocate. Todd enjoys skiing, fly fishing, rock climbing, and playing guitar.

BRAD BRAATEN *Deputy District Attorney*



Brad Braaten graduated with a BA in Criminal Justice from the University of North Dakota in 2003, and a JD from Thomas Jefferson School of Law in 2006. He clerked with the U.S. Attorney's Office, San Diego District Attorney's Office, and the State Bar of California before joining the Riverside County District Attorney's Office as a post bar clerk. He remained with the Riverside DA Office for eight years before accepting a position with the Mono County District Attorney's Office in 2014. Brad now happily resides in the Eastern Sierra with his wife and three kids pursuing outdoor activities.

SARAH GILLESPIE *Operations and Programming Supervisor/ Victim Witness Coordinator*



Sarah Gillespie joined the District Attorney's Office as the Victim Witness Coordinator and Operations and Programming Supervisor. Prior to coming to the District Attorney's Office, Sarah worked as a criminal clerk with the Mono County Superior Court, as a correctional officer with the Inyo County Sheriff's Department, and as a records clerk with the Bishop Police Department. Sarah was born and raised in the Eastern Sierra and enjoys being outdoors with her husband and two kids.

ELIZABETH PELICHOWSKI *Admin. Supervisor/Victim Advocate - Bridgeport*



Elizabeth Pelichowski came to the District Attorney's Office after spending years working with animals as an Officer for Mono County Animal Control and as a Vet Tech in the nation's largest animal shelter in Las Vegas, Nevada. Elizabeth was born and raised in the Eastern Sierra and enjoys the large variety of outdoor activities Mono County has to offer. When she's not at work, she can be found on a horse or spending time with her husband and dogs.

TIMINA GILFOY *Victim/Witness Advocate*



Timina Gilfoy joined the District Attorney's Office in March 2019 to serve as a Victim/Witness Advocate. She has lived in Mammoth Lakes since 2000 and worked full time in property management. Timina also spent 11 years serving a local Mammoth church as Church Administrator and recently worked part time with one of Mono County's Public Defenders. When not in the office, she enjoys homemaking, reading, and spending time with her family.

MICHELE KNOWLES *Victim/Witness Advocate – Part Time*



Michele moved to Mono County in 2002 and took a part time position with the Mono County District Attorney's Office in the fall of 2003. She worked in the Mammoth Office as the Victim/Witness Advocate for two years before taking a promotion to the Bridgeport Office as an Administrative Supervisor in 2005. She worked in the Bridgeport Office until 2017 before moving back to the Mammoth Office on a part time basis. Michele continues to have a wide range of duties as a Victim/Witness Advocate.

CHRIS CALLINAN *Chief Investigator*



Chris Callinan is a Marine Corps veteran who served for over eight years before beginning his career with the Mono County Sheriff's Department in 2006. During his time with the Sheriff Department his posts included the jail, patrol deputy, K-9 handler, and an investigator for the Narcotics Enforcement Team. In 2015, Chris accepted a position with the Mono County District Attorney's Office as an investigator and currently leads the Mono County Investigative Unit as the Chief Investigator.

JOHN ESTRIDGE *Investigator*



Investigator John Estridge has been a resident of Mono County since 1984. He began his law enforcement career in 2002 with the Mono County Sheriff's Department as a June Lake Resident Deputy, Rangemaster/Firearms Instructor, and Investigator. Prior to that he was a member of the June Lake Mountain Rescue team and a reserve Deputy Sheriff. He has over 18 years of full-time law enforcement experience and has received specialty certificates in homicide and sexual assault investigations.

CURTIS HILL *Temporary Investigative Assistant*



Curtis Hill came to the Office as a temporary Investigative Assistant. He is born and raised in the Eastern Sierra and graduated Magna Cum Laude from Azusa Pacific University with a bachelor's degree in Psychology and Political Science in 2008. He worked for the Probation Department for nine years supervising juvenile and various adult caseloads prior to joining the District Attorney's Office in 2019.

Departures

JACK LOERA *MLPD Detective*



Jack Loera worked as a detective with the Mammoth Lakes Police Department assigned to the Mono County Investigative Unit. He brought over 26 years of law enforcement experience working for Beaumont, Banning, and Upland Police Departments. His assignments over his career included Patrol Officer, Filed Training Officer, Detective, and Patrol Sergeant. In 2019, Jack Loera left Mammoth and returned to the Banning Police Department, where he currently works as a Detective.



Assistant DA Dave Anderson briefing CHP officers on updated DUI protocols



A wall of portraits of previous Mono County judges lines the back wall of the courthouse in Bridgeport



Tim Kendall discusses an upcoming case with Jason Pelichowski

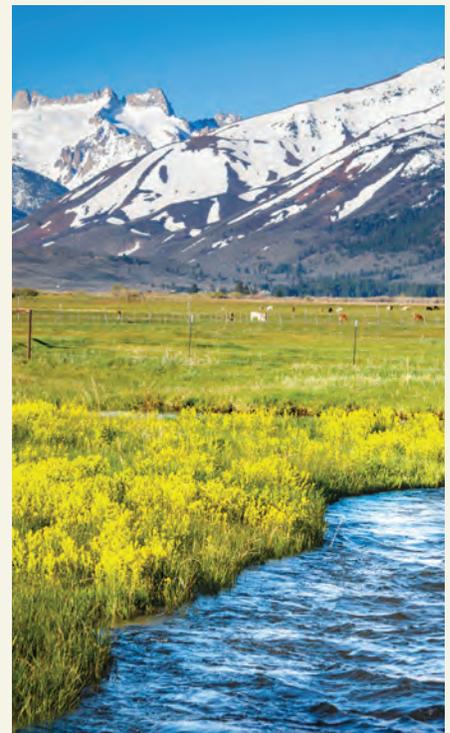


DA staff showing their holiday cheer



Priorities of the District Attorney

The District Attorney is elected into office every four years. It has been a practice of the District Attorney to identify specific areas which are his priorities for protecting the health and safety of the citizens in Mono County. These priorities are usually based on the current crime trends within the county and reflect a targeted effort to combat these crimes.



