



County of Orange

California

Michael B. Giancola
County Executive Officer

August 19, 2014

Honorable Glenda Sanders
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Subject: Response to Grand Jury Report, "Annual Report On Jails And Juvenile Detention Facilities"

Dear Judge Sanders:

Per your request, and in accordance with Penal Code 933, please find the County of Orange response to the subject report as approved by the Board of Supervisors. The respondents are the Orange County Board of Supervisors and the Probation Department.

If you have any questions, please contact Mike Kerr of the County Executive Office at 714-834-7086.

Sincerely,

Michael B. Giancola
County Executive Officer

Enclosure

cc: FT 2013-14 Orange County Grand Jury Foreman
Mark Denny, Chief Operating Officer, County Executive Office
Steve Sentman, Chief Probation Officer, Orange County Probation
Department
Mike Kerr, Assistant to the COO, County Executive Office

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County of Orange
Responses to Findings and Recommendations
2013-2014 Orange County Grand Jury Report
"Annual Report On Jails And Juvenile Detention Facilities"

Introductory Comments

On June 27, 2014, the Grand Jury released a report entitled: *"Annual Report On Jails And Juvenile Detention Facilities."* This report directed responses to Findings and Recommendations from the Orange County Probation Department and the Orange County Board of Supervisors. The responses to findings and recommendations herein represent a combined response from the Orange County Probation Department and the Orange County Board of Supervisors

County Combined Response to Grand Jury Findings

Responses to Findings:

F.1. The Juvenile Hall facility is in need of a gym that can also be used as a visiting center and chapel. Such a facility could be used for graduations, assemblies and other activities when youths cannot be outside due to inclement weather. There is already space to accommodate this.

Probation's Response: Agree

F.2. An infirmary in Juvenile Hall with a negative pressure room for contagion would be highly beneficial. This would save time and costs instead of transporting youth to an outside facility. This infirmary could occupy an existing area across from the current intake unit.

Probation's Response: Agree

F.3. All four facilities have an antiquated video surveillance system.

Probation's and Board of Supervisors' Response: Partially Disagree
While Probation and the Board of Supervisors agree that Juvenile Hall and Youth Leadership Academy have an antiquated video monitoring system, Joplin and Youth Guidance Center do not have any video monitoring capability.

F.4. There is a need at the Joplin Youth Center for a full-time school administrator to enhance communication and collaboration between probation and the school.

Probation's Response: Agree

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F.5. Due to budget and position cuts experienced over the past five plus years, Joplin lost the only assigned Transitional Deputy Probation Officer two years ago.

Probation's and Board of Supervisors' Response: Agree

F.6. Joplin is in need of mental health and substance abuse services. One of the largest and most complex issues confronting justice in California is the need for mental health services for youth in custody and for post-custody.

Probation's and Board of Supervisors' Response: Agree

F.7. The four facilities would benefit from longer terms of residence beyond the typical 90 days in order for youth to have full advantage of the numerous programs offered.

Probation's Response: Disagrees wholly with the finding.

Longer terms may offer community protection from serious and violent offenders, but there is no evidence to suggest that longer terms result in better programming and rehabilitation. In fact, the research suggests that the opposite is true; longer sentences than necessary decrease an individual's chances for successful reintegration in society.

F.8. The Academy needs to continue exploring additional ways to connect youth with services while in custody that will transition them back into the community and assist the entire family.

Probation's Response: Agree

F.9. There is a need for additional post release programs with more probation officers to supervise these programs.

Probation's Response: Disagrees partially with the finding.

While Probation recognizes a need for additional resources in the community to foster reintegration, Deputy Probation Officers are not the appropriate individuals to supervise the programs. Mental health professionals and substance abuse counselors are better able to administer most post release programming.

Response to Orange County Grand Jury Report
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Responses to Recommendations:

R.1. The Orange County Probation Department should determine the feasibility of constructing a gym at Juvenile Hall which could also be used as a visiting center and chapel. (F.1.)

Probation's Response: The recommendation has been implemented. An architect has drawn up a schematic site plan for the construction of a gymnasium/ visiting center. The funding to move forward with the project is not present at this point, however, the Probation Department will continue to watch for state construction grants or other means of potential funding.

R.2. The Probation Department should prioritize the addition of an infirmary with a negative pressure room at Juvenile Hall. (F.2.)

Probation's Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. While Probation agrees with the benefits of an infirmary, the lack of funding for such a project prohibits progress towards completion. Probation will, however, continue to vigilantly watch for construction grants or other funding sources. Should funding become available, Probation is in favor of proceeding with development of an infirmary.

R.3. The Probation Department should update antiquated video surveillance to a more advanced digital system at all four juvenile detention and treatment facilities. (F.3.)

Probation's and Board of Supervisors' Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. The scope of work for a video upgrade at Juvenile Hall and Youth Leadership Academy is underway, and funding is in place to proceed with the upgrade. The project should reach substantial completion in fiscal year 14/15.

R.4. The Probation Department should add a full-time school administrator at the Joplin Youth Center (F.4.)

Probation's Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. While the Probation Department agrees with the benefits of a full time school administrator, and has made this known to the OC Department of Education (OCDE), Probation does not have the ability to dictate OCDE's placement of resources.

R.5. The Probation Department should establish a budget to reinstate the Transitional Deputy Probation Officer. (F.5.)

Probation's and Board of Supervisors' Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. Probation and the Board of Supervisors do not dispute the benefits of having a transitional DPO assigned to Joplin, however, current budget realities have called for a redeployment of assets to areas of greater need in community supervision.

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R.6. The Probation Department should establish a budget for the addition of mental health and substance abuse services. (F.6.)

Probation's and Board of Supervisors' Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The Probation Department has provided these services to incarcerated youth for decades, and has recently contracted with the OCDE for expansion of mental health and substance abuse services following the RFP process. The OCDE is providing 11 full time employees for these services to in-custody youth, beginning this fiscal year. Further, the Orange County Health Care Agency continues to provide mental health and substance abuse programming for our youth.

R.7. The Probation Department should conduct a study to determine if program benefits would be enhanced by longer terms of residence beyond the typical 90 days. (F.7.)

Probation's Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. Although longer sentences would allow some minors to complete more programming, the negative effects would outweigh those benefits. Studies already exist which demonstrate this. Fortunately, the same type of programming exists outside of custody. The Probation Department can, and does, enforce attendance at the same programs out of custody for individuals on probation.

R.8. The Probation Department should determine if the Youth Leadership Academy has the need to explore additional ways to connect youth with services while in custody that will transition them back into the community and assist their family. (F.8.)

Probation's Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The Probation Department continually assesses the resources that exist in the community, and refers minors upon their release.

R.9. The Probation Department should determine the possibility of additional post release programs with more probation officers to supervise these programs. (F.9.)

Probation's Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. Probation will continue to seek out additional programming resources to assist in offender rehabilitation. However, offenders are better served when programs are staffed with mental health and substance abuse professionals, rather than probation officers.