



CITY OF SANTA ANA

September 29, 2025

Office of the Attorney General
California Department of Justice
P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550

Subject: Request for Investigation into Santa Ana Police Officers Association's Use of Public Funds

Dear Attorney General Rob Bonta,

I respectfully submit this request for an investigation into the financial practices of the Santa Ana Police Officers Association (SAPOA), specifically regarding the administration of public funds allocated for employee health benefits.

Under the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Santa Ana and the SAPOA, the City contributes public funds to the Association, which independently manages health benefit plans for its members. Importantly, the City retains the authority to audit these funds. The first such audit, conducted in 2023, revealed an overpayment of approximately \$3 million in a single year. Despite this substantial overpayment, the SAPOA's health benefit account is running at a deficit of \$608,894, as confirmed by City Manager Alvaro Nuñez in a recent discussion.

Given that this funding arrangement has been in place for many years, the presence of both large overpayments and a deficit raises serious concerns about financial mismanagement or potential misuse of public dollars. The situation appears inconsistent with sound fiscal practices and demands independent review.

Additionally, it should be noted that there have been recent controversies involving the SAPOA's leadership, including failed attempts by a past president to secure retirement income exceeding the amounts legally owed to him. The 4th District Court of Appeal eventually ruled against the former SAPOA president and reaffirmed CalPERS' stance against extra pay bonuses to spike pensions. These issues further underscore the need for transparency and accountability in how public contributions are being managed.

I respectfully urge the California Attorney General's Office to conduct a thorough investigation into the Santa Ana Police Officers Association's handling of public funds, including:

- The administration of health benefit contributions.
- The cause of the reported \$3 million overpayment in 2023.
- The reason the health benefit account continues to operate at a deficit.
- A forensic audit of all SAPOA accounts dating back 10 years.

- Any improper or unlawful use of funds by current or former SAPOA leadership.

The residents of Santa Ana and the taxpayers of California deserve confidence that public dollars are being managed lawfully and responsibly. I trust your office will give this matter the full attention it warrants.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,



Benjamin Vazquez
Mayor Pro Tem
City of Santa Ana