

Juvenile Justice Commission of San Diego County

Jails and Lockups 2023 Inspection Report

2022 Yearly Statistics (from Log Books)

0 # Secure detentions **OVER** 6 hours

5 # Secure detentions **UNDER** 6 hours

0 # Non-secure detentions **OVER** 6 hours

17 # Non-secure detentions **UNDER** 6 hours

Authority: Pursuant to Welfare & Institutions Code Section 209(b), a judge of the juvenile court shall conduct an annual inspection, either in person or through a delegated member of the appropriate county or regional juvenile justice commission, of any law enforcement facility that contains a lockup for adults which, in the preceding year, was used for the secure detention of any minor.

Please respond to sections that apply to the facility you are inspecting (type or print clearly)

Facility Name: SDCSD – Imperial Beach Substation Date of Inspection: 11/12/24
Address: 845 Imperial Beach Boulevard Date of Last Inspection: 11/14/2023
Imperial Beach, CA 91932 Phone Number: 619-498-2400

Facility Manager: Lt. Alfred Gathings Contact Person: Lisett N. Quijas
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Presiding Juvenile Court Judge: Hon. Ana España
Commission Chair: Yvette Klepin
Inspecting Commissioners: Amy Lansing

I. GENERAL COMMENTS:

Imperial Beach (IB) is a small, clean and well-lit Sheriff's substation. IB substation continues to have two holding cells near a computer monitoring room, as well as a bench with cuff rail in the computer monitoring room, after the building refresh that occurred in early 2023. The monitoring room theoretically permits both secure and non-secure detentions to occur, as well as separation of adults and youth. The IB substation's back door is within the computer monitoring room, near both cells, and has a cipher lock on it. As noted in the 2023 Juvenile Justice Commission inspection, the back door remains locked and cannot be opened without a code. The back door leads to an enclosed and locked gated alley. It is reasonable to secure the computer area, and the station, by having the back entrance locked.

The door separating the holding areas from the staff kitchen and break room area has a key code lock. When that door is open, it permits access to the reception area and front door as well. At the time of the inspection, the door to the kitchen area was open, providing the option for non-secure detentions to occur. This door is reportedly sometimes closed and therefore automatically locked for anyone without the key code (e.g., privacy in the staff lounge/kitchen etc.). As long as the door between the holding and staff kitchen areas remains open, non-secure juvenile detentions can occur. If the door between the kitchen and holding areas is closed for any reason, then all detentions at that time would be secure. While secure and non-secure detentions are documented, details about the separating door are not part of the logs. It might be helpful to clarify how secure detention occurs (e.g., handcuffed to bench, placed in a locked cell, or sitting on bench unconstrained but separating door is shut). If both doors leading to the processing and detention areas are closed, and therefore locked, any detentions at that time should be logged as secured even when a youth is not handcuffed to the railing. Notably, youth under the age of 14 should not be held in secure detention. Without information about whether or not the staff lounge

door is shut, it is not possible to know if a minor under the age of 14 may have inadvertently been held in a secure detention (i.e., even sitting unconstrained on the bench in the computer monitoring room would be a secure hold if the staff lounge door was shut). This issue could be avoided by training all staff about the door, and alerting staff whenever a minor under the age of 14 was brought into the substation, and consistently documenting any lounge door closures when a minor is present.

As noted in 2023, Imperial Beach completes both the BSCC Secure/Non-Secure Detention Logs and the SDSO "*Temporary Holding Cell Checklist*," Form SO-60. This additional form does not distinguish between detained youth and adult prisoners, as it asks the same questions of both and refers to individuals being in a holding cell. The SDSO form mandates 15-minute checks as opposed to 30-minute checks on the BSCC logs and therefore this substation continues to document 15-minute checks. This presents no conflict for laws related to minors.

In reviewing the monthly BSCC documentation, along with the secure/non-secure logs and *Temporary Holding Cell Checklist* forms, there were no holds over 6 hours for any minors and 17 non-secure and 5 secure holds for 2022. Logs were well-organized and accurate. One youth was brought in for being drunk in public but was not medically assessed. They were instead released in under 40 minutes to a family member. Another youth was noted to have ingested cannabis and was similarly not assessed but released to family in just over two hours. Finally, one youth was under the age of 14 (13 years old) but was released back to school within the hour but no details were available about whether or not the staff lounge door was closed or open.

