



COUNTY OF BUTTE  
DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL SERVICES

CATHI GRAMS

Director and Public Guardian/Public Administrator

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August 1, 2013

Honorable Stephen E. Benson, Presiding Judge  
c/o Court Administration  
Superior Court of California, County of Butte  
One Court Street  
Oroville, CA 95965

FILED  
Superior Court of California  
County of Butte  
AUG 06 2013  
Kimberly Flener, Clerk  
By K. Mortensen Deputy

Re: Department of Employment and Social Services (DESS) Director Responses to the 2012-2013 Grand Jury Final Report

Honorable Judge Benson:

Penal Code Section 933 and 933.05 provides that the governing body of the public agency shall comment to the presiding judge of the superior court on the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of the governing body. The Board of Supervisors, as the governing body of the County of Butte, will provide its response to the 2012-2013 Grand Jury Report by the statutory deadline.

**2012-2013 BUTTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT  
BUTTE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL  
SERVICES**

**FINDINGS**

F1 The social workers and their supervisors in the Adult Protective Services and In-Home Supportive Services programs are dedicated to providing the best possible services to their clients. They are to be commended for their work.

*The respondent agrees with the finding.*

F2 Adult Protective Services staff is concerned that they receive only about half the national average of referrals a month. They speculate that this may be due to lack of public knowledge regarding their services.

*The respondent agrees with the finding.*

F3 Not having a public health nurse inhibits the ability of the APS staff to evaluate medical neglect cases and to develop work plans for In-Home Supportive Services.

*The respondent agrees with the finding.*

F4 Fraud is a problem in some In-Home Supportive Services cases.

*The respondent agrees with the finding.*

F5 The caseloads of IHSS social workers are significantly large.

*The respondent agrees with the finding.*

F6 Staff in Adult Services feels communication with their supervisors is good, that they can voice concerns and that those concerns are heard.

*The respondent agrees with the finding.*

F7 There are safety concerns for Adult Services workers when doing field visits.

*The respondent agrees with the finding.*

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

R1 Develop and implement an outreach program to raise awareness of Adult Protective Services in order to educate the public about programs.

*The recommendation requires further analysis.*

*Currently, Adult Protective Services provides outreach and education to community partners, service organizations, universities, and others as well as those who are mandated reporters. DESS will conduct a needs assessment to determine the needs of the community relative to Adult Protection Services and the programs available. This will be completed by November 1, 2013.*

R2 Hire additional public health nurses to evaluate and assist with APS and IHSS clients.

*The recommendation has been implemented.*

*A full time Public Health Nurse has been hired in collaboration with Butte County Public Health. The Nurse functions in the Adult Protective Services Unit and is able to help Social Workers with their investigations and assess medical needs of the clients served.*

R3 Continue to investigate and assist in prosecuting IHSS fraud cases and seek ways to reduce recurrences of fraud.

*The recommendation requires further analysis.*

*In March 2013, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) distributed uniform protocols focused on statewide coordination and communication to develop a*

*coordinated and standardize process for fraud referrals and investigation, which includes a standard for deciding when to refer a case for fraud investigation.*

*DESS will provide refresher training on the CDSS established protocols to all social work staff and seek input to determine if there are gaps in the fraud identification and/or referral process. This will be completed by November 1, 2013.*

R4 Hire additional social workers to better manage the caseload for the IHSS program.

*The recommendation requires further analysis.*

*DESS will assess workload demands and available fiscal resources to determine if adding positions is warranted. The analysis will be completed by November 1, 2013.*

R5 Work with social workers in Adult Services to equip them with whatever resources are available that they would need to insure their safety.