Changing the Domestic Violence Cycle

Domestic Violence kills three women every day in America. The typical domestic violence victim endures endless forms of abuse before either serious injury or death occurs. It is the goal of the District Attorney to break this cycle of abuse before it leads to injury or death. We hold even first-time offenders accountable for their actions, even if they have never been in trouble with the law before. It is important to get involved early and not only to hold violators accountable, but also to address the reasons for the abuse. The hope is that we can curb the behavior and prevent the long term abuse a victim may endure before a serious event occurs. This is a crime that must be addressed and a cycle that must be stopped.



PAUL HARRIS



On June 19, 2016, Mono County Sheriff's deputies responded to Chalfant, CA and discovered the body of Betty Lee Harris in a backhoe bucket belonging to her husband, Paul Harris. Further investigation by Mono County

District Attorney Investigators determined that Mrs. Harris was shot by Mr. Harris the night prior with a .45 caliber handgun from approximately 12-18 inches away.

Mr. Harris then proceeded to drag Mrs. Harris' body through the house and into the bucket of his tractor. He attempted to dig a hole and bury Mrs. Harris approximately 100 yards off his property on BLM land. When this failed, Mr. Harris left Mrs. Harris in the bucket and went to bed. The following morning, Mr. Harris cleaned the house and was in the process of washing blood out of area rugs when Sheriff's deputies arrived after receiving a request to do a welfare check at the home and took him into custody without incident.

Mr. Harris was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison in May of 2018.

MATTHEW SEARCY



On February 5, 2019, Mammoth Lakes Police Department officers were dispatched to a residence in Mammoth Lakes after receiving a call regarding possible domestic violence occurring. When officers arrived, Matthew Searcy and his

victim were still in the home, along with a child and an infant.

“ Mr. Searcy had choked, punched, and then threatened to kill his victim.

After a thorough investigation by MLPD officers and Mono County District Attorney investigators, it was determined that domestic violence had occurred and that Mr. Searcy had choked, punched, and then threatened to kill his victim.

On March 12, 2019, Matthew Searcy pled guilty to a felony charge of Domestic Violence with enhancements. He was sentenced to one year in custody, 100 hours of community service, 5 years of supervised probation, and ordered to pay restitution.

Protecting Children

One of the most important priorities of the District Attorney is protecting children. Sexual, physical and emotional abuse of children are some of the most heinous crimes committed.

Children are often abused by people who are entrusted with protecting them. These crimes leave lifelong scars and trauma on these young victims. Individuals who prey on children are some of the most despicable individuals in society.

The Mono County District Attorney is dedicated to the protection of our children and has committed the resources needed to effectively investigate and prosecute individuals who prey on children. Over the past five years, the Mono County District Attorney has sentenced individuals to a cumulative of over 400 years in prison for their crimes against children.

Investigators, prosecutors and medical professionals are part of a team that is specially trained to handle these cases. These professionals are dedicated to seeking justice for these victims. Over the last several years, the Office has received many referrals for cases involving the abuse and/or neglect and endangerment of children. Several are highlighted on these pages.



WADE HALLSTROM AND MARISA GRAEF



Mono County District Attorney's Office investigators along with Mammoth Lakes Police Department officers served a search warrant on the residence of Wade Hallstrom and Marisa Graef after receiving information regarding possible child abuse and willful child endangerment.



While in the residence, MLPD officers discovered numerous narcotic paraphernalia items used for smoking methamphetamine and heroin. During another search of the residence, officers discovered a THC extraction operation used to produce Butane Honey Oil, as well as additional drug paraphernalia in plain view within their infant's room.

The infant was taken into custody by Mono County Child Protective Services and transferred to the custody of a family member.



Officers discovered narcotic and additional drug paraphernalia in plain view within their infant's room.

Marisa Graef pled guilty to a violation of felony Child Endangerment.

Wade Hallstrom pled guilty to a felony violation of manufacturing controlled substances as well as a violation of felony Child Endangerment.

Protecting Children

MATTHEW AND CAYLA MOHR



On March 15, 2018, Mono County Sheriff's Department deputies responded to a residence in Walker, CA to conduct a welfare check after receiving a Suspected Child Abuse Report from Mono County District Attorney investigators.

Both Matthew and Cayla Mohr were prosecuted for felony Child Endangerment and pled guilty to a misdemeanor charge.

Pictured below, the bedroom at the residence with visible animal feces.



When deputies arrived at the residence, they immediately noticed that the residence was in a complete state of disarray, to the point of being unsafe for children. They located prescription medications and empty alcohol

bottles within plain view and accessible to children, animal feces and urine in all bedrooms, trash throughout the house, a knife and crossbow lying within reach of the children, and a general state of uncleanliness throughout the entire residence.



Fighting Fraud & Economic Crimes

As criminals become more technologically advanced, there is an increased need to fight identity theft and economic fraud, medical insurance fraud, and real estate fraud.

The Mono County District Attorney has sought the maximum penalties for white collar criminals, who often prey on the most vulnerable and destroy the life savings of many families. Prosecutors, investigators, and staff are specialized with fraud expertise and equipped with the tools they need to utilize advanced technology.

KADI RUELAS



On June 20, 2018, the District Attorney's Office received a complaint from the AmeriGas corporate office alleging employee Kadi Ruelas of Mammoth Lakes had embezzled funds from the local Mammoth Lakes AmeriGas office. After a thorough investigation, it was determined that Ms. Ruelas had stolen/embezzled approximately \$7,808.19 by manipulating/changing AmeriGas refund checks that had been issued between February 2017 and January 2018.

Ms. Ruelas pled guilty to the felony embezzlement charge on October 28, 2019.

