



# San Diego County Probation Department

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*Tamika Nelson, Chief Probation Officer*

April 5, 2023

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

**Response to the June 1, 2022, Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) Facility Inspection Report for the East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility.**

Dear Ms. Klepin,

We are in receipt of the Juvenile Justice Commission 2022 Facility Inspection Report for the East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility. Below, please find the San Diego County Probation Department responses to the JJC Recommendations as it pertains to the East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility.

**RECOMMENDATION #1:** Probation to include all collaborative agencies that are or can be affected when renewing or revising contracts.

**RESPONSE #1:** The Probation department will consider collaborative agency impacts and seek to obtain information, guidance, and support from those agencies as appropriate and allowable within the procurement process.

**RECOMMENDATION #2:** Behavioral Health Services (BHS) and the medical clinic continue to use two separate electronic file systems for medical records, but staff from those areas should be given full access to both systems.

**RESPONSE #2:** The Public Safety Group and the Probation Department in collaboration with Health and Human Services have addressed the use of two separate Electronic Health Record Systems. As of March 7, 2023, the Health Services Administrator has submitted a list of medical staff positions who are to be given access to the Behavioral Health Electronic Health Records System. Currently, all Psychiatrists have access to both record systems. A request from Behavioral Health STAT team has not been received to expand the access to the youth's medical record beyond the Psychiatrists.

**RECOMMENDATION #3:** Probation and San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) should ensure CTE courses are offered at EMJDF.

**RESPONSE #3:** In January of 2022, East Mesa began the process of changing populations with the newly developed Youth Transition Campus (YTC). East Mesa's post-adjudicated youths were transferred to the YTC for continued programming (HOPE) including CTE. All pre-adjudicated students were then brought to East Mesa for intake and potential release. This resulted in an increase in the transiency rate. With the changing of populations, the CTE

programs (Culinary, Building and Construction, and Horticulture) moved to the YTC so students could continue their CTE pathway. Moving forward, SDCOE and Probation department are in talks to bring CTE programs back to the facility to serve the new Youth Development Academy population. We are looking to start with certificate programs such as food handlers, CPR, First Aid, music production, OSHA Safety. We are also working with Southwestern College to get access to online CTE courses. In the Winter of 2023, many of our pre-adjudicated enrollment will be transferred to the "YTC New Build" and the East Mesa facility will mainly house Youth Development Academy (YDA formerly DJJ Youth). The plan is to develop a robust CTE program partnering with South Bay Community Services SBCS and potentially San Diego Adult Education.

**RECOMMENDATION #4:** Probation should evaluate the staffing issue, determine why staff are not remaining and address the issues immediately.

**RESPONSE #4:** Beginning in March 2022, for the first time in the history of the Department, there has been an ongoing continuous Correctional Deputy Probation Officer (CDPO) recruitment. CDPO orientations have been occurring the first week of every month. The Department has bolstered the background unit by offering positions to not only retirees but to outside law enforcement agencies. Recruitment efforts are currently in place to occur monthly. The department will continue to seek opportunities for fiscal planning for a dedicated recruitment budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the June 1, 2022, Juvenile Justice Commission Facility Inspection Report for the East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility.

Very respectfully,

Tamika Nelson  
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

CC: Denise Huffiness, Assistant Chief Probation Officer  
Jason Druxman and Christine Andrews, Deputy Chiefs of Institutional Services  
Mathew Strickland, Division Chief, East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility.