

**Juvenile Justice Commission  
County of Santa Clara**

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**SANTA CLARA COUNTY  
JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION  
FY 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT  
July 18, 2023**

The Juvenile Justice Commission of Santa Clara County (JJC) is a state-mandated, court-appointed authority.<sup>1</sup> The broad purpose of the JJC is to inquire into the administration of the juvenile court law in the County.<sup>2</sup> The JJC is dedicated to the promotion of the effective administration of the juvenile justice system and juvenile dependency system with the goal that they produce an environment of credibility, dignity, equity, and respect for the youth of Santa Clara County.

**IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON COMMISSION ACTIVITIES**

COVID-19 continues to affect the Commission's activities, but to a lesser degree. Since Covid vaccinations and boosters are available Commissioners have increasing interaction with partners and each other. The fact that participation in our public meetings has exceeded pre-pandemic participation, the Commission is focusing on the use of hybrid meetings and hope to have that option in place in August of 2023.

JJC inspections with the exception of our annual inspection of Law Enforcement Agencies which were in-person even during lock-down, have been largely in-person, but with some discussions with the providers of services handled virtually. All committees except our monthly Executive Committee Meeting have continued to be online.

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<sup>1</sup> Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) 225 2 WIC 229

<sup>2</sup> WIC 225

As the restrictions related to Covid have decreased the Board of Supervisors has moved to in person meetings for it's Juvenile Justice System Collaborative (JJSC) and the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCS.) These important bodies have just been merged and their issue-focusing subcommittees, the Race Equity through Prevention and the Race Equity in the Justice Systems meetings are now scheduled to occur bi-monthly instead of monthly. The goal of these two committees has been to lessen the impact of racial disparity within the Justice System. However, due to the ongoing impact of Covid, neither of these subcommittees were held until early 2023. Unfortunately, the normal attendees have gotten use to living virtually therefore there has rarely been a quorum so that they are either cancelled outright or failed to reach a quorum after gathering and the important work is left undone.

### **COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP**

The Juvenile Justice Commission of Santa Clara County is comprised of 15 volunteers, two of whom are youth commissioners between the ages of 14 and 21. The adult commissioners are sworn to four-year terms, and the youth commissioners to two-year terms. All commissioners are residents of the County. The following are the names of the Commissioners who served on the JJC at the beginning of the year (July 2022- June 30 2023.)

Victoria BurtonBurke, Chair  
Stephen Betts, Vice Chair  
Lon Allen, Secretary  
Jean Pennypacker, Past Chair  
Heather Angove  
Penny Blake  
Neha Parthasarathi, Youth  
Karla Fukushima  
Seth Flagsberg  
Nora Manchester  
Darius Parakh, Youth  
Jean Pennypacker  
Vaishali Sirkay  
Lissa Thiele  
Diana Traub

During this year Karla Fukushima and Seth Flagsberg resigned. Lester Erzati was sworn in and resigned and Lon Allen let his term expire. During the year, Debashis Ghoshal, Marcie Bellicitti Diana Sanchez Bentz joined the commission. Darius Parakh was sworn in as an Adult Commissioner to a four year term and Rayan Sengupta was sworn in as the new Youth Commissioner. Debashis Ghoshal stepped in to be the the Commission Secretary.

The JJC strives to be representative of the community. To achieve this, Commissioners have been involved in community organizations and public forums mostly online.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 2022-2023**

The JJC established goals and objectives for fiscal year 2022-23. These goals and objectives were crafted with the intent to collaborate with juvenile justice and dependency systems partners to influence system improvements at both the county, statewide and even the national level. The following identifies the combined goals and objectives, and the actions the JJC took to achieve these goals:

### Juvenile Justice Commission Santa Clara County Goals 2022-2023

1. Ensure that the JJC views all its work through an equity and justice lens, thereby promoting healthier families, communities, and school environments striving to disrupt the pathways to system involvement.
2. Engage with other stakeholders to ensure that the Welcoming Center and satellite sites are safe and child-focused and provide healing and trauma-informed services.
3. Inform the Commission and partners on juvenile justice and child welfare issues through presentations by partners and experts to promote collaborative solutions.
4. Complete all scheduled inspections by June 30, 2023. The Chair of each inspection committee shall report in Executive Session the status of all inspection recommendations within 180 days from report publication.
5. Monitor and report to the Commission all Incident Reports (IR's) filed in Juvenile Hall and James Ranch (bi-monthly) and the Welcoming Center (quarterly).
6. Respond to emerging needs and issues through ad hoc committees.
7. Monitor the changes in the Dependency and Juvenile Justice Systems that are subsequent to the imposition of practices dictated by the Families First Services Prevention Act.
8. Monitor the continued development of Santa Clara County's Secure Track Program, it's creation of required Step Downs, it's development of Secure Track for females, and its preparation for the return of youth from California Department of Corrections, Division of Juvenile Justice that is to occur on or before June 30, 2023.
9. Individual Committees should prepare and post minutes of each meeting on the shared Drive and report out to the entire Commission during the Executive session monthly, yearly evaluate their goals for the long term and for the year and develop a Mission Statement. Goals for the subsequent year should be available to the commission at the June Executive Session.
10. Conduct periodic reviews of Commission By-Laws and Policies and Procedures.