Protecting the Environment

The Mono County District Attorney has been committed to fighting for and protecting our natural resources and to hold individuals and companies accountable by allocating resources to address these crimes. Polluters know that the Mono County District Attorney will protect the air quality, soil, and waterways from companies and entities that dump harmful pollutants into the beautiful and pristine environment of Mono County.

Further, the Office of the District Attorney pursues individuals and cartels that operate large scale illegal marijuana gardens on public lands, creating a danger to the public and to our recreational users of these lands. Unfortunately, hunters, hikers, and others that come across these types of gardens and the individuals who attend to these gardens put themselves in great danger. Along with the public danger there are also serious environmental impacts that these marijuana gardens create.

LARGE SCALE MARIJUANA GARDENS

Large scale illegal marijuana gardens on public lands create a danger to the public and to recreational users of these lands. Unfortunately, hunters, hikers, and others that come across these types of gardens and the individuals who attend to these gardens put themselves in great danger. Along with the public danger there are also serious environmental impacts that these marijuana gardens create.

Between 2016 and 2019, the Mono County DA's Office conducted flight operations in accordance with the Drug Enforcement Administration's marijuana eradication program. The purpose of the program is to locate large scale outdoor marijuana grows on public lands within Mono County. These flight operations resulted in the detection of several marijuana grows in rugged and remote locations in the southern Mono County area. The grow sites were very large in size and some ran up to approximately seven miles in length.

As a result, the Mono County DA's Office, with the assistance of the Forest Service, initiated investigations into the discovered grows. The investigations were also aided with the assistance of the Inyo County District Attorney's Office and the Inyo County Sheriff's Department.

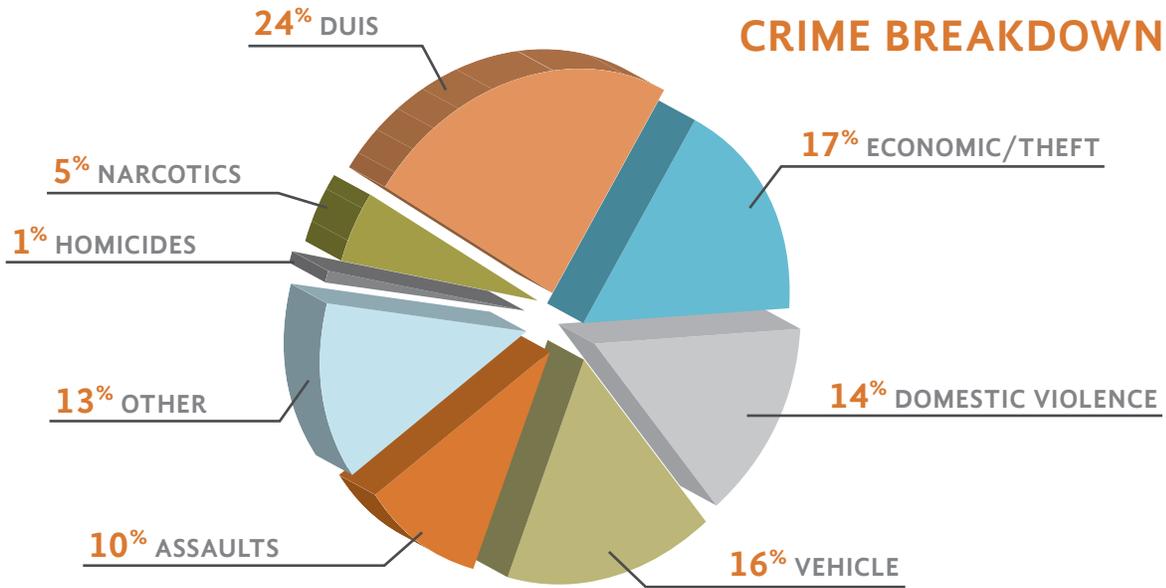
It was determined that the marijuana grows were typical of grows commonly operated by Mexican Drug Trade Organizations. Along with those characteristics, several Hispanic males were identified and were seen tending the garden armed with rifles.

During eradication and reclamation efforts of these grows, approximately 50,000 marijuana plants with a conservative street value of well over \$2.5 million were located and destroyed from the multiple sites. During reclamation efforts a total of 5,401 pounds of trash was removed. Some of that consisted of 15.82 miles of irrigation hose and 750 pounds of fertilizer. Numerous other illegal and highly toxic pesticides were also found in the gardens.

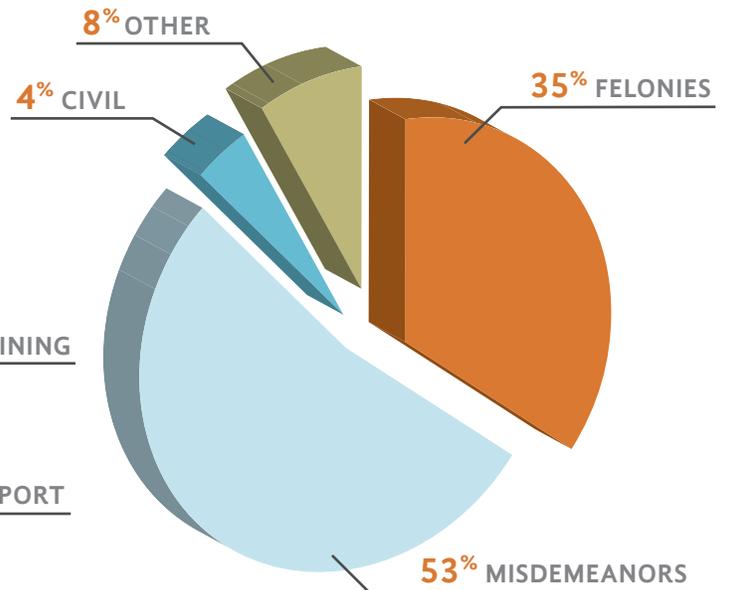
If you ever encounter a marijuana garden you should quickly and quietly remove yourself from the area. Do not continue on your path and do not make contact with anyone in the area. Immediately call the Mono County District Attorney or any other law enforcement agency as soon as you possibly can.



