

County of Santa Clara

Probation Department

Juvenile Hall
840 Guadalupe Parkway
San Jose, California 95110

Administrative Offices
840 Guadalupe Parkway
San Jose, California 95110



Laura Garnette
Chief Probation Officer

July 24, 2015

Raul Colunga
Juvenile Justice Commission
840 Guadalupe Parkway
San Jose, CA 95110

Re: Response to the 2015 Juvenile Justice Commission Inspection Report on Juvenile Hall

Dear Chairperson Raul Colunga,

The following is a response to the Juvenile Justice Commission Inspection Report and Recommendations prepared April 2015 on the Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall Facility.

The Commission members' dedication to safe, sound and healthy conditions for our youth is appreciated and valued by the Probation Department. Your comprehensive report reflects the significant effort and time committed to reviewing the policies and practices of the Juvenile Hall.

The responses below are enumerated in a manner that is consistent with the inspection report.

Recommendation One: The commission recommends that Probation create ongoing evaluation methods for Behavior Management and for Community Based Organization programs (pg.8).

Response: Probation will explore ways to develop an ongoing process for evaluating the data and outcomes for Behavior Management programs, such as the Control program, the Refocus program and the new behavior modification PRIDE program, as part of Juvenile Hall's quality assurance process. Currently, the Juvenile Hall Quality Assurance Team is collecting data on the PRIDE program and will be evaluating its effectiveness.

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) contracted to provide programs for youth in Juvenile Hall are required to collect and provide outcome data relevant to their program. Access to quantitative data is readily accessible. However, there are several challenges to obtaining good qualitative data. For example, given the brief stays and unpredictable releases of youth from the facility, it is challenging to get both pre and post survey completed by providers, which makes it difficult to assess the effectiveness of programs. Nevertheless, Probation will continue to work with the CBOs to improve data collection and evaluation methods.

Recommendation Two: There has been improvement in the programming and movement of boys in the two security units. The JJC recommends that a Quality Assurance team research and implement best practices for the Girls unit including those on “Secure” status (pg. 11).

Response: Recent efforts in implementing cognitive based strategies have started with programs such as: the Art of Yoga, which provides an integrated curriculum of trauma informed cognitive strategies along with yoga that focuses treatment on gender-responsive issues; Female Intervention Team (FIT) who provides gender specific gang intervention and support mentoring; and the new behavior modification PRIDE program which encompasses the use of the cognitive tools such as the Brief Intervention Tools (BITS) and the Carey Guides. The Juvenile Hall Quality Assurance Team is currently evaluating the PRIDE program and Probation is currently work with Professors from San Jose State University to develop an evaluation tool and create outcome measures for the Art of Yoga program.

In addition, Security Risk (SR) girls are regularly allowed to go to the gym for exercise and are allowed to participate in any of the special programs held in the gymnasium with the whole unit. While on the unit, they are not segregated and are allowed to regularly participate in community based programs with the other girls in their unit.

Probation management and staff are committed to researching and implementing best practices for all youth under our care.

Recommendation Three: Reestablish in 2015 and make available the area that was previously used as a vegetable garden to be available once again for youth for planting activities (pg. 3).

Response: Steps have been taken to reestablish the garden. Tools have been purchased, and the irrigation system was reestablished and is running. On July 18, 2015, the B9 youth began to prepare the soil for the planting of fruits and vegetables. The program is scheduled to occur at least every Saturday afternoon. Feedback from the youth that participated on July 18th was positive and they expressed excitement about the program.

Recommendation Four: Allocate funds in 2015 to correct the issues identified by the Commission and Probation Department previously, to correct and upgrade the identified equipment, heating and air conditioning issues in the Control Room (pg.3).

Response: Probation management is aware of the dated control desk and security system. Therefore, a security system consultant was brought into Juvenile Hall and evaluated our current system. The evaluation report was reviewed to determine which recommendations would be most appropriate for the facility. Based on the evaluation, Probation submitted a request for Capital Projects to update the Control Room, which was approved and funding was allocated by the County. However, at this time, at the request of Supervisor Simitian, all surveillance related items are moving through a centralized process to review implementation in accordance with privacy laws and concerns and to insure consistency among county agencies who use surveillance technologies.

Recommendation Five: Develop and publish a schedule that insures that the much delayed kitchen remodel be completed by October 1, 2015. Provide quarterly updates to the Commission on the project (pg. 4).

Response: Probation is in constant communication with County Facilities and Fleet Department (FAF), and they are aware of the Commission request. The Pre Bid conference for the Juvenile Hall kitchen remodel was completed on May 21, 2015, at Juvenile Hall. Bids were due by June 25, 2015. Construction is slated to begin September/October 2015 and be completed in the summer of 2016. Probation will provide at least quarterly updates to the Commission at the Juvenile Justice Commission meetings.

Recommendation Six: That Probation assigns tracking numbers to the Appeals submitted by the youth to coordinate them with the incident Report so that those reviewing the Appeals and Incident Reports can understand the totality of the incident (pg. 16).

Response: Probation is working on a new appeal form to document an assigned Incident Report (IR) number when appropriate, as not every discipline is associated to an incident report. Those that are not assigned an IR number will have a note on the form that it is recorded in the behavior log. Behavior logs will now be retained for two years.

The Probation Department recognizes and appreciates the significant role of the Juvenile Justice Commission and supports their efforts in ensuring excellent conditions of confinement for youth in our care. We are always grateful for the opportunity to clarify questions and provide responses in any and all areas.

Sincerely,



Laura Garnette
Chief Probation Officer

Cc: Jeff Smith, County Executive
John Mills, Deputy County Executive
Honorable Patrick Tondreau, Presiding Judge
Nancy Clark, County Counsel
Jermaine Hardy, Deputy Chief Probation Officer