



SOLANO COUNTY GRAND JURY
2016-2017

JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY COMPLEX

Juvenile Detention Facility Complex

2016-2017 SOLANO COUNTY GRAND JURY

I. SUMMARY

The Solano County Juvenile Detention Facility Complex provides placement and treatment for youth in the juvenile justice system. The Probation Department, which operates the facility, is changing, and adapting to provide evidenced-based practices to handle the challenges of dealing with youth accused of serious offenses. New leadership and input from consultants are bringing changes to the culture of juvenile justice. The changes will provide educational and treatment services for youth with the highest needs.

There are many areas or challenges for improvement in the organizational and social structure of the facility which can be addressed by the incorporation of professionalism, accountability, communication, and teamwork into every aspect of the operation.

II. INTRODUCTION

One member of the 2016-2017 Solano County Grand Jury requested recusal to avoid any potential conflict of interest. This member did not participate in any discussion, planning, observations, writing or the editorial discussion involved in the writing of this report.

California Penal Code § 919 subdivision (b) provides, *the Grand Jury shall inquire into the condition of management of the public prisons within the county*. Pursuant to the statute the 2016 – 2017 Solano County Grand Jury inspected the Juvenile Detention Facility Complex (JDFC). It is managed and operated by the Solano County Probation Department. The facility is located at 740 Beck Ave., Fairfield, CA with 148 available beds. There are three separate units within the JDFC. The units are the Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF), New Foundations (NF) and the Challenge Academy (CA).

The 2016-2017 Solano Grand Jury revisited the JDFC to follow up on the recommendations and issues raised by the 2015-2016 Solano County Grand Jury Report. Prior Grand Jury reports were reviewed to see if other recommendations were still outstanding.

JDFC is a locked facility operated by the Solano County Juvenile Institutions Division of the Probation Department. The division's goal is to provide for short-term residential treatment that meets the California Code of Regulations, Title 15, and Minimum Standards for Juvenile Facilities. JDFC staff endeavors to exceed those minimum requirements by creating an environment that is conducive to initiating and motivating individual changes, constructive personal development, educational growth, and minimizing the negative effects of detention. The number of arrests for both misdemeanor and felony charges by Solano County youth has shown a yearly decline since 2006 when there were 1,557 arrests for felony offenses, 3,628 arrests for misdemeanors and 233 arrests for status offenses (probation violations).

Statistics provided by the Solano County Probation Department in the chart below show the decline in juvenile arrest for 2015 and 2016.

Juvenile Referrals

Calendar Year:	2015	2016
Unique Minors ***	988	917
Referrals received	1433	1359
Felony Referrals	387	384
Misdemeanor Referrals	914	849
Infraction/Status Referral	131	126
Referrals with no charges	1	0
Violation only referrals	238	207

*** Individuals

The number of juveniles being arrested for more serious offenses and being tried as adults has increased. These high-risk juveniles require a significant investment of resources.

Currently, many first-time offenders are diverted at the local law enforcement level. They are given a citation and released to their parents or guardian. Diversion and early intervention are important aspects of the Solano County Probation Department Juvenile Justice Continuum. The offender is referred to the District Attorney’s Office if the diversion program was not completed successfully.

The Felony Diversion Program was created in 2006 as a partnership between the District Attorney’s Office and the Probation Department. The program provides intensive early intervention services to youth with felony arrests to divert them from the juvenile court system and future delinquency. The program allows for an individualized treatment plan to address the needs of the youth and their families with services offered for up to six months.

The Juvenile Detention Facility hired a new program director in February 2016 and has begun the process of implementing evidence-based practices in addressing the needs of the youth and in the training of staff. The 2016-2017 Solano County Grand Jury was told that the Policy and Procedures Manual is out of date and is currently being updated and will be completed in 2018.

III. METHODOLOGY

Reviewed:

- The California Penal Code § 919, subdivision (b)
- Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Division of Juvenile Justice, Title 15
- Prior Grand Jury Reports 2012-2013 and 2015-2016
- Visiting Hours and Regulations
- Solano Juvenile Institution Website
- Solano County Juvenile Detention Facility Complex Programs and Services
- Summary of Findings from the Assessment of the Solano County Juvenile Detention Facility Complex (SCJDFC) on January 19-21, 2016 and an Action Plan for Continued Program Improvement

Toured the Juvenile Detention Facility Complex:

- Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF)
- New Foundations (NF)
- Challenge Academy (CA)
- Intake Center
- Medical Center
- Control Room
- Kitchen

Interviewed:

- Probation Department Staff
- Supervisory Counselors
- Unit Counselors
- Medical Staff
- Mental Health Staff
- Several youth residents

IV. STATEMENT OF FACTS

The Juvenile Detention Facility Complex has three separate units: JDF, NF, CA

JDF

The JDF is a locked facility with a total capacity of 90 beds for juveniles who have been arrested and are awaiting court proceedings or for convicted juvenile offenders who have been sentenced by the court. Juveniles may be held until the age of 19. Once the juvenile becomes 19 years of age he or she may be transferred to the county jail.