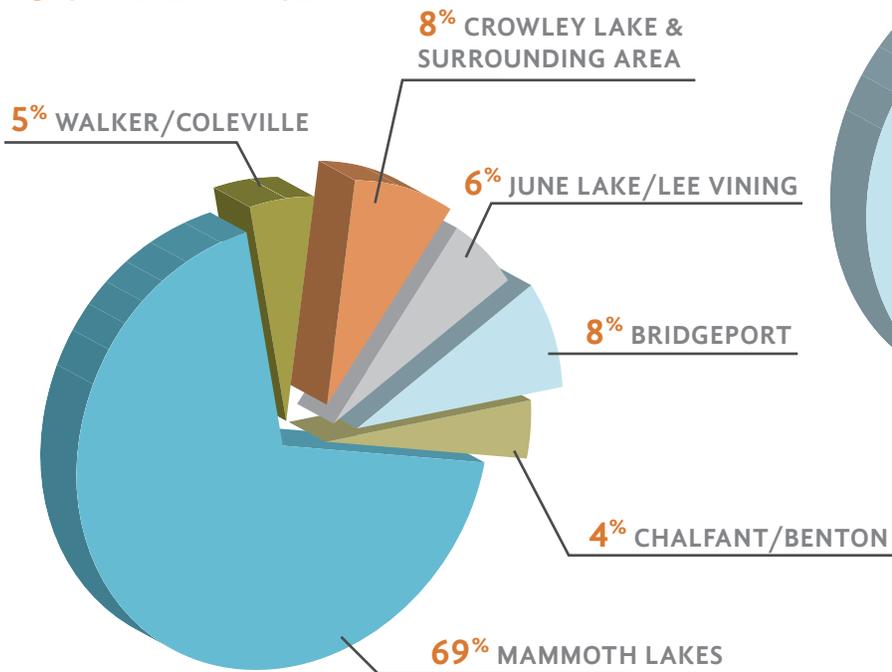
Case Breakdowns

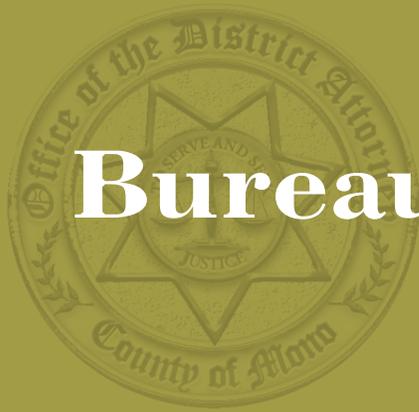


CRIME CLASSIFICATION



CRIME BY AREA





Bureau of Investigations

The Office of the District Attorney has a highly trained Investigations Unit. This Unit is made up of experienced law enforcement officers who come from highly diverse law enforcement backgrounds. These officers bring vast amounts of experience in investigating crimes as well as expertise in specific investigations. These officers head up internal and external teams and units to address some of the most serious crimes that occur in Mono County.

The Bureau also works closely in investigating cases with detectives and officers from other countywide and state law enforcement agencies. By bringing all the law enforcement agencies together, personnel are assembled to work cases collaboratively, resulting in a more efficient investigation and therefore minimizing everyone's efforts and duplication. Each victim, witness, and suspect are subjected to a comprehensive interview on scene or as soon as possible thereafter. A case receives immediate attention and is completed, submitted, filed, and prosecuted in a shorter amount of time.

Often there are four or more officers assigned to work together on a serious investigation and the casework is divided among all available personnel for a comprehensive investigation. Officers within the Bureau are on call 24/7 and when needed are available to assist and support other agencies personnel while sharing their expertise to assure the best outcome is reached for each investigation.



MCDU Investigators apprehend a "suspect" during a training exercise

Specialized Units within the District Attorney's Office



Consumer Fraud
Insurance Fraud
Real Estate Fraud
Welfare Fraud
Public Works Fraud
Elections Fraud
Child Abduction
High Tech Crimes
Environmental Crimes
Organized Crime
Narcotics
Sexual Assault Crimes

Child Abuse Crimes
Grand Jury Investigations
Brown Act Violations
Witness Relocation
Public Administrator
Asset Forfeiture
Court Investigator Services
Officer Involved Shootings
Subpoena Services
Bad Check Program
Special Assignments

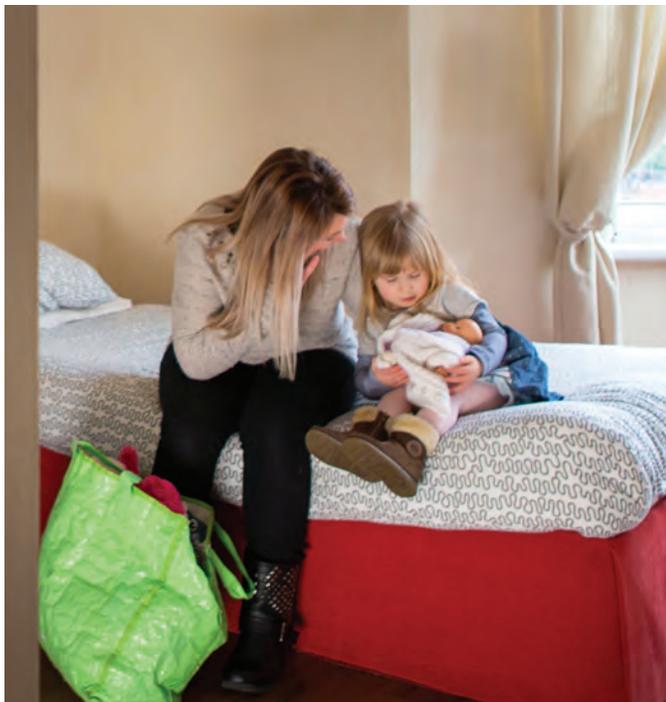
Sexual Abuse Response Team (SART)

The District Attorney's Office prosecutors and investigators spearhead this working group of assigned law enforcement and healthcare personnel. The Team meets monthly and discusses all sex crimes cases which are either pending investigation or prosecution.

