



San Diego County Probation Department

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Tamika Nelson, Chief Probation Officer

July 27, 2022

Yvette Klepin
Juvenile Justice Commission Chair
2901 Meadow Lark Drive
San Diego, CA 92123

Response to the 2021 Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) Facility Inspection Report for Urban Camp

Dear Ms. Klepin:

We are in receipt of the JJC 2021 Facility Inspection Report for Urban Camp. Below, please find the San Diego County Probation Department responses to the JJC recommendations as it pertains to Urban Camp.

Recommendation a:

The Juvenile Justice Commission recommends the Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS):

- i. Increase the number of CTE instructors
- ii. Provide more variety of CTE courses
- iii. Collaborate with Probation to develop after school programs for the youth

Response a:

SDCOE and JCCS worked in collaboration with the San Diego County Probation Department, Institutional Services-Urban Camp (UC) to increase the number of CTE instructors from three (3) to seven (7). Included in the seven CTE instructors are two full-time teachers and five part-time teachers. With the addition of CTE instructors, there has been an overall increase in the number of CTE courses from two to four. In the fall of 2022, JCCS will be adding a Horticulture program to the UC commitment program. The afterschool programs are provided through the ASSETs grant which provides youth opportunities to expand their learning academically, socially, artistically, emotionally, and physically through collaboration from probation and school staff. All programs are offered to all students, and are noted below:

David's Harp: Non-profit organization that teaches music production to students including all technology involved in the process. They open their studios to students upon being released to continue their education and offer internship opportunities to students.

Credit Recovery: Ran by a JCCS teacher, offers students high school credit recovery to recoup lost credits. We also partner with The Movement to provide after school tutoring to help students with their work. Students meet with the teacher once or twice a week to go over work and then credits are updated on their transcript as they are earned.

Project AWARE: Nonprofit that uses restorative practices to work with all youth through a credible messenger. They discuss trials and obstacles our youth face as well as how to overcome them.

Yard Games: Each unit has been provided yard games to use with students and partners to build social, emotional health in the cottages. These include cornhole, giant Jenga, ping pong, giant connect 4, giant tic-tac-toe and other sports equipment. This equipment can be used during rec, free time, or school when students may need to take a break and engage in something carefree. This has also been a great collaboration between probation and school as both entities use the equipment to build trust and rapport with students and staff.

Garden: The garden was provided by Coastal Roots Farm and in our after-school program, students take care of all garden needs. Both probation and school support supervision and education of the garden to students.

Running Club: Currently unable to safely implement due to COVID restrictions; however, running club prepares students for marathons in our community. Students are provided proper shoes and athletic wear to run great distances. Probation and Education Staff support in the training, coaching, and facilitating of the program.

Recommendation b:

The Juvenile Justice Commission recommends:

- i. The Urban Camp female population be transferred to the Urban Camp Facility
- ii. Programs for the male and female population commence and are equally accessible to the female and male population
- iii. All youth be grouped by age and/or development levels instead of placing all ages together

Response b:

In February 2022, the Kearny Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility which housed the population of UC and Girls Rehabilitation Facility (GRF) commitments was decommissioned. All youth participating in both the UC and GRF programs were transferred to the Youth Transition Campus (YTC) which now houses both male and female committed youth. The homelike campus of YTC provides more of a therapeutic, and less punitive approach, while focusing on providing supportive, trauma-informed services to male and female committed youth. Programs at YTC are geared toward both the male and female populations and are equally accessible.

Youth committed to the male living areas at YTC are classified and assigned to age-appropriate housing cottages. Also taken into consideration are developmental levels, criminal sophistication and ethnic demographics and gang affiliation. Due to staffing levels and the low number of youths in the female population at YTC, all female youth committed to (either UC or YTC) the program are housed together. YTC management is in the process of developing a population management plan regarding the limited housing arrangements for female committed youth in which the population may be better served.

Recommendation c:

The Juvenile Justice Commission recommends Probation:

- i. Continue to monitor OC spray use
- ii. Continue to work towards limited to no use of OC spray
- iii. Continue to train staff in de-escalation strategies
- iv. Implement the MANDT training

Response c:

The Probation Department is committed to developing and sustaining a positive youth development culture wherein youth on youth violence is lessened, and the use of OC spray is limited or no longer needed for the protection of the youth or where officers do not feel the need to carry OC spray for their own safety. The Probation Department has trained all direct care staff in the areas of Adolescent Brain Development, Trauma-Informed Care, Implicit Bias, and Restorative Practices. It is hopeful this will improve communication and rapport between staff and youth and result in a reduction of serious incidents and the use of force including OC spray.

The Probation Department began rolling out the first phase of the MANDT System to all Institutional management staff and supervisors. In August 2022, front line officers will begin attending the initial modules of MANDT.