Within JDF, there are four separate dormitories each called “pods”. The pods are referred to as follows: Palo Verde, Sequoia, Sycamore, and Redwood. Each juvenile is interviewed to determine which pod is appropriate for housing. The criteria depend upon the type of crime committed, gang affiliation, gender, age, behavior, and medical/mental health requirements. The Palo Verde pod is currently closed. The Sequoia pod houses females and younger males. The Sycamore pod houses older juvenile males. The Redwood pod is a maximum-security unit housing juveniles being prosecuted as adults or for juveniles committed for 90 days or more.

Also within the JDF unit are:

- Kitchen facilities that store and reheat meals prepared by an outside vendor
- Intake and assessment area where initial screening and processing is conducted
- Medical and mental health areas staffed with Registered Nurses (day and evening shift) and a Physician’s Assistant (two days a week), a Physician (two days a week) and a Mental Health Counselor (5 days a week)
- A security control room where the staff monitors the entire facility
- A library which is not in use

NF

New Foundations is a 30-bed unit within the JDFC. Juveniles who have been sentenced by the court may be placed at NF for up to 120 days. New Foundations focuses on family reunification and drug abuse intervention. The program consists of education, anger avoidance, self-esteem building, self-discipline, and personal accountability.

CA

The Challenge Academy is a 28-bed unit within the JDFC which is a nine-month program that provides the necessary skills, education, and training to assist the participants in changing their negative thinking and behaviors. It prepares them for family rehabilitation and re-entry into the community.

The JDFC population consists of male and female youth. At the time of the Grand Jury’s visit there were 43 youth in JDF, seven youth in New Foundations and nine youth in the Challenge Academy.

Staff indicated the population averages between 45 and 60 youth at any given time. JDFC is a 24-hour facility with a total of 63 allocated Staff Group Counselors including five Senior Group Counselors and five Supervising Group Counselors. Currently, interviews are being held to fill five open counselor positions and one Supervising Group Counselor position.

Upon arrival at the Juvenile Detention Facility Complex, offenders are processed and the following is completed:

- Booking information
- Health screening
- Custody assessment classification
- Property recorded
- Orientation
- Visitation rules
- Shower
- Issuance of clothing
- Prison Rape Elimination Act Training

Programs and Services:

There are a number of prevention resources offered at the facility. There are several community-based programs that have been implemented and are well received. Some of these programs are:

- Alcoholics Anonymous
- AIDS Awareness
- Anger Management
- Girl Scouts of America
- Motivational speakers
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Planned Parenthood
- Religious services
- Solano Community College Interns
- Youth mentoring

Programs as identified and offered within the facility are:

- *Adjustment group---designed to address issues common for offenders as they prepare for re-entry after their structured treatment phase*
- *Aerobic Exercise---large muscle exercises*
- *ALDEA--Dialectical Behavior Therapy designed to change patterns of behavior*
- *Beat Within (The)---Expressing emotions through writing, poetry, and art*
- *Career and College---Provides instruction on career endeavors via applications, mock interviews, etc.*
- *Early recovery Group--- Receives basic skills needed to achieve initial sobriety and movement towards readiness to change*
- *Fit Program---A variety of large muscle exercises*
- *Game Night---A variety of board games and team games*

- *Girls Group---Discussions regarding various topics which entails healthy relationships and self-esteem*
- *HealthRight 360 --- learning to process emotions, triggers, concerns, family issues and fears*
- *Industrial Program---Minors who perform peer counseling, pod maintenance and general duties as assigned by staff*
- *Mental Health Group---Group discussions regarding mental health issues relating to the minor's temporary detainment at JDF*
- *Reality Aftercare--- Group discussions relating to proactive concerns or issues minors may encounter once released from Juvenile Hall*
- *Real Talk--- Group discussions on real situations confronting males and how to deal with those circumstances so they do not control you*
- *Relapse Prevention---Discussing ways to avoid triggers that will cause you to relapse*
- *Relationships---Discussions regarding the importance of all types of relationships such as teachers, family members, personal friendships, etc.*
- *Tutoring---Educational/academic assistance*

The preceding programs and services are in addition to the educational programs which are available within each unit. A typical classroom has 15 students, one teacher and one para-educator. An Individual Educational Plan is created for each student through a screening process at intake.

The Solano County Office of Education certifies all programs and educators as mandated by the State of California. There are four core subjects: English, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. This allows students to earn a high school diploma or a General Education Development (GED) equivalency certificate.

In the last year, the Juvenile Detention Facility Complex has earned the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation and has graduated 20 individuals with three residents currently attending Solano Community College with escorts. The administration is currently considering a name for the school.

Transgender Youth:

In discussion with juvenile staff, the issue of a policy regarding transgender youth was questioned. The 2016-2017 Grand Jury was informed that currently there is no policy developed to address the issues which can arise with individuals who identify as transgender. They are currently discussing the transgender issue and are actively working on creating a policy that will address the issue. The current policy on separating youth is: "Facility staff shall not separate youth from the general population based solely on the youth's actual or perceived race, ethnic group identification, ancestry, national origin, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, mental or physical disability, or HIV or other health status".

Consultant's Report:

On January 19-21, 2016, Juvenile Justice Associates, LLC conducted an assessment of the Solano County Juvenile Detention Facility Complex and created a report and an Action Plan for Continued Program Improvement. Areas reviewed included:

- Institutional Health
- Assets and Strengths
 - Relationships
 - Veteran Staff
 - Programs and Activities
 - Education
 - Structure—formal and informal
 - Good Advice
 - Good Peer Interactions

The report identified challenges or areas for improvement and recommendations including:

- Policy and Procedures Manual
- Feedback from Youth
- Resident Management Information System
- Physical Plant and Staffing

Action Plan for Continued Program Improvement

The Juvenile Justice Associate Action Plan is organized around two readiness areas. Those areas are Organizational Structure and Social Structure. Their recommendations are organized as follows:

Organizational Structure

- Readiness
 - Development of the leadership team that meets regularly
 - Development of a Youth Advisory Committee
 - Consultant participation
- Revise and Update Policy and Procedures Manual
 - Policy experts prepare draft revisions
 - Leadership team review for applicability
 - Update Youth Advisory Committee
 - Train staff on new policies
- Align existing programs with Evidence-Based Practices findings from Cook County, Illinois
 - Leadership team review with task assignments
 - Update Youth Advisory Committee to include youth self-regulation

Social Structure

The social structure changes address the incorporation of Shared Values: PACT

- Professionalism
- Accountability
- Communications
- Teamwork

The leadership team formulates a new mission statement which encompasses the concepts of PACT and increases the knowledge and levels of skill of staff and youth.

Prior Grand Jury Reports

The 2012-2013 Solano County Grand Jury noted in its report: “The Grand Jury learned the JDF’s computer system lacks an “institutional module”. This institutional module is used to document, track and organize information including incident reports and disciplinary actions within a detention facility. This module is extremely important to maintain accurate statistics of various events occurring within the facility.” The 2012-2013 Solano County Grand Jury recommended “Solano County Probation Department upgrade its computer system to include an “Institutional Module” which allows the documentation, tracking and organization of this statistical information.” At the time of the 2016-2017 Solano County Grand Jury’s inspection, it was found that this recommendation had not been acted upon and is still needed. It was also noted in the consultant’s report as a recommendation concerning the Resident Management Information System.

The 2016-2017 Solano County Grand Jury reviewed the 2015-2016 Solano County Grand Jury report and recommendations. The current Grand Jury determined that some recommendations were not completed.

- Recommendation 1---Upgrade the control panel in the Control Room with a call-up button. This recommendation has been approved and is currently awaiting a Request For Proposal to be issued.
- Recommendation 2---Upgrade the current all call intercom system throughout the complex. The phone system has been upgraded.
- Recommendation 3---Upgrade the current facility and perform maintenance as needed: painting, lighting, furniture, and replace interior and exterior doors to accommodate a key card system. The maintenance recommended has been completed, except for installing a key card system due to cost considerations.

The 2015-2016 Solano County Grand Jury noted “at the time of our tour there were eight open positions”. The 2016-2017 Solano County Grand Jury was informed that currently five counselor positions and one supervisor position are vacant. With approximately 20% of the staff being on medical leave at any given time, the vacant positions increase the need for overtime usage.

V. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1- The Policy and Procedures Manual is not expected to be fully revised and current until sometime in 2018.

Recommendation 1- The Probation Department makes the Policy and Procedure Manual a priority.

Finding 2- The Juvenile Detention Facility Complex does not have a policy specifically concerning transgender youth.

Recommendation 2- The Juvenile Detention Facility Complex program director work with the Probation Department to create a comprehensive policy regarding transgender youth.

Finding 3- The 2016-2017 Solano County Grand Jury found that recommendation #1 from the 2015-16 Solano County Grand Jury report “Upgrade the control panel in the Control Room with a call-up button.” has not been implemented.

Recommendations 3- The Probation Department complete the upgrade of the control panel as previously approved.

Finding 4- Juvenile Detention Facility Complex’s computer system lacks an “institutional module”. The 2012-2013 Solano County Grand Jury also identified this item as a deficiency.

Recommendation 4- The Probation Department upgrade the computer system in the Juvenile Detention Facility Complex to include an “Institutional Module” which allows the documentation, tracking and organization of accurate statistical information.

Finding 5- The Juvenile Detention Facility Complex has not been fully staffed for several years.

Recommendation 5- The Probation Department and Human Resources Department work together to fully staff the facility.

Finding 6- The Juvenile Justice Associates Assessment and Action Plan for Continued Program Improvement report is a framework for implementing change to improve the outcome for staff and youth.

Recommendation 6- The Probation Department strongly consider full implementation of the Juvenile Justice Associates Assessment and Action Plan recommendations.

Finding 7- The library at the Juvenile Detention Facility Complex is not in use.

Recommendation 7- The Probation Department take the necessary action to open the library and make it functional.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

Solano County Probation Department (All Findings)

COURTESY COPIES

Clerk, Solano County Board of Supervisors