The Team employs a multi-disciplinary approach and interacts with Child Protective Services to minimize the possibility of causing a victim to suffer further trauma during the investigative process.

In a notable case several years ago, it was the work and concept of the SART team which resulted in a local daycare provider, Lupe Almaguer, to be sentenced to over 60 years without the victims having to testify and recount the trauma. A similar case is highlighted to the right.

Good case investigations result in successful prosecutions, and good investigations are conducted when all the experience and knowledge in Mono County is applied to a single case. It is this team approach that leads to successful outcomes on behalf of the victim.



JORGE ESPITIA



On December 10, 2019, Mammoth Lakes resident Jorge Espitia was convicted of a dozen felonies for providing methamphetamine to five different children and molesting at least two of them.

Mr. Espitia, who had a severe methamphetamine addiction of his own, would induce minors to become addicted to methamphetamine and while they were in a compromised state, he would often take advantage of them sexually. He did this in the Mammoth Lakes community for years, and his youngest known victim was 12 years old when first abused by Mr. Espitia.

“ The victim bravely came forward to law enforcement and was willing to testify against Mr. Espitia.

Thankfully, this victim bravely came forward to law enforcement and was willing to testify against Mr. Espitia. Because of this victim's courage, Mr. Espitia was convicted and sentenced to prison for 25 years.

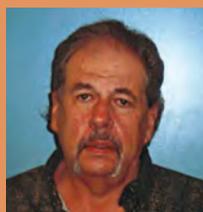
Justice could not have been received for these victims without their bravery and help from the community. One of the top priorities of the District Attorney is protecting children, especially from sexual abuse.

MONO COUNTY REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS



BARR

Ronald Evert
464 Hunter Ave.
Chalfant Valley, CA



BUZZARD

Warren Patrick
334 Pinenut Rd.
Coleville, CA



HARTMAN

Robert Charles
580 Hunter Ave. Apt. B
Chalfant Valley, CA



JACKSON

Leroy "Spike"
6501 HWY 6 Apt. A
Chalfant Valley, CA



LOGAN

Robert
Chalfant Valley, CA



McDONALD

Leonard
202 Mule Deer Rd.
Walker, CA



NAVARRO

Eduardo Daniel
4107 Crowley Lake Dr. Apt 15
Crowley Lake, CA



PENA

David
2987 Main St. #F
Mammoth Lakes, CA



RONDINI

Brian Lee
410 Pinenut Ave. Apt. A2
Coleville, CA



WALKER

Joseph
aka Morosco, Joseph
50 Hillside Dr. #237
Mammoth Lakes, CA



YULE

Sean Christopher
580 Hunter Ave.
Chalfant Valley, CA



YULE

Shaun Steven
580 Hunter Ave.
Chalfant Valley, CA

MEGAN'S LAW

California has required sex offenders to register with their local law enforcement agencies since 1947. California's Megan's Law provides the public with certain information on the whereabouts of sex offenders so that members of our local communities may protect themselves and their children. www.meganslaw.ca.gov

Megan's Law is named after seven-year-old Megan Kanka, a New Jersey girl who was raped and killed by a known registered sex offender who had moved across the street from the family without their knowledge. In the wake of the tragedy, the Kankas sought to have local communities warned about sex offenders in the area. All states now have a form of Megan's Law. Since 2004, the public has been able to view information on sex offenders required to register with local law enforcement under California's Megan's Law. The law was given final passage by the Legislature on August 24, 2004 and signed by the Governor on September 24, 2004. The law is not intended to punish the registrant and specifically prohibits using the information to harass or commit any crime against a registrant (Pen. Code § 290.46).

Special Prosecutions Unit (SPU)

The Special Prosecutions Unit handles cases that require special attention and receive high public attention. The Unit investigates and prosecutes individuals who violate public trust or commit criminal violations of state laws that regulate the conduct of elected or appointed public officials and employees, including law enforcement.

Holding public officials accountable for violating public trust is important in promoting the democratic process and keeping government free of corruption. Lifetime bans from holding public office can be imposed in cases involving public officials who abuse their official positions for personal and/or financial gain.

The Unit also investigates compliance with the open meeting requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act and the Bagley-Keene Act. These requirements protect, promote and strengthen transparency and accountability in local elected or appointed governmental bodies vital to the functioning of democratic institutions. Holding law enforcement officers and government officials to a high standard is crucial in maintaining public confidence in all criminal justice matters, and the Unit prosecutes cases against individuals who hold these positions.

The Unit is also responsible for upholding the professional integrity of licensed professionals, such as doctors and attorneys, in the course of performing their duties.



Child Abduction

Under California Family Code 3300 et seq the District Attorney is charged with carrying out child custody investigations and acting in court on behalf of the child in disputes where one parent has concealed, kidnapped, or abducted their child from the other parent. These cases are contentious and time consuming, and often involve other Counties, States, and Nations.

The Mono County District Attorney's Office has worked several international cases where a parent in Mexico alleged the parent in Mono County has abducted and concealed a child. At present the Office does not have any open international cases, and only one California case is open.



Internet Crimes Against Children

The Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program (ICAC) is a national network of 61 coordinated task forces representing more than 4,500 federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies.

These agencies are engaged in both proactive and reactive investigations, forensic examinations, and criminal prosecutions. By helping state and local agencies develop effective, sustainable responses to online child victimization – including responses to child sexual abuse images, the ICAC Program has increased law enforcements capacity to combat technology facilitated crimes against children at every level.

