

INSPECTION OF THE SONOMA COUNTY JUVENILE HALL

SUMMARY

The 2011-2012 Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury conducted an inspection of the Juvenile Hall in January 2012. The Grand Jury found the facility to be secure and well-maintained. Programs are designed to facilitate integrating detainees back into the community whenever possible. The Grand Jury recommends that Juvenile Hall staff determine the recidivism rate when sufficient data is collected.

APPROACH

The Grand Jury met with various members of the Juvenile Hall management team. The staff discussed Juvenile Hall goals and programs. The director provided facility facts and an overview of the programs, which the Grand Jury subsequently reviewed. A tour of the facility followed the discussion. The tour included various living units and other areas utilized by the detainees. Juvenile Hall staff answered questions during the tour. A listing of Juvenile Hall programs and facility facts are included in the Appendix.

DISCUSSION

The detainees enter the system through arrest, court order, or by turning themselves in. They are assigned to units using various criteria including age, gender, and severity of the charges. Program staff stated that the major goal is to rehabilitate the detainees and to assist in their integration back into the community. When asked how effective the rehabilitation program is, staff could not provide a recidivism rate (the percentage of detainees who are repeat offenders and return to custody). The director explained that a five-year survey period is required to determine reliable statistics. The Positive Achievement Change Tool, an assessment to determine the needs of the youth and their risk to reoffend, has been in use for only three years.

A security system is in place. Cameras monitor all common areas of the living units. Staffing meets or exceeds the state requirement of one staff member per ten detainees during waking hours and one staff per thirty detainees during sleeping hours. Most activities, including meal service and classroom instruction, take place in the individual units to avoid the risks of inappropriate/unsafe activity involved in the movement of groups. Environment, including music and lighting, can be controlled individually in each detainee's room.

A school program allows the detainees to graduate or to take the GED (General Educational Development) test. Classrooms in each unit have computers accessible for academic use. The computers have filters to control what is available. The facility includes a library, staffed by volunteers. Appropriate reading material is available to encourage reading. The facility includes areas for outdoor physical activities and areas that can be used in any weather.

Staff offers a behavior management program that uses positive reinforcement with a point system. The detainees earn points through positive activities and the points allow privileges such as attending the Boys and Girls Club and the use of pay phones located in the dayrooms. The on-site Boys and Girls Club (staffed by club employees and

not funded by the county) provides many activities and is available to all detainees as part of a case-management program to assist in rehabilitation. The detainees can transition into a community club, as a support system, upon their release from custody. In order to learn teamwork and responsibility, detainees participate in maintaining the units as part of their rehabilitation.

Kitchen staff provides special diets to those detainees who need them. All food is prepared on site. Snacks are provided at assigned times.

A large number of solar panels on the property provide most of the power for the facility. Generators activate immediately if there is a power outage.

Each unit staff member receives approximately one month of training when hired. In addition, each unit staff receives about 25 hours of training each year. They are certified as Juvenile Correction Counselors. The Juvenile Correction Counselors maintain communication with other staff and other units in the building by radio.

FINDINGS

- F1. Security in the Juvenile Hall is well-planned.
- F2. All units appeared clean and uncluttered.
- F3. The environment and programs are designed to promote rehabilitation of the detainees.
- F4. Staff seems knowledgeable of the facility, the programs and policies, and their responsibilities.
- F5. The facility was brightly lit and quiet, and the temperature was comfortable.
- F6. The recidivism rate has not been calculated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The Juvenile Hall administrative staff continues to collect and to analyze data to determine the program's effectiveness on the recidivism rate.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933.05, the Grand Jury requires responses from the following:

- Juvenile Hall administrative staff - R1

APPENDIX

- Juvenile Hall Programs
- Facility Facts

Reports issued by the Civil Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code Section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Civil Grand Jury.

JUVENILE HALL PROGRAMS

Aggression Replacement Training – 2x week JCP and serving time residents

Interactive Journaling – weekly – rotate units (mostly done on unit #5 and #6)

Girls Circle – weekly

Boys Council – weekly (multi-unit population)

Verity – individual counseling as needed

Verity – 10 Teen Assault Prevention Program presentations throughout the year (Tolerance)

Independent Living Program – weekly (multi-unit, resident application process)

Art and Dine – dinner process group – weekly – rotates through units about every 3 months

Self Esteem – weekly – girls process group

Tai Chi – weekly (2 units)

Imagine Bus Project – art weekly on all units

Arts and Crafts – 1x month on unit #4 and #6 (volunteers)

Tutor Program – approximately 15 tutors on roster

Friendly Visitor Program

Special Events – scheduled throughout the year

Narcotics Anonymous – all units weekly

Boys and Girls Club – all units receive approximately 4-5 hours of programming weekly

Level III Party – all units weekly

Guitar Program – coming soon (resident application process)

Tattoo Removal Program

FACILITY FACTS

The new Juvenile Justice Center (JCC) facility is a two-story 150,167 square foot steel and concrete block building providing new housing for 140 juveniles. The building is planned to support expansion of up to 100 beds, providing a total of 240 beds, meeting county needs well into the future. The new facility includes:

Intake/Release	Central Control	Public Lobby
Probation	Central Visiting	Kitchen
Educational Offices	Public Defender	Warehouse
Staff Facilities	Healthcare Offices	District Attorney
Administration	Support Facilities	Court Offices
Two Courtrooms	Recreation Areas	

The new Juvenile Hall provides a variety of housing types for program and management flexibility, housing both pre- and post-adjudicated juveniles. Each of the seven (7) housing units includes program, school, and activity spaces to support a decentralized operational program for efficient use of staff and maintenance of safety and security. Unit designs vary according to classifications. Single sleeping rooms are used for youth classified as high security risks, mixed single/double rooms are used for general population groups, and a dormitory unit is used for youth awaiting placement or in special programs. The housing units are designed with an emphasis on environmental quality, which contributes to lessening of tensions and assists staff in managing the population. The units have a great deal of natural light through windows and skylights, which greatly lessens the feeling of confinement. Each housing unit includes a small outdoor recreation yard. There are also three (3) large covered outdoor gymnasium-sized courts for group sports in all weather conditions and an outdoor recreation field for soccer, running, and other active sports.

The new housing is designed to support the principles of direct supervision and the operational philosophy termed "new generation". This type of design has been shown over the last twenty (20) years to reduce violence among juveniles and increase potential for rehabilitation. In addition to this new generation design, the Juvenile Hall uses a progressive behavior management system that creates positive expectations, behaviors, and results. It is a more humane and respectful environment for both the staff and the detainees.

The project cost for the JCC is approximately \$60.4 million. Funding for the facility was provided from various sources, and includes an \$8 million grant from the Corrections Standard Authority (CSA), State of California, proceeds from Tobacco Settlement, Courts Criminal Justice funds, and County funds.