*The recommendation requires further analysis.*

*DESS will conduct a needs assessment to better understand the specific safety needs of Social Worker staff in the field. This will be completed by January 1, 2014.*

## **REQUEST FOR RESPONSE**

Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933 and 933.05, the Grand Jury requests responses as follows:

- Director, Butte County Department of Employment and Social Services:
  - A response to Findings F1 through F7; and Recommendations R1 through R5

## **2012-2013 BUTTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIVISION**

### **FINDINGS**

F1 The social workers and their supervisors in the Children's Services programs are dedicated to providing the best possible services to their clients. They are to be commended for their work.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

F2 Law enforcement works closely with the Children's Services Division. A training course in Children's Services policies and regulations for law enforcement would enhance the working relationship and would result in a more efficient collaboration.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

F3 While being involved with CPS is not a pleasant experience, it provides an opportunity for families to improve their circumstances.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

F4 CPS staff recognize and appreciate the personal counseling support that is available to them if needed.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

F5 While several programs are available to families working with CPS, there is a desire to provide more programs if funding were available.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

F6 Assumption by the county of Adoption Services should expedite the adoption process.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

F7 CSD has a wealth of information and checklists on foster care, child custody regulations, etc. However, it can only be obtained in hard copy from a CSD office.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

R1 Establish an orientation program on CPS parameters for law enforcement.

*The recommendation requires further analysis.*

*DESS will conduct an analysis with input from local law enforcement jurisdiction and social work staff to determine orientation needs. The analysis will be completed by October 2013. Based on the results of the analysis, an orientation program will be developed and implemented by June 2014.*

R2 Seek additional funding to expand the programs for families working with CPS.

*The recommendation has been implemented.*

*DESS has used 2011 Realignment revenue to expand programs, including a prevention-based program, intensive wraparound service programs for foster youth at risk of group home care. With the implementation of the Affordable Care Act in 2014, parents involved with CPS will qualify for Medi-Cal, which may expand their eligibility to a number of health and mental health services.*

R3 Monitor the newly acquired Adoption Services program to ensure that adoptions are taking place within 24 months.

*The recommendation has been implemented.*

*DESS currently completes a monthly data review of all Child and Family Services Review categories, including federal performance standards that pertain to Adoptions. Management staff reviews this data and address concerns pertaining to departmental performance if discovered.*

R4 Put as much information and checklists as possible on the Butte County government website, [www.buttecounty.net](http://www.buttecounty.net).

*The recommendation has not been implemented but will be in the future.*

*DESS will include information pertaining to Relative Foster Care, Adoption, Foster Care Recruitment, Trainings, etc. on the County's updated website. Additional information will be available to the community by November 1, 2013.*

## **REQUEST FOR RESPONSE**

Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933 and 933.05, the Grand Jury requests responses as follows:

- Director, Butte County Department of Employment and Social Services:
  - A response to Findings F1 through F7 and Recommendations R1 through R4

## **2012-2013 BUTTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND ELIGIBILITY SERVICES DIVISIONS**

### **FINDINGS**

F1 The demand for public assistance has increased over the past several years and will most likely continue to increase.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

F2 Although the county anticipates receiving additional state and federal funds to administer public assistance programs, the increases will not be sufficient to continue providing services in the current manner.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

F3 The Department of Employment and Social Services plans to reorganize the Eligibility Services Division in the manner of successful reorganizations in other counties.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

F4 The department deserves commendation for its proactive efforts to find economical ways to address increased workload.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

R1 Monitor the number of calls, length of time before a call is answered, length of each call, etc. of the future call center to ensure that the public continues to receive a high quality of service when calling for assistance.

*The recommendation has not been implemented but will be in the future.*

*DESS will monitor the number of calls, length of time before a call is answered, the length of each call and other critical parameters of operation in order to assure that excellent customer service is provided by the Department's Customer Service Center. This will be implemented by October 2013.*

R2 After implementation of the task-based workload allocation, conduct user surveys to determine customer satisfaction with the system and solicit ways to improve the service.

