

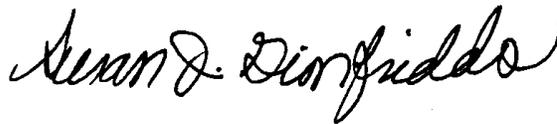
MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 13, 2002

TO: Honorable Rodney S. Melville, Presiding Judge
Santa Barbara County Superior Court
312-C Cook Street
Santa Maria, CA 93456

Mary Anne Harrison, Foreperson
2001/2002 Grand Jury
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93121

FROM: Susan J. Gionfriddo, Chief Probation Officer



RE: **RESPONSE TO 2001-2002 GRAND JURY REPORT
ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE DETENTION FACILITY REPORT
IN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY**

cc: Honorable Clifford Anderson, Assistant Presiding Superior Court Judge
Honorable Barbara Beck, Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court
Michael F. Brown, Santa Barbara County Administrator
Raul Zermeno, Juvenile Justice/Delinquency Prevention Commission Chair

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the time and effort put forth by members of your Grand Jury while learning the complexities of the justice system in general, and specifically, the operations of the Probation Department. I equally appreciate the commendation for our Department and staff contained in your Report, as well as the support expressed for our Juvenile Facilities and Programs.

Please accept the following as my official response to the 2001-2002 Grand Jury Report on Criminal Justice Detention Facilities in Santa Barbara County, which was released March 14, 2002.

FINDING 19: *There is a Registered Nurse on duty at the Santa Barbara Juvenile Hall (SBJH) only on the day shift, Monday through Friday.*

RESPONSE: We agree with the finding that there is a Registered Nurse on duty at the SBJH on the day shift, Monday through Friday.

RECOMMENDATION 19: *Have a Registered Nurse on site Saturday and Sunday.*

RESPONSE: The recommendation will not be implemented at this time based on the following information:

Ideally, the SBJH would have nursing coverage seven days a week. However, the current level of medical services at the SBJH meet California Board of Corrections Title 15 Minimum Standards for Juvenile Facilities. Additionally, the SBJH meets the high standards required for accreditation by the Institute for Medical Quality. The Public Health Department has a physician on call after hours and on weekends seven days a week to provide telephone consultation as well as a mobile private physician available for on-site medical treatment. An ongoing review of records for all minors taken to the Emergency Room indicates that most of these visits would have been necessary regardless of whether or not additional weekend nursing hours were added.

The Public Health Department recently hired a new Clinic Manager, who also has responsibility for oversight of medical services delivered within the Probation Institutions. A primary assignment for her will be to fully analyze the anticipated additional staffing that will be needed with the expansion of the Santa Maria Juvenile Hall (SMJH).

FINDING 20: *Unit II has ten dry rooms (no sink or toilet within the room) and nine wet rooms. With only two staff members on duty, while one accompanies a dry room detainee to a toilet facility, there is a shortage of staff to oversee the other detainees.*

RESPONSE: The respondent disagrees partially with the finding as Unit II has eleven wet rooms and nine dry rooms.

RECOMMENDATION 20: *The Probation Department should seek funds to convert these ten dry rooms to wet rooms.*

RESPONSE: The recommendation will not be implemented pending the development of a financing plan.

The Probation Department's Grant application to the California Board of Corrections in February of 2001 to renovate and reconstruct much of the SBJH was not funded. Only those projects that added a significant number of beds were funded. The Probation Department did receive funding from the California Board of Corrections to expand the SMJH by ninety beds. Construction will begin in August of 2002. The

increased capacity of the SMJH should reduce the need for using SBJH dry rooms. The installation of toilets and wash basins in dry rooms in both Units II and III at the SBJH is also included in the proposed remodel of the SBJH, which is included in the County's Capital Improvement Plan. It has not been funded as of this date. The Probation Department will continue to investigate alternative funding sources for this project.

FINDING 21: *Some textbooks at the SBJH are out-dated.*

RESPONSE: The respondent agrees with the finding.

