

The Detective Division, Records Bureau, Property Division, Forensic Services, Crime Analysis, Explorers and Chaplains are under the direction of Commander Al Panella. Commander Panella has been with the department for 27 years, beginning his career in 1982 as a Westminster Police Explorer and Intern. During his law enforcement tenure, Commander Panella has worked a variety of assignments including Patrol Officer, Field Training Officer, Metro Team Task Force Officer, Detective, Sergeant, Watch Commander, Crisis Negotiator, West County SWAT Team Leader/Commander, Special Operations/Traffic Commander, and Professional Standards Unit Commander.

Commander Panella has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Administration of Justice and a Master of Arts Degree in Leadership from Bellevue University. He is a graduate of the California POST Supervisor Leadership Institute (SLI), California POST Command College, as well as many other executive development programs. He has completed, and has served as an instructor for the International Association of Chiefs of Police - Leadership in Police Organizations (LPO) program.

Though born in the City of Long Beach, Commander Panella was raised in Westminster. He attended local schools, and graduated from Westminster High School in 1986. He enjoys attending church and participating in a variety of athletic activities, but most of his leisure time is spent with his two sons and wife of 25 years, Michelle.