

**JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION
SANTA CLARA COUNTY**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2007-2008**

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) of Santa Clara County is a state-mandated, court-appointed authority. The broad purpose of the Commission is to inquire into the administration of the juvenile court law in the County. The Commission is dedicated to the promotion of an effective juvenile justice system operated in an environment of credibility, dignity, fairness, and respect for the youth of Santa Clara County.

The Commission's responsibilities include:

- Inspecting juvenile facilities including shelters, detention facilities and group homes used for the placement of any minor in Santa Clara County
- Conducting public or closed hearings on matters relating to juvenile law in the County
- Advocating for needed services for youth in the justice system

COMMISSIONERS

Betty Benson (resigned January 1, 2008)
Gerald Buten (appointed November 6, 2007)
Robert W. Campbell
Nick Corcoran (appointed May 6, 2008)
Martha Craycroft Biegun (resigned February 1, 2008)
Ernest C. Dossa, Jr. (resigned July 1, 2007)
Patricia A. Khan, Chairperson
Arthur E. Knopf
Nora Manchester
Vilma K. Palette
Daniel C. Peak (appointed November 6, 2007)
Stephen L. Rice (resigned September 1, 2007)
Louis Gene Romantino (appointed September 4, 2007)
William J. Scilacci
Pamela N. Serrano
Michael A. Smith
Neil Wharton (appointed May 6, 2008)

2007-2008 COMMITTEES

Executive Committee

Patricia Khan, Chair
Mike Smith, Vice Chair
Bill Scilacci, Past Chair
Pam Serrano, Secretary

Membership Committee

Mike Smith, Chair
Martha Biegun
Bill Scilacci
Daniel Peak

Nominating Committee

Bill Scilacci, Chair
Bob Campbell
Art Knopf

Ad Hoc Committee

Patricia Khan, Chair
All Commissioners

Group Home Inspection Committee

Pam Serrano, Chair
Betty Benson
Martha Biegun
Gerald Buten

Juvenile Hall Inspection Committee

Bill Scilacci, Chair
Bob Campbell, Vice Chair
Betty Benson
Martha Biegun
Gene Romantino
Gerald Buten
Daniel Peak
Nora Manchester

James Ranch Inspection Committee

Nora Manchester, Chair
Mike Smith, Vice Chair
Gene Romantino
Art Knopf
Bill Scilacci
Pam Serrano
Gerald Buten

Wright Center Inspection Committee

Bob Campbell, Chair
Vilma Palette, Vice Chair
Betty Benson
Art Knopf
Nora Manchester
Bill Scilacci
Daniel Peak

Children's Shelter

Vilma Palette, Chair
Nora Manchester, Vice Chair
Mike Smith
Pam Serrano
Gene Romantino
Gerald Buten

Police Facilities Inspection

Art Knopf, Chair
Martha Biegun
Vilma Palette
Bob Campbell
Gene Romantino

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2007-2008

Activities toward achievement of goals in italics

The Juvenile Justice Commission approved the following Goals and Objectives at the August 7, 2007 meeting:

1. Conduct mandated inspections and within two months of the inspection, submit written reports for Commission approval.

Activities: All mandated inspections were completed by the end of the fiscal year. The approved reports include:

- *Juvenile Hall – Six visits were made: two in October 2007, three in November 2007 and one in December 2007. The report was approved at the January 8, 2008 meeting.*
- *William F. James Boys' Ranch – Four visits were made: two in December 2007 and two in January 2008. The report was approved at the March 4, 2008 meeting.*
- *Muriel Wright Residential Center – Two visits were made in February 2008. The report was approved at the June 3, 2008 meeting.*
- *Children's Shelter – Four visits were made: two in April 2008, one in May 2008 and one in June 2008. The report was approved at the June 17, 2008 meeting.*
- *Law Enforcement Facilities – Law enforcement agencies in Campbell, Los Altos, Los Gatos/Monte Sereno, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Sunnyvale and the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Department were visited during May 2008. The report was approved at the June 17, 2008 meeting.*
- *Group Home – Two visits were made to Snell House Adolescent Group Home: one in October 2007 and one in November 2007. The report was approved at the January 8, 2008 meeting.*

All Inspection Reports, including current and prior years, can be accessed at www.sccsuperiorcourt.org/juvenile/jjc.htm

2. Develop a Master Schedule for Inspection Reports.

Activities: A Master Schedule was developed and distributed to Commissioners at the August 7, 2007 meeting. The intent of the Master Schedule was to spread the workload over the year. The schedule was: August 2007 – Group Home; September 2007 – Juvenile Hall; November

2007 – James Ranch; January 2008 – Muriel Wright Center; February 2008 – Law Enforcement Facilities; and March 2008 – Children’s Shelter.