The Mono County District Attorney's Office is the designated law enforcement agency in Mono County, who receives all ICAC referrals involving online child victimization and exploitation and conducts investigations within the Eastern District of California as well as works with federal agencies and ICAC task forces throughout the United States. Most of the investigations focus on sex crimes committed upon children in which a computer was used to facilitate the crime.

The task force also conducts education for children, adults, and community groups to help them learn to be safer on the Internet and thereby hopefully reducing online victimization.

ANONYMOUS



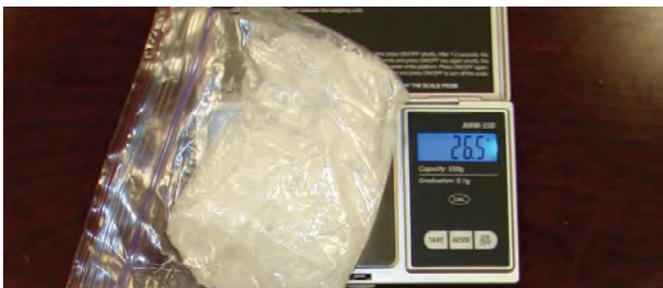
In 2019, MCDA received a referral involving a local male who was discovered receiving and distributing hundreds of photos and videos depicting sexual acts involving children.

The case was fully investigated by the Mono County District Attorney's Office and the offender was prosecuted for his crimes.

Drug Traffickers and Narcotics

Drugs have a major impact to Mono County. Drugs wreak havoc on people, their families and friends, and on the landscape of Mono County. Additional crimes occur such as thefts and assaults due to drug use and the contentious nature of drug deals and drug dealers.

Drugs infiltrate into our schools and places of work and because of this, leave a destructive path. Drug trafficking remains a high priority for the District Attorney.



The investigators at the District Attorney's Office operated the Mono County Narcotics Program. With the reduction in staffing made by Mammoth Lakes Police Department over the years and the Sheriff's Department not participating in narcotics investigations anymore, the District Attorney took over all the administration and operations of the Narcotics Program in 2013.

The District Attorney's Office is also responsible for the assets seized in conjunction with narcotic offenses. The District Attorney proceeds against assets only in conjunction with a filed criminal case and once the criminal case establishes a predicate conviction allowing for the permanent seizure of the asset.

In 2017, the District Attorney terminated all operation of the Mono County Narcotics Program. The program became unsustainable based on allied law enforcement agencies not participating.

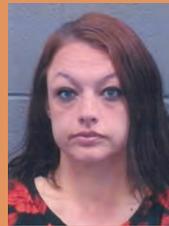
Welfare Fraud Specialized Investigative Unit (SIU)

Under an MOU with Mono County Department of Social Services, the investigators of the District Attorney’s Office receive fraud referrals from social workers where fraud in obtaining benefits is suspected or has been reported.

The types of aid cases include General Assistance, which are County funds, as well as Food Stamps and Cash Aid, which are State-Federal funds. The referrals often include investigation of disqualifying factors such as being a drug-sales convicted felon, being a fleeing felon, or claiming benefits for an incarcerated individual. The referral of fraud cases can lead to extensive financial investigations.



SHANNON BROSSAU



In June 2017, Mono County District Attorney investigators received information from Mono County Social Services that Shannon Brosseau had knowingly and intentionally defrauded the welfare system. After a thorough investigation, it was discovered that Ms. Brosseau had received overpayment of \$17,405.47 as a result of her deception.

On October 22, 2018, Shannon Brosseau was convicted of felony “aid by misrepresentation”, a violation of California Welfare and Institutions Code.

Elections

Year after year, the District Attorney Investigators also receive cases from the Registrar of Voters when there is an indication of voter fraud. It is common for voters to vote either multiple times in an election or to register in more than one county in order to vote multiple times.

In recent elections there have been efforts of second homeowners to register in Mono County, while maintaining a residence elsewhere, so as to have an impact in our local elections. The Office currently has several open cases of voter fraud allegations.



Grand Jury

The Office of the District Attorney is designated by the Government Code as the primary advisor to the Grand Jury. As such, the District Attorney Investigators are tasked with and authorized under state law to issue subpoenas and conduct certain investigations for the Grand Jury.

Year after year, the Office routinely issues and serves subpoenas for the Grand Jury, assists in investigations, and the DA advises the Grand Jury on legal issues that they confront.

Public Administration

The Mono County Code and the California Government Code require the District Attorney to act as the Public Administrator. The duties of this position require an investigation to determine if a decedent has any next of kin and any assets. The primary responsibility is to secure the decedent's assets and utilize the court process to determine proper disposition of those assets.



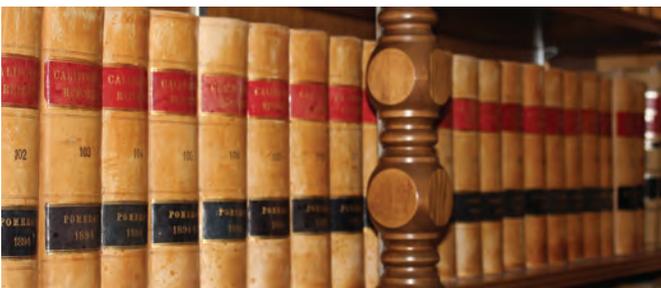
Financial Crimes

Many financial crimes are highly sophisticated and require time consuming in-depth investigations. While our investigators assist all local law enforcement with their financial crimes investigations, many financial crimes investigations begin with the District Attorney's office. One of the principles used in these investigations is to "follow the money." It is not uncommon for a financial crimes investigation to take months, sometimes a year to complete.



Court Investigator Services

The District Attorney investigators are routinely called on by the court to conduct investigations on behalf of the court. In matters such as conservatorships, probate, guardianships, and adoptions, the investigators will conduct investigations and report specific criteria under consideration by the court. The court also refers matters to our investigators when someone claims their identity was used and they are not the individual that should be in front of the court.



