

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



**ITEM: 3.34  
(ID # 15131)**

**MEETING DATE:**  
Tuesday, April 27, 2021

**FROM:** SUPERVISOR KAREN SPIEGEL AND DISTRICT ATTORNEY:

**SUBJECT:** SUPERVISOR KAREN SPIEGEL AND DISTRICT ATTORNEY: Approve the addition of four full time positions to investigate, process, examine and supervise cases related to online child exploitation in Riverside County by the Riverside County Child Exploitation Team (RCET); Approve and direct the Auditor-Controller to adjust the budget according to Schedule A and Amend Ordinance No. 440 pursuant to Resolution No. 440-9194 submitted herewith, All Districts. [2 years total cost - \$1,157,577, \$926,062 ongoing cost – General Fund Contingency 100%] (4/5 required)

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** The Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve the addition of:
  - a. One (1) Riverside County Supervising District Attorney Investigator; to properly supervise investigations by the Riverside County Child Exploitation Team (RCET).
  - b. Two (2) Riverside County Senior District Attorney Investigators; to proactively conduct investigations related to online child exploitation.
  - c. One (1) Riverside County District Attorney Investigative Technician - Forensics Examiner to process and examine items of digital media pertaining to the investigations of online child exploitation.
2. Approve and direct the Auditor-Controller to make the budget adjustments on the attached Schedule A.
3. Amend Ordinance No. 440 pursuant to Resolution No. 440-9194 submitted herewith.

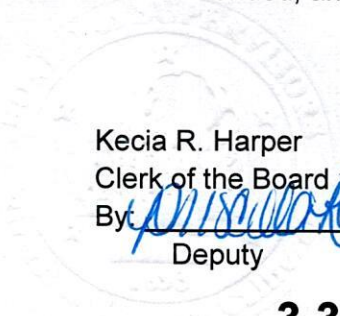
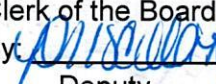
**ACTION: Policy**

  
Supervisor Karen Spiegel, Chair 4/22/2021

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

On motion of Supervisor Spiegel, seconded by Supervisor Jeffries and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is approved as recommended, and that Ordinance 440-9194 is adopted as recommended.

Ayes: Jeffries, Spiegel, Washington, Perez, and Hewitt  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Date: April 27, 2021  
xc: Supvr. Spiegel, DA, Auditor

  
Kecia R. Harper  
Clerk of the Board  
By:   
Deputy



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**BACKGROUND:**

<b>FINANCIAL DATA</b>	<b>Current Fiscal Year:</b>	<b>Next Fiscal Year:</b>	<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>Ongoing Cost</b>
<b>COST</b>	\$ 231,515	\$ 926,062	\$ 1,157,577	\$ 926,062
<b>NET COUNTY COST</b>	\$ 231,515	\$ 926,062	\$ 1,157,577	\$ 926,062
<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS:</b> General Fund-Contingency 100%			<b>Budget Adjustment:</b> Yes	
			<b>For Fiscal Year:</b> 20/21, FY 21/22	

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

**ACTION: (4/5 Vote Required) 4/5 Vote Required, Positions Added**

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

**BACKGROUND:**

**Summary**

The current proliferation of the Internet and electronic devices, combined with the stay-at-home mandates of the COVID-19 pandemic, has resulted in our children spending inordinate amounts of time online. This has created unprecedented risks to children from online predators. Even when the pandemic restrictions ease, many aspects of online life will remain, and children will still be spending significant time online. Time online is not by itself a problem, but online gaming, a popular pastime, and social media applications are major issues. Almost every online application or gaming platform has chatting capabilities. These chat areas are fertile environments for predators to groom and lure our children into being sexually exploited.

In June 2020, the Riverside County District Attorney's Office recognized the significant importance of finding new ways to address these online predators. The District Attorney's Office established the Riverside County Child Exploitation Team (RCCET) and reallocated two (2) Senior Investigators from its already limited resources to help combat online child sexual exploitation. These Investigators were assigned to proactively pursue and arrest online predators who were taking advantage of the increased opportunities to target children online. As part of their investigation, RCCET Investigators portray themselves as juveniles on various online platforms intending to catch predators trying to lure our children.

The amazing work of these RCCET Investigators has resulted in the identification and apprehension of fifteen (15) adult *Travelers*. The term *Traveler* is used to describe predators who use online communication to lure children for the purpose of in person sexual activity. Of the RCCET *Traveler* arrests, approximately 25% are registered sex offenders (having been previously convicted of some form of sexual assault). Significantly, registered sex offenders residing in Riverside County, increased by 4% in 2020 to 4,567. Non-compliance among this population is expected to increase in 2021 due to a recent change in the law adding an annual in-person appearance as part of sex offender registration requirements.

