



Office of the Sheriff

PRESS RELEASE

A safer step forward: TASER pilot program shows promise in Santa Clara County jails



August 28, 2025

Five months into its launch, the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office's TASER 10 Pilot Program is proving to be a valuable tool in our custody facilities – reducing the need for physical force, improving safety for the incarcerated population, medical staff, and Sheriff's Office personnel, and offering new ways to de-escalate dangerous situations.

This pilot brings Axon's TASER 10, a next-generation Conducted Energy Device (CED), into our facilities. It's designed to help our deputies manage volatile situations in a safer, more controlled way with less risk of injury to both staff and incarcerated individuals.

As we compile initial data, we're sharing an update on what's been implemented, what we've learned so far, and what's ahead.

What is the TASER 10?



The Axon TASER 10 is a significant upgrade over previous CED models. Its extended range -- nearly double that of earlier models -- gives deputies greater distance and time to safely engage those who are behaving violently. That additional space can help facilitate de-escalation and reduce the likelihood of force being used.

Where and how it's being used

The pilot program currently includes 60 CEDs, issued in specifically approved areas at the Main Jail and Elmwood Correctional Complex. On average, seven CEDs are available on each shift.

Training first

Before being issued a CED, qualifying deputies are selected to complete a comprehensive 14-hour training program:

- 2 hours online, covering device functionality, policy, safety
- 12 hours in-person, including:
 - Case law and department policy
 - Holster use and weapon retention
 - Scenario-based and virtual reality training
 - Live deployments in controlled settings

Deputies not assigned a CED also completed a mandatory one-hour training session to understand the devices, how they work, and how to respond appropriately when one is used in the field.



What we've seen so far

As of August 2025, there have been nearly 50 incidents where a CED was drawn but not deployed:

- In 30 of those incidents, simply showing the CED led to a peaceful resolution where no further force was needed.
- In the remaining 19 incidents, other tools (like pepper spray or physical restraint) were used, but the presence of the CED helped deputies gain control.

Since the launch of the pilot program, a CED has been deployed in eight incidents. Each of these deployments prevented the need for additional use of force.

- In one incident on June 9, a deputy at the Main Jail was seriously injured during an assault by an incarcerated person and required hospitalization. When backup arrived, the individual continued to resist violently. A CED was deployed, allowing deputies to safely gain control and prevent further harm to both the incarcerated person and staff.

These early results show that even without being deployed, the CED has already proven to be a useful deterrent -- helping to prevent violence without escalating it.

What's next



The Sheriff's Office will present a formal report in October 2025 to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. This report will include:

- Full pilot program data
- Policy recommendations
- Feedback from staff and oversight divisions
- A recommendation to expand CED use to other divisions

If approved, the Sheriff's Office would assign this tool to all deputies in correctional facilities, and potentially to deputies in patrol divisions as well.

Santa Clara County is currently the only Sheriff's Office in California that does not have CEDs in full use. This pilot represents a careful, measured step toward addressing that gap — with transparency, accountability, and safety as guiding principles.

Why this matters

We understand that many community members are cautious or even critical about introducing CEDs into correctional settings.

That's why this pilot was designed with:

- Strict oversight
- Detailed training requirements
- Ongoing public reporting

The goal isn't more force — it's less. Fewer injuries. Fewer fights. Fewer situations spiraling out of control. And more chances to de-escalate without harm.

We're committed to sharing updates as the program evolves and listening to community feedback every step of the way.

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Office of the Sheriff

 (408) 808-4400

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so.website@shf.sccgov.org

