



San Diego County Probation Department

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Tamika Nelson, Chief Probation Officer

December 22, 2023

Maya De La Torre
Juvenile Justice Commission Chair
2901 Meadow Lark Drive
San Diego, CA 92123

Response to the 2023 Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) Facility Inspection Report for the Youth Transition Campus (YTC)

Dear Maya De La Torre,

We are in receipt of the Juvenile Justice Commission 2023 Facility Inspection Report for the Youth Transition Campus. Below, please find the San Diego County Probation Department responses to the JJC Recommendations as it pertains to the Youth Transition Campus.

ADMINISTRATION:

RECOMMENDATION #1: Probation and Behavioral Health Services (BHS) management should work towards building a working relationship for the betterment of the Youth at the facility. This can be accomplished through.

RESPONSE #1: The Youth Transition Campus team consisting of Probation, BHS, Wellpath, and San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) meet daily for "Huddles" to discuss youth in the program. BHS, SDCOE, Wellpath and Probation work collaboratively on emergency and individual case plans for the youth in custody.

RECOMMENDATION #2: Regular on-site leadership meetings between the entities using restorative practices. Ensure meetings are documented and tracked.

RESPONSE #2: Monthly facility leadership meetings are held with leadership from BHS, SDCOE, Department of General Services, Wellpath, Summit Food Group, and Professional support staff. Lower-level meetings between facility management, Supervisor, and representatives from BHS, SDCOE and Wellpath are conducted on a bi-weekly basis. Meeting minutes are documented and distributed to all partner for further dissemination amongst the ranks.

RECOMMENDATION #3: Regular on-site relationship building activities between Probation and BHS staff using restorative practices. Ensure activities are documented and tracked.

RESPONSE #3: Please see response to recommendation #2.

RECOMMENDATION #4: Officers referring youth to BHS provide a more detailed referral than "See report" because reports are often not available to clinicians for days if not longer. BHS's ability to triage and treat youth in a timely manner will increase with additional information.

RESPONSE #4: Information was disseminated to officers regarding the need to provide all imperative information related to referrals to allow for BHS to appropriately triage and treat youth in our custody. This information is regularly included in our daily meetings with officers as well.

RECOMMENDATION #5: Probation to ensure all parents and caregivers and/or educational rights holders are aware of the parental grievance process, document, and track.

RESPONSE #5: Parents are provided with a handbook that outlines all parental rights while the youth is in the custody of the Probation Department. The handbook provides youth and family rights, information on the court process, the role of Probation, supportive services information, PREA information, and information regarding resources for youth to voice concerns or complaints (grievance).

RECOMMENDATION #6: Probation to ensure all information disseminated to youth regarding the PREA standards is inclusive of all forms of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment and sexual abuse) and clearly relayed to the Youth.

RESPONSE #6: PREA information is shared throughout the facility and is viewable via large posters that have been posted throughout the facility and living units. Audible information is provided twice a day via a PREA announcements voiced over a facility intercom and by officers within the cottages. Youth are subject to weekly PREA programming and are given an in-depth PREA orientation upon intake at our juvenile institutions.

RECOMMENDATION #7: Capture information to accurately reflect LGBTQ+ Youth in population numbers.

RESPONSE #7: Probation will work with the Probation Department's IT department to develop a method for tracking LGBTQ+ population numbers.

RECOMMENDATION #8: Probation to update policy review protocol or ensure practice meets policy.

RESPONSE #8: Probation has a team who works to review, update, and amend policies as needed. Facility management and supervisory officers will work to ensure practice at the institutional level meets policy by monitoring the activities of officers.

RECOMMENDATION # 9: Establish a Steering Committee who can review outdated policies and procedures that are no longer relevant since the opening of the new facility and the mission and values it now operates on. The facility might be new and beautiful but will crumble under outdated policies and procedures.

RESPONSE # 9: Probation has hired a dedicated team and has been assigned to continually review and revise (as needed) Policies and Procedures. In addition, the team works collaboratively with officers identified as Subject Matter Experts.

RECOMMENDATION # 10: Create specific policies and procedures to ensure all grievances of slurs are addressed in a group setting.

RESPONSE # 10: The grievance process is under continual review with the Policy and Procedures manager and her team.

RECOMMENDATION #11: Provide group facilitators with restorative practices training to address specific topics in each housing unit, for example, the use of discriminatory language. Ensure workshops are documented and tracked.