High Tech Crimes

The District Attorney's Investigators are trained in computer forensics, and the office has focused on acquiring the equipment and training in order to develop digital evidence from items used or associated with criminal activity.





Victim/Witness Services

The Mono County Victim/Witness Program is a division of the Mono County District Attorney's Office and provides free services to victims of all crimes as well as support services to families and friends.

Our Victim/Witness Program focuses on supporting and providing resources to victims and witnesses of crimes. Our advocates are available, dedicated, and compassionate professionals who receive specialized training in order to support those affected by crime. We serve as critical members of the prosecution team who provide victims and witnesses with information, guidance and support throughout the criminal justice process.

Advocates facilitate the delivery of immediate crisis services and are available to accompany individuals to provide support on-scene, during interviews with law enforcement, attorney meetings and court hearings. The Victim/Witness Services Department works to ensure victims' voices are heard and that they are treated with fairness, respect and dignity.



Services Offered

CRISIS INTERVENTION – Crisis intervention counseling and support for victims.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE – Assistance with meeting immediate needs of victims, such as food, shelter, transportation, and medical care.

REFERRAL COUNSELING – Directing victims to community resources for assistance.

ORIENTATION TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM – Explaining the system and providing information about cases.

CASE DISPOSITION/STATUS – Keeping Victims/Witnesses aware of the investigation and prosecution of their case.

PROPERTY RETURN – Ensuring the prompt return of property used as evidence.

COURT ASSISTANCE/SUPPORT – Assisting with court appearances, including providing transportation to and from court.

RESTRAINING ORDERS – Assist in obtaining restraining orders.

RESTITUTION – Helping to obtain court-ordered restitution from convicted offenders.

VICTIM OF CRIME CLAIMS – Assisting victims in preparing and submitting applications to the state to receive compensation for their losses, such as lost wages and medical expenses.

PRESENTATIONS – Promoting awareness of program services to the public, criminal justice agencies, and victim service organizations.

OTHER ASSISTANCE AS NEEDED – Child care referrals, creditor/employer intervention, notification to friends or relatives, etc.

A victim does not have to report a crime to law enforcement to be eligible for some of the services that the program provides.



Marsy's Law



The Mono County District Attorney supports California's Marsy's Law, which officially recognizes that victims of crime have rights under the State Constitution.

The Office invokes Marsy's Law to ensure that victims have an opportunity to be heard at every court hearing where their rights could be impacted, including allowing victims to speak at bail hearings, when defense attorneys seek a continuance, and prior to the court sentencing a defendant.

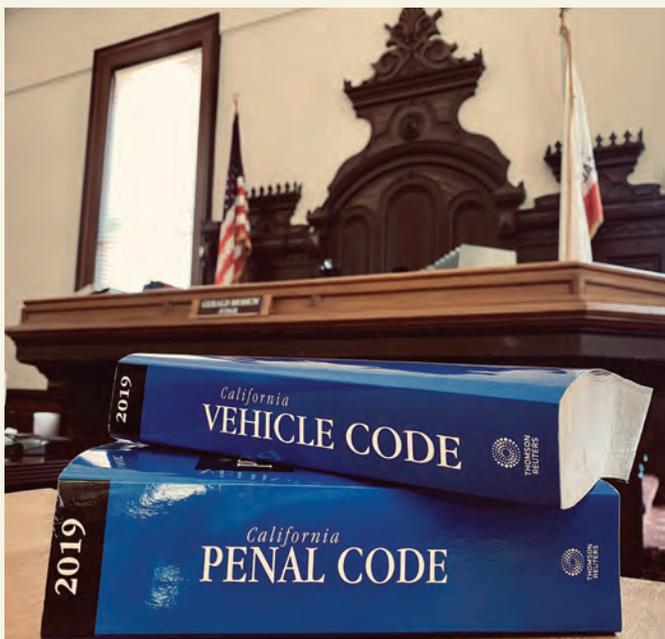
To protect victims' rights, the Office provides Marsy's Law services by advising victims of their rights by mail, online, and in person.

Rights and interests of victims are represented even decades after victimization by providing input for parole hearings against convicted felons.



Juvenile Division

The Office of the District Attorney is also responsible for the prosecution of juvenile criminal offenders. Criminal offenders who are under 18 years of age who commit either felony or misdemeanor offenses are handled by the Juvenile Division. Serious offenders may be prosecuted as adults. The Mono County District Attorney's Office uses numerous programs to balance rehabilitation of juvenile offenders and the public safety.



Student Attendance Review Board (SARB)

The Juvenile Division is also responsible for the Truancy Program and Outreach. This is a cooperative effort by many agencies to address truancy and behavioral issues in the schools. The primary agency that addresses truancy is the Student Attendance Review Board. This Board is comprised of members from the District Attorney’s Office, School Districts, Law Enforcement, Probation, and Health and Social Services. The primary goal of the Student Attendance Review Board is to keep kids in school.

Families and students are held accountable and offered assistance, services, and support to help the student be successful in school and beyond. SARB provides a progression of interventions, up to formal court action if necessary. When a student or family fails to respond to traditional efforts made by SARB the District Attorney steps in and represents the State in court to enforce compliance. Whether it’s a morning phone call to wake a student up or court intervention, the goal is to get the student to graduation.

Education Through School

Members of the District Attorney’s Office volunteer their time to teach students about the benefits of receiving an education. They also teach our students about the negative impact of narcotics, alcohol and sex crimes.

Additionally, the Mono County District Attorney participates in advising, teaching and/or judging students who participate in the County’s Mock Trial competition. The winner of that competition goes on to represent Mono County at the State Competition.



The District Attorney’s Office provides scholarships to local High School students every year



Keeping kids in school is the best way to keep them out of trouble and allows them the best chance for their future. Early intervention is the key.