RECOMMENDATION 21: *Update the textbooks, especially the History and Social Studies books to a more current volume.*

RESPONSE: According to William Cirone, County Education Office Superintendent, "The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented by September 1, 2002. The Santa Barbara Juvenile Hall must update its textbooks. Although the History/Social Studies textbook adoption runs on a multi-year cycle, the books do need updating, and the Instructional Materials Fund for State-Adopted Textbooks will be used to do so. The Math textbook is new, and the English/Language Arts book is being purchased this spring."

FINDING 22: *There is a Registered Nurse on duty at the Santa Maria Juvenile Hall (SMJH) only on day shift, Monday through Friday.*

RESPONSE: The respondent agrees with the finding.

RECOMMENDATION 22: *Increase the time when a Registered Nurse is available.*

RESPONSE: The recommendation will not be implemented at this time based on the following information:

Ideally, the SMJH would have nursing coverage seven days a week. However, the current level of medical services at the SMJH meet California Board of Corrections Title 15 Minimum Standards for Juvenile facilities. Additionally, the SMJH meets the high standards required for accreditation by the Institute for Medical Quality. The Public Health Department has a physician on call after hours and on weekends seven days a week to provide telephone consultation. An ongoing review of records for all minors taken to the Emergency Room indicates that most of these visits would have been necessary regardless of whether or not additional weekend nursing hours were added.

The Public Health Department recently hired a new Clinic Manager, who also has responsibility for oversight of medical services delivered within the Probation Institutions. A primary assignment for her will be to fully analyze the anticipated additional staffing that will be needed with the expansion of the SMJH.

FINDING 23: *Juveniles are transported to the Mental Health facility in restraints for treatment due to the lack of an adequate treatment facility on site.*

RESPONSE: The respondent disagrees partially with the finding. The present practice is that Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Services (ADMHS) staff will assess, counsel, and treat detained minors at the SMJH. The following data shows

that the number of minors who were transported from the SMJH to the ADMHS Clinics in either Santa Maria or Lompoc has decreased.

- October 2001 – 10 minors
- November 2001 – 7 minors
- December 2001 – 6 minors
- January 2002 – 5 minors
- February 2002 – none
- March 2002 – 1 minor

RECOMMENDATION 23: *The Probation Department should provide a quiet, segregated room on site to conduct counseling sessions.*

RESPONSE: The recommendation has been implemented.

The Probation Department has made available at the SMJH one of the on-site modular buildings for ADMHS staff to conduct assessments, counseling, and treatment. The modular is large enough for family counseling whenever the need arises. ADMHS can also meet minors in one of the interview rooms in the office or in the main classroom whenever it is not in use. ADMHS staff also utilizes a small assigned office to conduct routine office work and communications.

The SMJH Expansion Project will be completed in 2004. Two new offices have been identified in this expansion for ADMHS staff to do assessment, counseling, and treatment. Also, one individual counseling room has been included in each of the three new living units for counseling purposes.

FINDING 24: *There are no padded cells on site to hold juveniles found to be a danger to themselves.*

RESPONSE: The respondent agrees with the finding.

RECOMMENDATION: *The Probation Department should provide a padded cell.*

RESPONSE: The recommendation will not be implemented because of a more effective alternative explained below.

The Probation Department recently purchased two safety chairs, one for the Santa Maria Juvenile Hall and one for the Santa Barbara Juvenile Hall after considerable discussion and study and after comparing their use with a “padded cell” or safety room. The safety chairs will allow staff to temporarily restrain minors who are seriously ‘acting out’ by hurting themselves or others. Minors restrained in the safety chairs will be directly observed by Probation Department staff and will have the required medical and mental health reviews. These safety chairs are mobile and can be moved to the living unit where the problem is occurring. This will eliminate the need to transport the ‘acting out’ minor from one living unit to the other as is the case when a “padded cell”, or safety room is only available in a particular living unit. We were encouraged by the representative from the California Board of Corrections to consider the safety chairs as an option to a padded safety room. Procedures are presently being developed regarding the use of the safety chairs in the facilities.