Each facility monitors the use of OC within their facilities, and its use is always documented in the form of a written incident report. From these reports we are able to collect data on the frequency, the amount of OC being used, and which specific officers are using this type of force. This data is regularly reviewed at a Department Executive level and at the Facility Management level, as well as through the facility's Incident Review Committee. The purpose of the Incident Review Committee is to render a single finding to determine if the force used was within policy and will provide recommendations for areas of additional training, changes in policy, or if further administrative investigation is needed. The Probation Department has partnered with national experts from the Council of Juvenile Justice of Administrators (CJJA) to review and improve our de-escalation and use of force practices to ensure they are within national best practices, along with recommendations relative to national standards. The department is also contracting with Performance Based Standards (PbS), which is an additional data system which effectively identify trends within our facilities.

Recommendation d:

The Juvenile Justice Commission recommends Probation:

- i. Add clerical and nursing staff positions
- ii. Consult with nurses and the Program Manager of the medical agency to ensure there is proper coverage for the safety of youth as well as for the opportunity for nursing staff to take healthy needed breaks
- iii. Ensure medical staff have the means to transport medical equipment to emergencies (i.e., crash cart)

Response d:

Medical Clinic staffing meets the clinical needs of the youth population served within our facility. In consultation with the contracted Health Service Administrator: (i) an Administrative Assistant position has been added to their staff, (ii) the current daily staffing plan at YTC includes two 12 hr. Registered Nurses allowing for nursing coverage to meet the clinical needs of the youth and the opportunity for the nursing staff to take their required breaks and (iii) necessary emergency medical equipment is transported in a wheeled medical bag during a medical emergency.

Recommendation e:

The Juvenile Justice Commission recommends Behavior Health:

- i. Follow up on referrals to community agencies to ensure youth have transitioned to community services
- ii. Ensure quality assurance reviews are conducted for all contracted services and review and reconsider a contract that provides more transitional services from custody to community such as what was provided by Bridgeways until this year (2021)

Response e:

In addition to services to in-custody youth, since 2003, the STAT Team has provided transition services for a subset of probation youth released who were seen in custody when ongoing care is clinically indicated. Services are designed to meet the individual needs of the youth within the context of the youth's family and cultural life. The goals of this service, in addition to providing mental health services, are to maximize successful transition into the community and minimize negative mental health outcomes. Services typically last 30 to 90 days. In March of 2020, with the onset of the COVID pandemic, STAT team changed procedures and now follows up on all youth released, who received STAT services, for a minimum of 30 days post release to ensure they are connected to community resources if needed. If they are not, the STAT team works to assist the youth and caregiver or coordinates with Probation to offer the resources. Any referrals made by the STAT team directly to a community provider are followed up to ensure youth has been connected. Once the youth leave the institution, unless it is a part of their release orders, services are voluntary, and youth can decline services.

Recommendation f:

The Juvenile Justice Commission recommends Probation:

- i. Increase staff morale through more transparency at the higher executive levels
- ii. Include line staff when changes to program, policy and procedures are anticipated
- iii. Continue to update policies and procedures that take into consideration day to day operations as well as administrative needs
- iv. Executive level staff provide on-going updates in regard to program development Of SB 823 youth
- v. Provide the means for staff to have camaraderie-building opportunities (i.e., BBQs)
- vi. Increase staff incentives, awards, and positive recognitions

Response f:

In an effort to increase officer morale through more transparency at the higher levels, the Deputy Chief Probation Officer, and the facility Division Chief(s) host quarterly Town Hall meetings; wherein, updates on policy and procedures are discussed, departmental updates are provided, and officers are encouraged to have a voice in discussions. Officers are included in updates and changes in practice/policy regarding facility matters, procedures and the implementation and role of facility procedures. The voice of the officers is heard during daily facility briefings, participation in the Institutional Solution Committee meetings which encompasses line officers in discussion of facility matters, and through the Division Chief(s) who have an open-door policy.

The Probation Department takes into consideration day-to-day operations including Title 15 mandates before making any decisions. The Probation Department has assigned a Supervising Probation Officer and a Deputy Probation Officer to the program development of SB823. They work closely with executive level staff and receive on-going updates regarding the development of the program.

Camaraderie building opportunities have been provided through monthly barbecue events, facility potluck opportunities, the addition of a staff break room, an onsite wellness center and the addition of a staff specific counselor designed to enhance staff wellness. The Probation Department has also secured regular meals during work hours for officers on duty in a state-of-the-art staff dining area. The Probation Department has provided Major League Baseball (MLB) tickets as an incentive to officers who consistently go above and beyond their duties. In addition, an Employee of the Month board display has been created; wherein, we feature all the employees of the month

via photography. Furthermore, the employee of the month is designated a parking space. An employee of the year award is provided at the end of the year.

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the Juvenile Justice Commission 2021 Facility Inspection Report for Urban Camp.

Very respectfully,

TAMIKA NELSON
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER
SAN DIEGO COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

cc: Denise Huffhines, Assistant Chief Probation Officer
Jason Druxman, Deputy Chief Probation Officer, Institutional Services
Cynthia Gamboa, Division Chief, Youth Transition Campus
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