All of the inspections started at least one month after they were scheduled to occur. The end result was that a special JJC meeting had to be held on June 17, 2008 to approve the Children’s Shelter and Law Enforcement Facilities inspection reports so all the reports could be completed by the end of the fiscal year. This objective has been repeated for next year, with a Group Home inspection to start in August 2008 and the Juvenile Hall inspection to start in September 2008.

3. Monitor recommendations of the 2006-2007 JJC Inspection Reports.

Activities: Recommendations in 2006-2007 JJC inspection reports were directed to the following agencies: Probation Department; County Office of Education; Santa Clara Valley Health & Hospital System; and Department of Family and Children’s Services. Commissioners reviewed the 2006-2007 recommendations for each facility and addressed the actions taken on each of the recommendations in this year’s inspection reports.

The Chief Probation Officer responds to the recommendations directed to the Probation Department. The Juvenile Hall Advisory Board (JHAB), the Board of Supervisors’ Public Safety & Justice Committee (PS&J) and the Board of Supervisors then approve the Chief Probation Officer’s responses. The Chief Probation Officer’s written responses to the recommendations in the Juvenile Hall inspection report were completed on February 26, 2008, and JHAB approved the responses on June 4, 2008. PS&J and the Board of Supervisors have not yet placed this matter on their agendas. The Chief Probation Officer has completed written responses to the recommendations in the James Ranch and Muriel Wright Center inspection reports, but the responses have not yet been reviewed by JHAB, PS&J or the Board of Supervisors. .

Written responses to recommendations in all applicable reports have been received from the County Office of Education, Santa Clara Valley Health & Hospital System and Department of Family and Children’s Services.

A written response to the recommendations was received from EE’s Residential Group Homes on December 27, 2007. (This response was to the Final Draft. The Commission approved the report on January 8, 2008.)

4. Develop a standard format for Inspection reports.

Activities: An Inspection Procedure and accompanying worksheet were developed and approved at the November 6, 2007 meeting.

5. Review and update Bylaws and Procedures Manual.

Activities: The Bylaws were revised in conformance with the JJC Statutory Duties and Authority, and were approved at the November 6, 2007 meeting. The Commission also approved placing the Bylaws on the JJC website.

The Procedures Manual is in the process of being reviewed and updated. As a precursor to a full revision of the Procedures Manual, a new Inspection Procedure was developed and approved at the November 6, 2007 meeting.

6. Develop a process to recruit new Commissioners, including youth members.

Activities: No formal process was developed to recruit new Commissioners, including youth members, and Commissioners continue to individually recruit new members. The Commission has had some success in recruiting individuals who have completed their Civil Grand Jury term. The Chairperson met with the Court Manager for the Civil Grand Jury to discuss new ways to recruit new Commissioners, especially youth members.

The Commission struggles to keep its membership at capacity. The vacant positions create extra workload for the Commissioners. Keeping the Commission at capacity will continue to be an objective.

7. Develop an Orientation Program for new Commissioners.

Activities: The JJC Executive Committee and several Commissioners developed a revised Orientation Program for new Commissioners. Four Commissioners were presenters and three new Commissioners attended the Orientation session on September 12, 2007. The presenters also learned new information through their participation in the Orientation session.

The newly revised Orientation Program will be evaluated for effectiveness in future Orientation sessions. The Commission will consider a unique Orientation Program for youth members. Because of their school schedule, a modified Orientation program may be appropriate.

8. Schedule speakers occasionally for monthly Commission meetings.

Activities: Lois Baer, Deputy District Attorney, spoke at the October 2, 2007 meeting. She heads the District Attorney's Truancy Program. It is a two-pronged program: prosecution and mediation. She explained how the program works and the success rate.

John Dahl, Manager, Probation Department Internal Affairs Unit, spoke at the February 5, 2008 meeting. He explained the scope and activities of the

Internal Affairs Unit. The Roush Report and the Department of Justice recommended that the Probation Department create an Internal Affairs Unit.

At the April 1, 2008 meeting, Angela Valdez, Regional Manager, and Pat Story from the State of California, Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division, Children's Residential Program explained what their Division does. They monitor and license group homes (including the Children's Shelter), small family homes, foster family agencies, transitional housing, placement projects, adoption agencies and community treatment facilities. The Division generally visits these facilities every five years, unless a complaint is received for a particular facility. If they identify a facility as having issues and problems with compliance, the facility is placed on an annual inspection list. The Children's Shelter is also visited annually.