RESPONSE #11: The use of discriminatory language is not tolerated within the facility. Supervisors, line officers and youth partake in town hall meetings where this information is discussed. Supervisors conduct meetings with officers where meeting minutes are documented addressing such items as derogatory comments and discriminatory language.

RECOMMENDATION #12: Officer onboarding and ongoing workshops by the LGBT Center, Trans Support Services, etc., to ensure an inclusive staff and culture in all units.

RESPONSE #12: Onboarding staff are trained in Gender and Identity Training. In addition, the probation department officers a variety of classes that focus on LGBT and diversity training. Furthermore, the Probation Department recently acquired new instructors that will mainly focus on LGBTQI Awareness.

RECOMMENDATION #13: Regarding the Family Information Night, Probation should ensure translators are in attendance.

RESPONSE #13: During Family Night, we continue to have translators on-site, from Probation, BHS, and SDCOE.

RECOMMENDATION #14: Invitations to the event should be printed in multiple languages and should clearly indicate that translators will be present at the event.

RESPONSE #14: The Youth Transition Campus provides event invitations in multiple languages.

PROGRAMS:

RECOMMENDATION #1: Ensure female Youth continue to receive similar programming as the services male Youth receive in the HOPE program.

RESPONSE #1: The YTC Programming team is committed to identifying and addressing programming gaps to ensure female youth receive HOPE-comparable programming and gender-specific/sensitive programming. The female population has the same access to medical services, mental health, and schooling as the male population. The female populations housed in YTC receive services through the Youthful Offender Unit (YOU). In the YOU program, youths have services and programs available to them. The female cottage has a designated clinician who works with the female population to provide services. Furthermore, the Career Technical Education program is also offered to the female population. SDOCE is currently working on hiring additional teachers to enhance the CTE program.

RECOMMENDATION #2: Collaborate with more community partners and corporations to ensure Youth who are exiting the facility are connected with more resources that represent their strengths and passions. This can be accomplished through:

RESPONSE #2: Probation is working with various programs such as Just In Time and JJAC that provide ongoing support to the youth upon being released back into the community.

Probation is in the process of collaborating with the SDPD Gang Intervention Unit to provide youth athletic leadership opportunities to the youth in custody to bridge gaps between law enforcement in the community and youth in custody. Probation is also collaborating with David's Harp to provide mentoring opportunities for youth in custody through music. These opportunities then transition with the youth as they are released back to the community.

RECOMMENDATION #3: Meeting with organizations or corporations who are looking to support the community especially our most vulnerable populations, for example Starbucks, local sports teams, Lloyds Barber, Snapdragon, SDSU, Padres, restaurant groups, etc.

RESPONSE #3: When approached or identified by community organizations or corporations, the YTC programming team meets with the organizations to learn more about possible partnerships that would benefit YTC youth. These corporate or grant-funded programs provide otherwise inaccessible resources and have included, but are not limited to, coordinating for local sports team visits, military visits, SDSU/student-led programming, interns, attending Padres games, extracurricular opportunities provided by SDCOE partners, restaurant groups, community-based organizations, guest motivational speakers/authors, etc.

RECOMMENDATION #4: Review and re-evaluate the policies and procedures of the Community Resource Directory, including the language used in the Memorandum of Agreement to increase and diversify Probation's community partnerships.

RESPONSE #4: Probation continues to review and evaluate the resources, language and memorandum or agreement with the Community Resource Directory to ensure it is ethnically sensitive, culturally diverse, and educationally competent.

RECOMMENDATION #5: Review and re-evaluate the policies and procedures of the Behavioral Management Systems regarding Youth leaving the facility on program activities and ensure all partners are aware of the procedures to schedule and re-schedule activities.

RESPONSE #5: Probation continues to review and evaluate with our collaborative partners, the policies, procedures, and practices for off campus excursions as it relates to BMS.

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the May 25, 2023, Juvenile Justice Commission Facility Inspection Report for the Youth Transition Campus

Very respectfully,

Tamika Nelson
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER
SAN DIEGO COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

CC: Denise Huffiness, Assistant Chief Probation Officer
Jason Druxman, Deputy Chief of Institutional Services
Cynthia Gamboa & Mike Whatley, Division Chiefs, Youth Transition Campus