FINDING 25: *There is a lack of aftercare when boys are released from Tri-Counties Boot Camp (TCBC).*

RESPONSE: The respondent disagrees with this finding.

Minors committed to the TCBC from Santa Barbara County have an aftercare Juvenile Institutions Officer (JIO) immediately assigned to their cases. Aftercare planning is an ongoing process during a ward's participation in the Camp programs. Aftercare JIO's are geographically assigned to ensure consistency, support of the ward and family with appropriate service referrals, and to reinforce the effectiveness of the Probation Department's neighborhood supervision strategy. Aftercare JIO's spend time each week in the Camp setting for aftercare planning and pre-graduation support services, and in the community actively supervising and supporting Camp graduates. In addition, Probation Department-sponsored multi-family group sessions are provided in the community, as are Camp aftercare peer/family groups. Aside from the services of the aftercare JIO's, each minor is assigned to a Deputy Probation Officer (DPO) for case planning and neighborhood supervision. The aftercare JIO assigned to each geographic region supports a number of DPO's in providing intensive aftercare supervision by which milestones are developed for each minor to assist in their long term, successful reintegration into their family and community. Although resources are limited, with creativity and a strong team approach between our Institutions and Field Service Divisions, effective aftercare services are provided to our Camp graduates.

RECOMMENDATION 25: *The Probation Department should hire more JIO's to provide aftercare.*

RESPONSE: This recommendation will not be implemented.

Although enhanced aftercare services are a Department priority, projected Probation Department budget and position reductions for fiscal year '02-'03 preclude such a program expansion with available financing. However, existing aftercare services have been assured in the next fiscal year. In addition, modifications in the allocation of Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (J.J.C.P.A.) funds include the elimination of the aftercare transition school in Santa Maria, which will free up an aftercare JIO for planning and direct supervision services in the community. This direct service orientation has proven successful in both the South County and the Lompoc/Santa Ynez Valley regions and will be a notable aftercare enhancement for the Santa Maria area. The Probation Department will continue to explore creative, efficient, and effective aftercare service options within our existing resources as we concur with the therapeutic need for this support to our wards.

FINDING 26: *There is a lack of aftercare when boys are released from Los Prietos Boys' Camp (LPBC).*

RESPONSE: We disagree with this finding.

Minors committed to the LPBC from Santa Barbara County have an aftercare Juvenile Institutions Officer (JIO) immediately assigned to their cases. Aftercare planning is an ongoing process during a ward's participation in the Camp programs. Aftercare JIO's are geographically assigned to ensure consistency, support of the

ward and family with appropriate service referrals, and to reinforce the effectiveness of the Probation Department's neighborhood supervision strategy. Aftercare JIO's spend time each week in the Camp setting for aftercare planning and pre-graduation support services, and in the community actively supervising and supporting Camp graduates. In addition, Probation Department-sponsored multi-family group sessions are provided in the community, as are Camp aftercare peer/family groups. Aside from the services of the aftercare JIO's, each minor is assigned to a Deputy Probation Officer (DPO) for case planning and neighborhood supervision. The aftercare JIO assigned to each geographic region supports a number of DPO's in providing intensive aftercare supervision by which milestones are developed for each minor to assist in their long term, successful reintegration into their family and community. Although resources are limited, with creativity and a strong team approach between our Institutions and Field Service Divisions, effective aftercare services are provided to our Camp graduates.

RECOMMENDATION 26: *The Probation Department should provide follow-up care for the boys after their participation in the Camp.*

RESPONSE: This Recommendation and Recommendation 25 have previously been implemented, as outlined in the Responses to Findings 25 and 26. Although limited by fiscal constraints, the Probation Department does provide meaningful aftercare services to Camp graduates.