11. Meet regularly with the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court, county supervisors, Chief of Probation, and the DFCS Director to discuss and report on Juvenile Justice and child welfare issues.

12. Continue to work with statewide JJC's to improve outcomes for all California Justice and Dependency Youth.

These have on the whole, been ongoing activities for the Commission though the Commission did not meet with anyone from the Board of Supervisors this past year, but have met quarterly with the Director of DFCS and his assistants, the outgoing and incoming head of Probation and have had regular contact with the Office of Youth and Community Restoration and the Judges of the Justice and Dependency Courts. The Commission has sent support letters to elected officials to urge the passage of legislation and meaningful budgets for the state and county systems over which we have a focus and oversight. We have had ongoing contact with other JJC's on statewide issues and attempt to create a stronger collective to support those interests.

### **Inspections:**

#### The Welcoming Center/Scattered Sites:

The Continuum of Care Committee meets bi-monthly and The Welcoming Center was inspected this year and a report will be forthcoming. A supplemental report on the use of Scattered Sites for the placement of youth who spent extended time before placement in "Scattered Sites" was completed and published in May of 2023. The facilities used for the treatment of youth with addictions was reviewed after it was re-certified, but as of yet has not have any Santa Clara County youth placed there since its relicensing.

#### Juvenile Hall:

The Juvenile Hall Inspection Report was adopted and published in May of 2023 and was co-chaired by Nora Manchester and Jean Pennypacker.

#### James Ranch:

The James Ranch Inspection Report was published in November 2022 and was chaired by Stephen Betts.

#### Law Enforcement Agencies:

The LEA Inspection report was published in December 2022 (for the calendar year 2021) and was chaired by then, Youth Commissioner, Darius Parakh. The report for the Inspection of Law Enforcement Agencies is in process and is being chaired again by Darius Parakh who is now serving as an adult commissioner.

The (presently named) Secure Youth Treatment Facility, formerly referred to as SecureTrack, is a program as a result of SB 823 that precipitated the closing of the California Department of Corrections Division of Juvenile Justice by mandating the housing and programs be offered at the county level has been monitored in its development and the 2022-2023 report is in process in July of 2023. This inspection is chaired by Diana Traub and it is completed and ready for approval.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

In fulfilling their commitment to share pertinent information with its partners the Commission hosted seven presentations at our public session:

- Fresh Lifelines for youth (FLY) by Susie Rivera, Kristopher Scott, Alexandra Cooley and Meredith McGrath (10/4/22)
- James Ranch Aftercare and ReEntry by Marc Utsey, Jennifer Anguiano, and Adria Reiner (11/8/2022)
- DFCS Plans on Implementation of the Families First Prevention Services Act by Wendy Kinnear-Rauschenberg and Rocio Abundis (2/7/2023)
- Juvenile Statistics by DA Paul Jhin (3/7/2023)
- DA's Chronic Absenteeism Program by Alisha Schoen (4/4/2023)
- San Jose Youth Empowerment Alliance by Israel Canjura, Sergio Gonzales and Mario Maciel (6/6/2023)

Upon the completion of the Commission's inspections, the respective Inspection Chairs gave a verbal summary of the report's findings.

## **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

1. Meetings to Discuss Topics of Interest all occurred virtually. The JJC met informally in Executive Session with several agency leaders to frankly discuss new developments or concerns and have had presentations by partners to keep up on their operations and trends.
2. Meetings with representatives of other statewide Juvenile Justice/Delinquency Prevention Commissions to discuss topics of mutual interest and backing of legislation and to urge greater mutually beneficial connections.
3. Met with representatives and the Director of the Office of Youth and Community Restoration
4. Met with Supervising Judges in Juvenile Justice and Dependency Divisions.
5. Met the incoming County Executive to alert him to issues as it relates to housing and programing for SB 823, SYTF youth, and issues of support for youth in need of Short-Term Residential Treatment/Quality Residential Treatment, STRTP/QTRTP facilities and other children and youth in need of placement.
6. Individual Commissioners sent letters of support to the federal government officials on issues of interest for the well-being of youth. The JJC has also written letters supporting positions of concern to the JJC at the state and local level.
7. Participation in Special Ad-Hoc Committees to address specific issues. JJC commissioners participated as members in the committees on Operations and Outcome:
8. Data Analysis of Population Trends for Juvenile Hall Detainees and the population of The Welcome Center: The JJC continues to monitor the daily Juvenile Hall and James Ranch population numbers and regularly tracks and analyzes the data from TWC and Scattered Sites.
9. The Equity, Education and Justice Committee coordinated a presentation to the County School Boards Association on the issue of Expulsions.
10. Attended the Children's Summit and graduation ceremonies for youth in Community and Court Schools