9. Recognize, by means of commendation certificates, the efforts and contributions of various leaders.

Activities: At the August 7, 2007 meeting, the Commission recognized retiring Commissioner Chuck Fikes for his 33 years of service on the Juvenile Justice Commission.

At the November 6, 2007 meeting, Judge Richard J. Loftus, Jr. recognized Stephen Rice, former youth member, for his service to the Juvenile Justice Commission.

At the March 4, 2008 meeting, the Commission recognized David Soares, Deputy District Attorney, Delinquency, for his work, particularly in the area of detention reform.

10. Continue focus on Juvenile Detention Reform by active membership on task forces including monitoring of the Roush Report Recommendations.

Activities: Commissioners continue their participation in the Juvenile Detention Reform (JDR) movement as members of work groups and the JDR oversight and steering committees. The JDR is "sunsetting" consistent with the original plan, and ended on June 30. The results have been limited. The original goals were to: (1) reduce disproportionate minority confinement; (2) reduce the number of Juvenile Hall intakes; (3) reduce the Juvenile Hall population; (4) reduce the Juvenile Hall length-of-stay; (5) increase the use of alternatives to secure confinement; (6) minimize court "failures to appear"; and (7) minimize the number of re-offenders. The number of minors in Juvenile Hall has been increasing and the number of minorities in the system has not decreased. A resolution to create the Juvenile Justice System Collaborative has been proposed. The JJC has not been invited to be a part of this Collaborative. The JJC Executive Committee will evaluate if the Commission should seek to be a part of the Collaborative.

The Chairperson or the Chairperson's designee attends the monthly Juvenile Court Systems meeting, quarterly Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council meeting, monthly Juvenile Hall Advisory Board meeting and monthly Board of Supervisors' Public Safety and Justice Committee meeting.

The Manager of the Probation Department Internal Affairs Unit spoke to the Commission at the February 5, 2008 meeting. One of the recommendations in the Roush Report was to create an Internal Affairs Unit.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Commissioner Pallette regularly attended meetings of the Juvenile Court Education Task (JET) Force.

Commissioner Romantino attended the City of San Jose, Mayor Gang Prevention Task Force, Town Hall Community Input meeting on April 24, 2008.

Seven Commissioners attended Ethics Training for Elected and Appointed Officials of the County of Santa Clara on May 8, 2008.

Five Commissioners attended the Specialty Courts training coordinated by Judge Margaret Johnson on June 16, 2008.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Commission has not sent any letters this year regarding pertinent issues.

OTHER EVENTS

Commissioners Peak, Serrano and Smith toured the San Mateo County Juvenile Hall and met with the Chief Probation Officer and a Juvenile Court Judge.

Commissioners Khan and Knopf were speakers at the Santa Clara County Chiefs of Police meeting on October 11, 2007. Commissioner Khan gave a presentation on the Juvenile Justice Commission. Both Commissioners answered questions.

Commissioner Pallette regularly attends meetings of the task force planning the Beyond-the-Bench event that will occur in November 2008.

SERVICE

Commissioners, all of whom are community volunteers, spend many hours inspecting both detention and dependency facilities. Many additional hours are spent preparing the written reports. Commissioners attend the JJC monthly meetings and many other meetings that impact delinquent and dependent minors.

At the monthly Juvenile Justice Commission meetings, issues may be raised as a result of the reports provided by Juvenile Court, Probation Department, Children's Shelter, San Jose Police Department, District Attorney, Public Defender, County Office of Education, Mental Health Services, Medical Services and Department of Alcohol and Drug Services. Some of these issues may require follow-up actions.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC

The Commission receives communication from the public and others through a secure telephone line. The Chairperson retrieves the phone messages daily. The messages received include inquiries, complaints and requests for information or help. In cases where the Chairperson is unable to resolve that caller's concern, an appropriate referral is provided. The Commission received 52 calls during the past year. Forty-seven callers left messages and five hung up without leaving a message.

Descriptive information is provided on the Superior Court web site, regarding the Juvenile Justice Commission and its mission, responsibilities, membership, meetings, and contacts. Copies of Inspection Reports from 2004-2005 to the present appear on the website, along with Annual Reports from 2002-2003 to the present. Youth and adult applications for membership are also available. This information can be accessed at www.sccsuperiorcourt.org/juvenile/jjc.htm

Approved by the Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission on August 5, 2008.

Patricia A. Khan, JJC Chairperson

Date