*The recommendation has not been implemented but will be in the future.*

*DESS will explore and select a method to evaluate customer satisfaction for clients who are having their cases maintained, in an ongoing fashion, through the task-based approach to workload management. This will be completed by January 1, 2014.*

*This feedback will be solicited six months post-implementation in order to allow for a sufficient period of implementation to occur, facilitating the greatest insight into improvements needed or desired. This will be completed by June 2014.*

## **REQUEST FOR RESPONSE**

Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933 and 933.05, the Grand Jury requests responses as follows:

- Director, Butte County Department of Employment and Social Services
  - A Response to Findings F1 through F4 and Recommendations R1 and R2

## FINDINGS

F1 AB109 realignment legislation has aggravated an already serious overcrowding problem. This has emphasized the need for additional jail space.

*The respondent partially disagrees with the finding.*

*The term "overcrowding" could be interpreted as meaning the jail is operating above rated capacity. The jail operates under a consent decree which places a population cap which the jail does not exceed.*

F2 The Butte County Sheriff's Office has approached realignment in an innovative manner.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

F3 Inadequate local information and community conversation have resulted in a misunderstanding of AB109 by the public.

*The respondent partially disagrees with the finding.*

*There appears to be public misunderstanding of AB 109. However, the information provided by the County has been plentiful and consistent. The Board of Supervisors has heard multiple reports on the matter; the Community Corrections Partnership, which determines AB 109 funding holds open meetings regularly; the Sheriff, Undersheriff, District Attorney, and Chief Probation Officer have made presentations to a number of community, civic, and fraternal organizations, neighborhood groups, and community meetings; the Sheriff has partnered with Chico State University and has widely publicized the reports issued by the University; and representatives from the County have met with the newspapers' editorial boards.*

F4 The Day Reporting Center program has been implemented in a manner that has been cost effective for county taxpayers.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

F5 There are inmates in the County Jail that could qualify for Alternative Custody Supervision if they had an acceptable place to live.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

F6 Medical needs of inmates in alternative custody programs are not taken care of by jail medical services or other government programs.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

F7 The CSUC research group is a valuable resource for the Butte County Sheriff's Office and this is a productive partnership.

*The respondent agrees with the finding*

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

R1 Butte County needs to obtain funding to expand the critically overcrowded Butte County Jail, as recommended by the March 2013 Jail Needs Assessment.

*The recommendation has been implemented.*

*Staff is currently working on obtaining funding from SB 1022 for a jail expansion and remodel. Awards are anticipated to be announced in January 2014.*

R2 The Sheriff's Office should designate a public information officer to keep the citizens of Butte County better informed.

*The recommendation has been implemented.*

*The Sheriff employs a media liaison who provides public information. In addition, the Sheriff and staff have made numerous presentations to community organizations, media, and governments.*

R3 Butte County should explore ways to provide temporary housing options for indigent inmates who would otherwise qualify for alternative sentencing programs.

*The recommendation has been implemented.*

*The County is currently exploring options through Sober Living Environment housing. Additionally, the County will explore temporary housing through the Butte Countywide Homeless Continuum of Care.*

R4 Butte County needs to explore ways to provide basic medical care to those alternative custody inmates who do not qualify for state or federal health care assistance.

*The recommendation has been implemented.*

*The County is currently exploring the possibility of opening a "clinic day" at the Day Reporting Center. The County implemented Certified Expenditures for County Jail Patient Inmate Program effective July 1, 2013 and is also exploring additional MediCal eligibility for inmates effective January 2014 under the Affordable Care Act.*

R5 Proposed changes in alternative custody programs by the CSUC study group should be prioritized by the Butte County Sheriff's Office.

*The recommendation has been implemented.*

*The Sheriff is prioritizing the study findings and implementing them as able.*

## REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Grand Jury requests responses as follows:

- Butte County Sheriff's Office:
  - A response to Findings F1 through F7 and Recommendations R1 through R5
- Butte County Board of Supervisors:
  - A response to Finding F1 and Recommendations R1 through R5
- Butte County Department of Employment and Social Services:
  - A response to Findings F5 and F6 and Recommendations R3 and R4

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cathi Grams".

Cathi Grams, Director  
Butte County Department of Employment & Social Services

CC: County Administration Office