11. Training Sessions: JJC Commissioners attended various local and regional training sessions offered through the Court, County agencies and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) including review of the new laws and cases that relate to youth under the jurisdiction of the juvenile courts or those that might be at risk to come under Welfare and Institution Codes Sections 602 and 300. Included were programs on Residential Placement and ReEntry, DFCS's forum on Self Assessment, the Family First Services Prevention Act, the combine Dependency and Juvenile Justice Beyond the Bench.

### **JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DEPENDENCY COMMITTEE MEETING PARTICIPATION**

One or more JJC Commissioners regularly attend or was a member of the following committees within the juvenile justice and dependency systems. While some of these committee meetings were suspended due to COVID-19, some continued to meet virtually.

- Behavioral Health Board Adolescent's and Children's Committee
- Beyond the Bench Planning Committee
- Board of Supervisors - when a topic of interest is on the agenda.
- Board of Supervisors, Children, Seniors & Family Committee - when a topic of interest is on the agenda
- Board of Supervisors, Public Safety & Justice Committee - when a topic of interest is on the agenda
- Community Based Organizations & Juvenile Justice Stakeholder Meeting (NCYL)
- Child Abuse Prevention Council
  - Inter-Agency Collaborative Committee
- Community Care Licensing
- County Office of Education District Reps and Joint Meeting
- Dependency Court Systems Trainings
- Judicial Advisory Committee
- Juvenile Court Aligned Action Network
- Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council
- Juvenile Justice Gender Responsive Task Force/Collaboration
  - JJGRTF Planning Subcommittee,
- Juvenile Justice System Collaborative (JJSC)
- Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC)
  - Race Equity through Prevention Workgroup
  - Race Equity in the Justice Systems Workgroup
- Office of Youth and Community Restoration
- South County Youth Task Force
- Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits

### **Committees of the Juvenile Justice Committees**

### **Juvenile Hall Inspection**

Nora Manchester, Chair  
Jean Pennypacker, Vice Chair  
Neha Parthasarathi  
Lissa Thiele  
Marcie Bellicitti  
Darius Parakh  
Dev Ghoshal  
Victoria BurtonBurke

### **Secure Youth Treatment Facility Inspection**

Diana Traub, Chair  
Victoria BurtonBurke  
Stephen Betts  
Penny Blake  
Shali Sirkay  
Dev Ghoshal  
Shali Sirkay  
Marcie Bellicitti  
Rayan Sengupta

### **Continuum of Care**

Penny Blake, Chair  
Dev Ghoshal  
Stephen Betts  
Jean Pennypacker  
Marcie Bellicitti  
Nora Manchester  
Victoria BurtonBurke

### **Equity, Justice and Education**

Shali Sirkay, Chair  
Penny Blake  
Neha Parthasarathi  
Marcie Bellicitti

### **James Ranch Inspection**

Stephen Betts, Chair  
Lon Allen  
Neha Parthasarathi  
Heather Angove  
Darius Parakh  
Shali Sirkay  
Lissa Thiele  
Diana Traub  
Victoria BurtonBurke

### **Law Enforcement Agencies**

Darius Parakh, Chair  
Diana Bentz  
Neha Parthasarathi  
Dev Ghoshal  
Jean Pennypacker  
Penny Blake  
Lissa Thiele  
Heather Angove  
Shali Sirkay

### **IR/Grievance Review**

Lissa Thiele, Chair  
Victoria BurtonBurke

### **Legislative**

Heather Angove, Chair  
Dev Ghoshal  
Jean Pennypacker  
Diana Traub

**Executive Committee**

Victoria BurtonBurke, Chair  
Stephen Betts, Vice Chair  
Dev Ghoshal, Secretary  
Jean Pennypacker, Past Chair

**Nominating**

Jean Pennypacker, Chair  
Nora Manchester  
Stephen Betts

**Membership**

Stephen Betts, Chair  
Penny Blake  
Shali Sirkay

**Recruitment**

Stephen Betts, Chair  
Jean Pennypacker  
Diana Traub

**Ad Hoc Committees**

**Ops**

Heather Angove  
Penny Blake  
Jean Pennypacker

**Outcomes**

Dev Ghoshal, Chair  
Stephen Betts  
Victoria BurtonBurke  
Jean Pennypacker  
Shali Sirkay

The Juvenile Justice Commission has been proud to serve Santa Clara County in its duty to assure the best outcomes possible for youth in the Juvenile Justice System and the Dependency System and its mission to help see that all county youth are successful in their communities.

Respectfully submitted by:

Victoria BurtonBurke

Date: July 18, 2023