

Date: August 21, 2018

To: Honorable Steven R. Sanders, Presiding Judge  
Superior Court of California, County of San Benito

From: San Benito County Board of Supervisors

Subject: Response to San Benito County Grand Jury Report for FY 2017-2018 in Reference to "Jail Report" and "Juvenile Hall Report".

The Board of Supervisors reserves the right to implement or change its position as outlined in the Findings and Recommendations listed below in accordance with available budgetary and staff resources. Additionally, the Board of Supervisors acknowledges the role and authority of the County Administrative Officer to establish and implement administrative findings and directives to insure the timely and efficient administration of County Government in accordance with all applicable California State Statutes as well as policy priorities and initiatives established in the San Benito County Fiscal Year Budget.

**I. San Benito County Jail Report**

**FINDINGS**

**Finding F1**

Female inmates are only allowed exercise every other day, while male inmates are provided daily exercise in the yard. With the "Exercise Plan" of the Jail for 2019 currently there is no goal or objective to add additional exercise yard(s):

**Response to Finding F1**

The Board of Supervisors partially disagrees. The new "Expansion Plan" includes two recreation yards, one for each of the housing units. The female inmates occupying either of these two housing units will have access to a recreation yard, thus providing opportunity for daily exercise.

**Finding F2**

Currently many of the appliances within this full functioning Kitchen do not work.

**Response to Finding F2**

The Board of Supervisors concurs with the Grand Jury's findings.

**Finding F3**

There is a staff shortage; often shifts are covered via overtime which cost more money.

**Response to Finding F3**

The Board of Supervisors concurs with the Grand Jury's finding.

**Finding F4**

County does not have enough medical staff to cover a full 24 hour day. Nor does it have the staff to support the mental health needs of an inmate at the jail.

**Response to Finding F4**

The Board of Supervisors disagrees in part. The County is in compliance with state regulations, although the Sheriff's Department agrees it lacks sufficient medical staffing to provide 24-hour care. The County's Behavioral Health Department is able to provide support services and care for those inmates with mental health needs.

**Finding F5**

Programming like counseling, education and rehabilitation needs to be improved.

**Response to Finding F5**

The Board of Supervisors partially disagrees. The Sheriff's Department is in compliance with state law, although the Board agrees that inmates would likely benefit from greater levels of programming. The Department is currently implementing additional programs.

**RECOMMENDATIONS****Recommendation R1**

We recommend that the "Expansion Plan" Committee reevaluate the need for additional exercise yard(s), maybe by creating an exercise yard specifically designated for the female inmates. Our concern is that by the expansion and increasing of inmate population, female inmate yard may be reduced more.

**Response to Recommendation R1**

The County is in compliance with Title 15 minimum standards.. The Sheriff's Department will review its present design to provide female inmates additional opportunities to exercise.

**Recommendation R2**

Our recommendation is to open the Food Staging Area to a full functioning kitchen, by replacing or repairing non-operating appliances. This will also allow inmates to further develop their skills and possibly offers a Kitchen Work Program.

**Response to Recommendation R2**

The County is unable to implement this recommendation at this time due to budget limitations. The cost to return the Food Staging Area to a fully-functioning kitchen has been estimated at more than \$150,000.00, as the drains and plumbing in that area do not meet current health and safety standards and would need to be replaced and reconstructed in addition to repairing or replacing the appliances.

The cost to implement a kitchen outweighs the benefits provided by this action. The County currently utilizes an outside vendor which provides the jail with pre-prepared meals. The Sheriff's Department strives to provide quality nutrition and intends to provide an educational platform that will result in a food services certificate, referred to as "Safe Serve Certificate".

### **Recommendation R3**

We concur with the Sheriff's Department who expressed the desire for hiring more COs.

### **Response to Recommendation R3**

The Board of Supervisors has implemented this recommendation and approved funding for two additional correctional officers during the June 2018 budget hearing.

### **Recommendation R4**

We encourage the Sheriff's Department to continue its negotiations with Mental Health Services. Furthermore, the Sheriff's Department should seek funding sources for full-time 24/7 medical staff.

### **Response to Recommendation R4**

The Board of Supervisors acknowledges the Sheriff's Department collaboration with Mental Health Services. The Board of Supervisors approved an additional \$135,000 during the 18/19 budget hearing, which will provide an additional four hours of medical service per day. The Department strives to generate additional funding to have a medical staff on board 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

### **Recommendation R5**

Programming like counseling, education and rehabilitation needs to improve. The Sheriff's Department wants to help inmates develop skills to reduce the recidivism rate. We recommend possibly adding horticulture, canine mentoring, equine therapy, expand the library, more classes and a transition center.

### **Response to Recommendation R5**

A portion of the recommendations have been executed, others need additional analysis, and others are not achievable at this time:

1. A horticulture program is not achievable at this time due to the physical restrictions of the jail facilities.
2. Canine mentoring is not achievable at this time due to the physical restrictions of the jail facilities.
3. Equine therapy is not achievable at this time due to physical restrictions of the jail facilities.
4. Expanding the library is not achievable at this time due to physical restrictions of the facilities. Expanding the hours of operations is under analysis to be completed within six months' time.
5. More classes: This recommendation has been implemented; the Department has added substance abuse and counseling classes.

6. Transition center: The Probation Department currently operates a Transition Center and the Sheriff's Department is pursuing a partnership to provide a greater array of services to the Jail inmates. The Jail transition team and the Reentry Program manager have been meeting frequently in an effort to improve the education, counseling, and rehabilitation programs. We strive to work cohesively to be able to provide a smooth transition within the various county services provided including: Probation department, Health and Human Services and Behavioral Health.

The Sheriff's department has developed a Jail Security Clearance Application program, to allow volunteer/providers to provide services to the inmates.

## **II. San Benito County Juvenile Hall Report**

### FINDINGS

#### **Finding F1**

Carpet needs replacement throughout the facility.

#### **Response to Finding F1**

The Board of Supervisors concurs with the Grand Jury's finding.

#### **Finding F2**

There are missing water damage ceiling tiles in the recreation area.

#### **Response to Finding F2**

The Board of Supervisors concurs with the Grand Jury's finding.

#### **Finding F3**

Internal Locks are worn and did not open easily.

#### **Response to Finding F3**

The Board of Supervisors concurs with the Grand Jury's finding; the Probation Department has addressed this issue by replacing many of the internal locks.

#### **Finding F4**

Basketball hoop was damaged.

#### **Response to Finding F4**

The Board of Supervisors disagrees with the Grand Jury's finding. The Department re-inspected the basketball hoop and found it to be in good repair.

**Finding F5**

There are a number of trip hazards, including potholes in the grass from gopher infestation, and splits along the edge of the asphalt where it meets the grass area.

**Response to Finding F5**

The Board of Supervisors concurs with the Grand Jury's finding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation R1**

The SBCCGJ recommends that the San Benito County Board of Supervisors approve the request for funding by the Juvenile Hall to complete repairs and improvements to the facility that will benefit wards in the future.

**Response to Recommendation R1**

On June 26, 2018, the Board of Supervisors approved a contract to allow the Probation Department to address the conditions included in the findings by the Grand Jury. The Board of Supervisor expects the contract work to be completed by November 30, 2018.