



SOLANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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August 18, 2026

The Honorable William J. Pendergast III, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California
600 Union Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533

**Re: Sheriff-Coroner's Response to 2025-2026 Solano County Civil Grand Jury Report –
Save Over \$10 Million by Closing Claybank Jail**

Dear Honorable William J. Pendergast III, Presiding Judge:

Under Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05, I am responding to the following recommendations contained in the 2025-2026 Grand Jury Report that pertain to matters under my control as the Solano County Sheriff-Coroner:

FINDING 1 – Proposed renovation of the older Claybank facility is estimated to cost over \$13 million dollars and does not meet the CFIP's standard of "improving efficiency and operations improvement." Such an unnecessary expenditure would negatively impact the County's finances. As of April 4, 2026, the Claybank facility had an extremely low occupancy percentage of 15% with two other facilities available. Closing Claybank would increase the overall jail occupancy rating to 47% and still be well below 100%.

Response to Finding 1 – I partially disagree with this finding. The "proposed renovation" referenced in Finding 1 is not a single renovation project, but rather approximately \$13.4 million in several separate capital projects identified in the County's Capital Facilities Improvement Plan. On June 10, 2026, the Sheriff's Office opened the Behavioral Health Unit at the Justice Center Detention Facility, relocated the remaining incarcerated population from Claybank, and reassigned staff to other custody operations. While Claybank's housing units have remained unoccupied since that date, facility needs cannot be evaluated solely on overall occupancy because inmate classification, housing separation, medical and behavioral health needs, and mandated programming affect how available beds and facilities may be used. Decisions regarding the CFIP and future capital funding remain within the purview of the Board of Supervisors.

RECOMMENDATION 1A – The Board of Supervisor reject at its first opportunity the CFIP proposal to renovate the Claybank facility and save the County General Fund over \$13 million dollars in capital improvements.

Dedicated to Our Community

Response to Recommendation 1A - Recommendation will not be implemented by the Sheriff's Office. This recommendation is directed to the Board of Supervisors and should be responded to by the Board. The Capital Facilities Improvement Plan (CFIP) is not under the purview of the Sheriff's Office.

RECOMMENDATION 1B – Solano County close the Claybank facility within a year from the date of this report and reassign inmates and security staff to the other remaining facilities.

Response to Recommendation 1B - Recommendation has been partially implemented. On June 10, 2026, the Sheriff's Office relocated the remaining incarcerated population from the Claybank Detention Facility to the Stanton Correctional Facility and reassigned Claybank security staff to the Justice Center Detention Facility to support the new Behavioral Health Unit and other custody operations. Although Claybank's housing units have remained unoccupied since that date, its kitchen remains operational and provides food service for all jail facilities. Formal closure of Claybank would require the County to develop a replacement kitchen operation, including the design and construction of appropriate facilities, which would require significant capital investment and time to complete. The Sheriff's Office will also continue to evaluate appropriate non-housing uses of the facility, including staff training, programming, and other operational support functions, as needs and resources allow. Until the Board of Supervisors determines Claybank's future and authorizes its formal closure, the Sheriff's Office will continue to maintain the facility to support kitchen operations and other operational needs.

RECOMMENDATION 1C – Solano County perform a “warm closure” or find alternative suitable uses of the Claybank facility by December 2027.

Response to Recommendation 1C - Recommendation has been partially implemented. The Claybank facility has been unoccupied since June 10, 2026, following the relocation of the remaining incarcerated population and reassignment of security staff to other custody operations, including the Behavioral Health Unit at the Justice Center Detention Facility. The facility is currently being maintained in a “warm closure” status. Any long-term alternative use or formal disposition of the facility will require further consideration and action by the County and Board of Supervisors.

FINDING 2 – The Solano County Sheriff's Office has hired a surplus of Custody Officers, negatively impacting the County's finances.

Response to Finding 2 – I disagree with this finding. The Sheriff's Office does not have a surplus of Correctional Officers. From 2023 through 2025, 64 officers were hired, while 53 separated and eight promoted, resulting in a net increase of only three. Hiring remains necessary to address vacancies and extended leaves and to safely meet Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) requirements for supervision, out-of-cell time, programming, and medical and mental health services.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – By July 1, 2027, impose the LAO recommended one-to-three year hiring freeze for custody officers to align security staffing with other neighboring counties, potentially saving the County an additional \$3,750,000 per year in FTE costs. A hiring freeze,

plus staff attrition, promotions, and retirements would minimize undue layoffs. Reducing Custody officer positions to an acceptable level could provide adequate staffing for 600 inmates.