RCCET utilizes sting operations to prevent these online predators from meeting and exploiting children. For example, in the Fall of 2020, Investigators arrested a *Traveler* for attempting to lure



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what he believed was a 12-year-old girl to meet and have sex. The suspect was already a registered sex offender. Fortunately, he met RCCET Investigators and not the child he thought he was communicating with.

Additionally, since June 2020, RCCET Investigators have identified or rescued twenty-three (23) previously unreported juvenile victims. These victims include girls and boys and range in ages from 2 months to 17 years. For year-end **2020**, RCCET made **587 arrests**, an **186% increase over 2019** (205 arrests). Those arrested include the previously addressed *Travelers*, predators producing, possessing, and sharing child pornography, and sex crime registrants who were out of compliance with their registration requirements.

Many of the arrests by RCCET originate from CyberTips sent by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). During the pandemic in 2020, CyberTips received by NCMEC significantly increased 110% to 2,692 tips, versus the 1,245 received in 2019. When investigating these CyberTips, RCCET Investigators frequently identified additional victims who unfortunately, are often family members of the perpetrator. For example, RCCET's first investigation in the Summer of 2020 began with a CyberTip for the uploading of child pornography. This investigation resulted in the arrest of a suspect for possessing child pornography. This suspect admitted to molesting multiple additional victims.

While CyberTips have increased rapidly over the last year, so has the production and sharing of child pornography. Utilizing government tracking technology, RCCET can track incidents of uploading or sharing of child pornography to geolocations across Riverside County. A recent review of location information showed approximately 40 incidents of uploading or sharing of child pornography throughout Riverside County. Once identified, each incident requires additional investigation, including in depth specialized electronic search warrants and labor-intensive surveillance to identify the person(s) responsible and stop them from continuing to produce and share the illicit images.

There is no question that Riverside County is facing a significant increase of tech-savvy child predator activity. This must be addressed. The creation of RCCET to combat this crisis has resulted in the identification and apprehension of many child predators. However, RCCET is not adequately staffed to address the ongoing and increasing problem. This growing problem has been further exacerbated by the intensive use of online learning, digital gaming, social media, daily virtual activities which are frequently un-supervised, and the COVID-19 Stay at Home orders which have limited our customary day-to-day lifestyle. To enable the protection of our most vulnerable residents, the District Attorney's office needs to add the necessary personnel to continue to successfully supervise and operate RCCET.

This Form 11 provides funding to the Riverside County District Attorney's Office for an additional (1) Riverside County Supervising District Attorney Investigator to properly supervise investigations by the Riverside County Child Exploitation Team (RCCET), two (2) Riverside County Senior District Attorney Investigators to proactively conduct investigations related to online child exploitation, and one (1) Riverside County District Attorney Investigative Technician - Forensics Examiner to process and examine items of digital media pertaining to the investigations of online child exploitation.

This will be an ongoing cost of \$926,062 in future fiscal years.

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**Impact on Residents and Businesses**

This effort will provide personnel to conduct proactive online investigations to identify and apprehend those sexually exploiting minor children in Riverside County.

**Attachments**

- 1 – Schedule A
- 2 – Resolution No. 440-9194

**SCHEDULE A.      BUDGET ADJUSTMENT FY 20/21**

Decrease appropriations:		
10000-1109000000-581000	Appropriation for contingencies	\$231,515
Anticipated increase of unassigned fund balance:		
10000-1109000000-370100	Unassigned fund balance	\$231,515
Increase appropriations:		
10000-2200100000-510040	Regular salaries	\$145,613
10000-2200100000-518100	Budgeted benefits	<u>\$ 85,902</u>
	Total	\$231,515
Anticipated use of unassigned fund balance:		
10000-2200100000-370100	Unassigned fund balance	\$231,515

  
Misley Wang, Supervising Accountant      4/22/2021



1 RESOLUTION NO. 440-9194

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3 BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Riverside, State of California, in  
4 regular session assembled on April 27, 2021, that pursuant to Section 4(a)(ii) of Ordinance No. 440,  
5 Supervisor Karen Spiegel and the District Attorney are authorized to amend the Class and Salary Listing of  
6 Ordinance No. 440, operative on the date of approval, as follows:

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8 Job Code	+/-	Department ID	Class Title
9 98555	+1	2200100000	IT Forensic Examiner III
10 37690	+2	2200100000	Senior District Attorney Investigator B-III
11 37727	+1	2200100000	Supervising District Attorney Investigator

12 ROLL CALL:

13 Ayes: Spiegel, Jeffries, Washington, Perez and Hewitt  
14 Nays: None  
15 Absent: None  
16 Abstained:

17 The foregoing is certified to be a true copy of a resolution duly adopted by said Board of Supervisors on the date therein set forth.

18 Kecia R. Harper, Clerk of said Board  
19 By *Orisilla Passo*  
20 Deputy  
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440 Resolutions\KC

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