

**Assembly Bill No. 1185**

CHAPTER 342

An act to add Section 25303.7 to the Government Code, relating to counties.

[Approved by Governor September 30, 2020. Filed with Secretary of State September 30, 2020.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1185, McCarty. County board of supervisors: sheriff oversight.

Existing law establishes the office of the sheriff in each county to preserve peace, and authorizes the sheriff to sponsor, supervise, or participate in any project of crime prevention, rehabilitation of persons previously convicted of crime, or the suppression of delinquency. Existing law requires a board of supervisors to supervise the official conduct of all county officers and ensure that they faithfully perform their duties.

This bill would authorize a county to establish a sheriff oversight board to assist the board of supervisors with those duties as they relate to the sheriff, either by action of the board of supervisors or through a vote of county residents.

This bill would authorize a county, either by action of the board of supervisors or through a vote of county residents, to establish an office of the inspector general to assist the board of supervisors with these duties as they relate to the sheriff.

The bill would authorize the chair of the oversight board and the inspector general to issue a subpoena or subpoena duces tecum when deemed necessary to investigate a matter within their jurisdiction.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 25303.7 is added to the Government Code, to read:  
25303.7. (a) (1) A county may create a sheriff oversight board, either by action of the board of supervisors or through a vote of county residents, comprised of civilians to assist the board of supervisors with its duties required pursuant to Section 25303 that relate to the sheriff.

(2) The members of the sheriff oversight board shall be appointed by the board of supervisors. The board of supervisors shall designate one member to serve as the chairperson of the board.

(b) (1) The chair of the sheriff oversight board shall issue a subpoena or subpoena duces tecum in accordance with Sections 1985 to 1985.4, inclusive, of the Code of Civil Procedure whenever the board deems it necessary or important to examine the following:

(A) Any person as a witness upon any subject matter within the jurisdiction of the board.

(B) Any officer of the county in relation to the discharge of their official duties on behalf of the sheriff's department.

(C) Any books, papers, or documents in the possession of or under the control of a person or officer relating to the affairs of the sheriff's department.

(2) A subpoena shall be served in accordance with Sections 1987 and 1988 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

(3) (A) If a witness fails to attend, or in the case of a subpoena duces tecum, if an item is not produced as set forth therein, the chair or the chair authorized deputy issuing the subpoena upon proof of service thereof may certify the facts to the superior court in the county of the board.

(B) The court shall thereupon issue an order directing the person to appear before the court and show cause why they should not be ordered to comply with the subpoena. The order and a copy of the certified statement shall be served on the person and the court shall have jurisdiction of the matter.

(C) The same proceedings shall be had, the same penalties imposed, and the person charged may purge themselves of the contempt in the same way as in a case of a person who has committed a contempt in the trial of a civil action before a superior court.

(c) (1) A county, through action of the board of supervisors or vote by county residents, may establish an office of the inspector general, appointed by the board of supervisors, to assist the board of supervisors with its duties required pursuant to Section 25303 that relate to the sheriff.

(2) The inspector general shall have the independent authority to issue a subpoena or subpoena duces tecum subject to the procedure provided in subdivision (b).

(d) The exercise of powers under this section or other investigative functions performed by a board of supervisors, sheriff oversight board, or inspector general vested with oversight responsibility for the sheriff shall not be considered to obstruct the investigative functions of the sheriff.

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