Response to Recommendation 2 - Recommendation will not be implemented. The LAO analysis referenced in the Civil Grand Jury report addresses the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the State prison system and is not specific to Solano County's jail operations, staffing requirements, or inmate population. Applying a generalized state-level recommendation to Solano County without a county-specific staffing and operational analysis could have significant operational and fiscal impacts. The Custody Division is already understaffed, with 32 vacant Correctional Officer positions and 31 Correctional Officers or Sergeants on extended leave. The Sheriff's Office also deleted five vacant Correctional Officer positions through the FY2026/27 budget process. From 2023 through 2025, hiring resulted in a net increase of only three officers after separations and promotions. Under these circumstances, a hiring freeze could further increase staffing pressures, including reliance on overtime and other measures necessary to maintain required operations, and could jeopardize safety, Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) compliance, and required services.

FINDING 3 – At the time of this report, Solano County does not lease inmate bed space to other counties, which negatively impacts metrics and revenue.

Response to Finding 3 – I disagree with this finding. Solano County has an approved agreement with Shasta County to house incarcerated persons and is currently in discussions with Marin County. The Sheriff's Office continues to explore opportunities to lease available bed space to other counties as staffing and capacity allow.

RECOMMENDATION 3 – Within six months of the date of this report, offer or lease inmate bed space to improve underperforming metrics and generate revenue. The Justice Center and Stanton facilities have sufficient capacity to house all local inmates while also leasing over 500 beds.

Response to Recommendation 3 - Recommendation has already been implemented. Solano County has an approved agreement with Shasta County through June 30, 2028, and is in discussions with Marin County. The Sheriff's Office continues to explore opportunities to lease bed space as staffing and operational capacity allow. Available space cannot be determined by rated capacity alone because inmate classification, housing separation, medical and mental health needs, and staffing requirements must also be considered.

FINDING 4 – The Sheriff's Office has not engaged outside consultants in the last ten years to review their financial situation, which could lead to perpetuation of the current underperforming situation.

Response to Finding 4 – I disagree partially with this finding. The Sheriff's Office is initiating an independent full-cost analysis of the daily jail bed rate which will compare Solano County's costs with four other counties using a consistent methodology. This independent review will help identify cost drivers and opportunities for improved efficiency.

RECOMMENDATION 4A – Hire an unbiased third-party professional consultant by the end of 2026 to review the Custodial Division budget and make recommendations or suggestions to reduce their budget within three months.

Response to Recommendation 4A - Recommendation has been partially implemented. The Sheriff's Office is initiating an independent full-cost analysis of the daily jail bed rate which will compare Solano County's costs with four other counties using a consistent methodology. The analysis will help identify cost drivers and opportunities for improved efficiency.

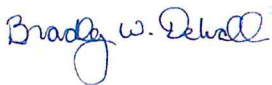
RECOMMENDATION 4B – By March 1, 2027, post position descriptions and interview for volunteer candidates to a citizen oversight committee. The goal being to provide feedback to the Sheriff's Office about performance, as well as suggestions for improvement. Appoint such committee by July 1, 2027.

Response to Recommendation 4B - Recommendation will not be implemented. The Sheriff's Office values community input but respectfully disagrees that an additional oversight committee is necessary. The Office is already subject to oversight by the Board of Supervisors, County Administrator's Office, Auditor-Controller's Office, Civil Grand Jury, Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), County Environmental Health, and an established public complaint processes.

Additionally, the Sheriff's Office is also voluntarily pursuing accreditation through the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC), demonstrating our commitment to meeting nationally recognized standards for correctional health care, safety, training, inmate treatment, health records, and medical-legal practices. Specially trained NCCHC surveyors will visit our facilities in fall 2026 to evaluate compliance with these standards.

I would like to thank the Solano County Grand Jury for their time invested in this matter and for their report of findings and recommendations. As always, the recommendations and comments of the Solano County Grand Jury are appreciated.

Respectfully,



Bradley W. DeWall
Sheriff-Coroner

cc: Solano County Grand Jury
County Administrator's Office