



# BUTTE COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT



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July 29, 2013

Honorable Stephen E. Benson, Presiding Judge  
Butte County Superior Court  
1 Court Street  
Oroville, CA 95965

FILED Superior Court of California  
County of Butte  
AUG 05 2013  
Kimberly Floner, Clerk  
By *R. Martinez* Deputy

Honorable Judge Benson,

The following is in response to the Grand Jury Final report, dated 2012-2013, pages 52, 53, 54, under the heading Butte County Juvenile Hall (BCJH) as required by penal code section 933, 933.05.

## FINDINGS

**F1: Juvenile Hall is clean, efficiently operated and focused on the needs of the juvenile detainees.**

This respondent agrees with this finding.

**F2: Staff members work hard to ensure the welfare and safety of the juveniles, plus try to establish mentoring relationships. These relationships provide positive role models and identify opportunities for the juveniles to improve their lives and succeed in the community.**

This respondent agrees with this finding.

**F3: Programs like the Boys and Girls Club and the Table Mountain School provide valuable services and reinforce positive behavior.**

This respondent agrees with this finding.

**F4: Counselor safety would be improved with earlier pepper spray training and more staff to deal with disturbances.**

This respondent disagrees with this finding.

**F5: Due to increased numbers of gang-affiliated juveniles in custody, with limited options for separation, the potential for violence is increased.**

This respondent agrees with this finding.

**F6: A significant number of juveniles return multiple times to Juvenile Hall.**

This respondent agrees with this finding.

**F7: Visitation during the workweek is hard for some parents and guardians due to their work schedules.**

This respondent agrees with this finding.

**F8: The safety and security of the exercise yard is an issue. Access to the perimeter fence around the exercise yard is unsecured. Passing contraband over or through the fence is possible, although a visual check before use minimizes the risk. The lack of security cameras for the entire yard limits electronic monitoring capability.**

This respondent agrees with this finding.

**F9: Juvenile Hall needs a combination of more inside/outside security cameras to cover unmonitored areas and a security system upgrade for outdated and obsolete equipment.**

This respondent agrees with this finding.

**F10: Knowledge of the proposed security system upgrade was varied among the staff counselors.**

This respondent agrees with this finding.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**R1: Add pepper spray training earlier in the formal training program given to new counselors.**

This recommendation will not be implemented. This recommendation is not warranted as deployment of chemical agents is not a routine occurrence within Juvenile Hall and significant observation and training of newer staff is required prior to issuance of pepper spray.

**R2: Increase staff to provide more safety, security, and one-on-one juvenile counseling.**

This recommendation will not be implemented. The recommendation is not warranted as Butte County Juvenile Hall staffing levels are within the levels required by the Board of State and Community Corrections. Adding additional staff is not reasonable as budgetary constraints do not allow for this.

**R3: Explore opening a fourth pod for separating increased gang population and longer-term serious offenders.**

This recommendation will not be implemented. Opening of a fourth pod is not reasonable as Butte County Juvenile Hall currently operates under a Board of State and Community Corrections capacity rating of 60 beds. Opening a fourth pod would require the hiring of numerous additional staff and a cost of around one million dollars additional County general fund to operate annually.

**R4: Continue to improve and expand programs that deal with family counseling and parental interaction.**

This recommendation has been implemented. Butte County Juvenile Hall have dedicated outside counselors and therapists who interact with both the minors in custody and their families. Additionally, more effective ways to transition minors from juvenile hall back to the community are being explored through various partners including the Boys and Girls Club. Finally, Probation Officers and Juvenile Hall Counselors are now jointly managing caseloads for minors in custody which enables better interaction with parents during non-traditional work hours and establishes a more effective transitional plan.

**R5: Look at adjusting visiting hours to provide more weekend opportunities for parents and guardians.**

This recommendation will not be implemented. This recommendation is not warranted as Juvenile Hall currently has visitation both during the week and also on the weekends. Additionally, Juvenile Hall has accommodated special visitation for minors whose parents legitimately cannot make normal visitation due to work schedules. Special additional family visitation is also allowed for minors who have served more than 30 days in custody, birthdays, and certain holidays. Juvenile Hall currently exceeds minimum standards as they pertain to visitation.

**R6: Limit public access to the exercise yard.**

This recommendation will not be implemented as it is not warranted. An additional exterior fence surrounding the current fence would still not prevent contraband being thrown over it. The current fence has been built within industry standards for Juvenile Halls throughout the State of California. Prior to outdoor exercise, a check of both the fence and field is performed by Juvenile Hall staff. Staff have the ability to radio for additional assistance, including police, if security concerns arise during field use.

**R7: Make use of the jail drug dog to randomly search the exercise yard.**

This recommendation will be implemented by January 2014. Following further analysis and coordination with the Sheriff's department the staff will work to implement periodic utilization of the dog both outside and within the facility.

**R8: Make sure the Security System Upgrade Project includes some cameras with day/night recording capability to be deployed in the classrooms and around the exercise yard.**

This recommendation has been implemented. The Juvenile Hall has received approval from the Board of Supervisors to upgrade the entire camera system which includes numerous additional cameras and recording capabilities. This project is expected to be finished during the 2013-14 Grand Jury tenure.

**R9: Proceed with acquiring funding and installation of the Security System Upgrade Project.**

This recommendation has been implemented. On April 23, 2013, the Board of Supervisors approved the funding of the project. This project is expected to be finished during the 2013-14 Grand Jury tenure.

**R10: Better communicate details and updates about the security system upgrade to staff.**

This recommendation has been implemented and will be ongoing as the project progresses. Staff have received verbal updates, emails, memos, and the updated timelines and project details are posted and updated as the project progresses.

Sincerely,

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Steven K. Bordin  
Chief of Probation  
County of Butte

Cc: Butte County Board of Supervisors