– *District Attorney Tim Kendall*





Government and Community Relations

The Office of the District Attorney is intimately involved in relationships with other governmental agencies as well as entrenched in each of the communities of Mono County. Although vigorous prosecution of criminal defendants is just one aspect of maintaining a safer community, there will never be enough police and prosecutors to keep the public safe if we do not reach out to all stakeholders in our County.



Attorneys, investigators, and staff are involved in every community throughout Mono County. We have members who volunteer their time in civic groups like Lions Club and Rotary. We have members that volunteer their time for the many community events that are held throughout our county and we have members who are invested in our kids' programs and schools.

The District Attorney's Office employs people who are passionate about the betterment of our communities because this same passion translates to employees who dedicate and contribute their talents and skills to public service and the Office of the District Attorney is all about public service.



Bad Check Program

For years, the Mono County District Attorney's Office has operated a Bad Check Program for individuals and businesses located throughout Mono County. When individuals and/or business have accepted a check, for merchandise or a service of any kind, that has been provided by that individual and/or business and cannot collect on that check for payment it can be turned over to the District Attorney for review under the Bad Check Program.

Under Penal Code section 470(a), if it appears that a check was written with the intent to defraud a party the District Attorney may charge the writer of that bad check with a criminal offense and will collect restitution and any out of pocket expenses as a result of the bad check on behalf of the party in which the debt is due.

District Attorney's Pre-Filing Diversion Program

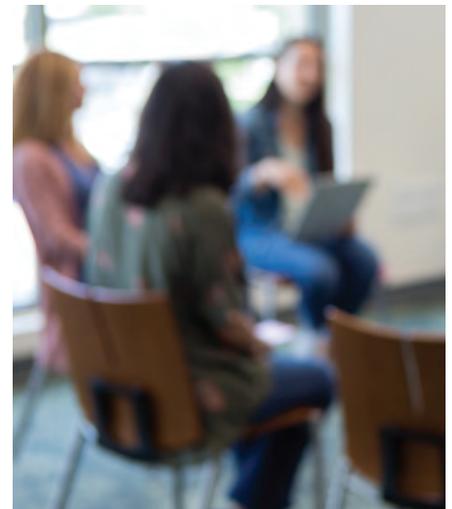
This program allows low level first time criminal offenders to be diverted from the criminal system. Upon completion of the program their criminal charges are dismissed and their case is closed. This allows individuals who find themselves in the criminal system because of circumstances that are not within their character to avoid having a criminal record.

Funds that are collected for this program are donated back into the community for education and prevention programs, youth programs, as well as programs that are within the interest of the District Attorney's Office.

Programs and groups that have received funds from this program are the Mammoth High School sports program, Disabled Sports, Antelope Valley CERT team, Choose Civility Initiative, Mono County Mock Trial team, and many more. To date approximately \$10,000 has been distributed back into the community.

Hispanic Outreach

This outreach program is an opportunity to educate and explain the judicial system to our Hispanic population. The outreach has become an important vehicle for individuals to ask legal questions, learn about the criminal justice system, learn how various laws may affect them, and how they can avoid issues with the law. The outreach also informs them of the many services and support programs that are offered to individuals when they find themselves in the justice system.



Restitution Court

Victims often incur significant losses because of a crime committed against them. Victims incur property loss, loss of employment, insurance bills, and medical bills to name a few. Once a defendant is convicted, the court orders restitution to be paid by the defendant to the victim for any economic losses a victim incurred. Many defendants do not take this order seriously and either refuse or fail to pay. The District Attorney's Restitution Court was created specifically to ensure that victims recover their losses by monitoring a defendant's payments. This allows the District Attorney to vigorously pursue all legal avenues to ensure that a defendant fulfills their responsibility to the victim. Defendants that do not follow through with their restitution obligation are required to appear in court monthly and answer to the District Attorney and the Court for their failure to pay. The overall goal of any criminal prosecution is to make a victim whole again in hopes that the crime committed against them has a minimal impact on them and their life.



Mono County Multi-Agency Leadership Council (MAC)

The purpose of the council is to address and create procedures regarding matters of safety and security, and to promote a healthy, safe environment for the county's youth. The Council is made of representatives of school districts, law enforcement, and county and town staff.

Some of the issues that the Council has addressed are: tobacco enforcement, drugs/alcohol on/off campus, weapons on campus, student truancy, graffiti, sexual harassment, and underage sex.

Wild Iris

The Mono County District Attorney's Office works closely with and supports the services provided by Wild Iris. Wild Iris is dedicated to serving victims and survivors affected by domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse while remaining sensitive to culture, race, sexuality, gender, religion, age, class, disability status, immigration status, education, and geographic location within Mono County. Their services are provided at no charge, are completely confidential, and are provided with dignity and respect.

Because one of the priorities of the Office of the District Attorney is to curb the pattern of Domestic Violence, Wild Iris is an important component by assisting victims of crimes to understand that no one deserves to be abused. By providing and sustaining programs of education and prevention, crisis intervention, advocacy, and support for those affected by domestic violence, child abuse, and sexual assault, Wild Iris helps victims move forward while helping to prevent them from becoming victims again.

Community Partners



MAMMOTH
HIGH SCHOOL



MAMMOTH
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mammoth^M



“ It is crucial to be available to others. The District Attorney is the people’s attorney and we assist in so many different areas that it is important to be involved in what is happening throughout the county. Assisting others is a cherished privilege. Giving back to our community, through involvement, is an honor that we should all undertake. It’s what makes a community great. – *District Attorney Tim Kendall*



Tim Kendall with employees of the Mammoth Lakes Police Department



Court screeners ensure the safety of staff and the public



Our law enforcement partners, MLPD, CHP – Bridgeport area, and MCSO preparing for New Year’s Eve events



**“There is no true peace without fairness, truth,
justice and solidarity.” – Pope John Paul II**

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photo: Mick Haupt