II. **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The Juvenile Justice Commission continues to recommend that the door between the kitchen and holding/processing areas be kept open whenever a minor is being processed during a non-secure detention. This allows for an accessible exit consistent with conditions of a non-secure hold for minors. If the door between the kitchen and holding/processing areas is closed for any reason, then the youth must be classified as a secure hold even if they are not handcuffed or in a cell. If the youth is classified as secure only because of the door needing to be closed for any reason other than the youth's own behavior (e.g., the behavior of another detainee, privacy needed in the staff lounge), that should be explained in their log – noting that the youth was not handcuffed, not placed in a cell and did not demonstrate problematic behavior warranting a secure detention. While this is not an ideal solution, it provides a reasonable measure given the substation's configuration and size.
2. The Juvenile Justice Commission continues to recommend that all officers are made aware of the restrictions on secure holds of minors, as well as the structural complexities of the substation which can make a hold secure just by shutting an internal door (see recommendation 1). No youths under the age of 14 may be handcuffed to the rail, placed in a cell, or detained when key-coded doors are shut and therefore locked. We recognize that for a youth's safety, even one under the age of 14, secure holds might occur or happen inadvertently. We ask that consistent documentation, and training on appropriate documentation, occur for all officers. Further, all staff should be aware when a minor under the age of 14 is present in the station so that the lounge door remains open. Signage for the staff on the door, indicating the presence of a minor under the age of 14, might be adequate so that no one shuts the door.
3. The Juvenile Justice Commission recommends that the IB substation be mindful of youths' substance-related charges. Generally, a youth arrested on public intoxication and other substance-related charges should be medically evaluated. Some stations accomplish this by calling a paramedic, reaching out to the fire department and/or taking a youth to Rady Children's Hospital. While each station handles minor's intoxication in slightly different ways, depending on available resources and location, we recommend that all officers receive training. We recognize that cannabis intoxication does not have the gold standard assessments associated with alcohol (i.e., blood alcohol levels in DUI arrests) but request that IB continue to look for appropriate

trainings, be alert for any health concerns that might arise among youth who have ingested alcohol and/or other substances and take steps for appropriate medical assessments as needed.

The following questions are used to assess compliance with the state standards governing law enforcement facilities in which minors are held in temporary custody. See Article 9, *Minors in Temporary Custody in a Law Enforcement Facility*, Title 15 of the California Code of Regulations (15 Cal. Code Regs. §§ 1140–1151).

III. CONDITIONS OF DETENTION:

- A. Are minors provided with orientation? Yes No
- B. Are they informed of the purpose of detention? Yes No
- C. Are they told the length of time detention is expected to last? Yes No
- D. Are they informed of the six-hour maximum time limit? Yes No

IV. CONDITIONS OF SECURE DETENTION (e.g. cell/locked room):

- A. What is the proximity of minors to adult inmates?
Secure holds may occur in one of the two side-by-side cells used for youth and adults or by cuffing a youth seated on the bench in the computer room. It seems minors are most commonly held in the computer room but there is limited space in this substation and some proximity is likely if adults and minors are being processed at the same time.
- B. What is the ability and frequency of staff to supervise minor?
Continuous monitoring.
- C. Is there constant auditory access to staff? Yes No
- D. Are minors provided with a snack if requested? Yes No
- E. Do minors have access to toilets and washing facilities? Yes No
- F. Do minors have access to a drinking fountain or water? Yes No
- G. Are there provisions to provide clothing or blankets to assure comfort? Yes No

V. CONDITIONS OF SECURE DETENTION OUTSIDE A LOCKED ENCLOSURE:

(this includes minors who are handcuffed to a fixed object such as a rail, bench, chair or table):

- A. Are minors assured no “contact” with adult inmates? Yes No
- B. Is there constant supervision? Yes No
- C. Is there a 30-minute limit and Watch Commander approval every 30 minutes thereafter? Yes No
- D. Are minors placed in cell when one becomes available? Yes No
It is possible but not automatic or even necessary unless there are multiple youths being processed at the same time as an option exists in the computer monitoring room, which allows for constant supervision/monitoring.
- E. Do minors have access to toilet and washing facilities? Yes No
- F. Is there access to a drinking fountain? Yes No

No water fountain was observed but water is available and provided.

VI. CONDITIONS OF NON-SECURE DETENTION:

- A. Is there direct and constant supervision by staff during the entire custody period? Yes No
- B. Are males and females put in same room? Yes No

VII. INTOXICATED MINORS:

- A. Does the facility have written procedures for the handling of minors under the influence of any intoxicating substances? Yes No
- B. Did the facility detain any minors, either secure or non-secure, determined to be under the influence of an intoxicating substance? Yes No

If yes:

1. Was medical clearance obtained? Yes No N/A
2. Were these detentions documented? Yes No N/A
3. If the detention was secure, were there documented safety checks no less than once every 15 minutes? Yes No N/A
4. If the detention was non-secure, was the minor in the constant presence of staff? Yes No N/A
5. Who provides medical clearance for these minors?

EMT may be called in the field and officers are aware of the option to take a minor to Children's Hospital but it does not appear that these options are routinely used. Blood alcohol tests are used as the gold standard at the substation, particularly related to DUI arrests.

VIII. DOCUMENTATION:

- A. Are all mandated visual checks documented? Yes No
- B. Are secure/non-secure detention logs used? Yes No
- C. Do the detention logs list the offense and reason which formed the decision to place the minor in secure detention, as well as the length of time the minor was securely detained? Yes No
- D. Does the facility have signage posted explaining the procedures for the handling of secure / non-secure detention of minors? Yes No

IX. ARE THERE INSTANCES IN WHICH A MINOR(S) WAS HELD FOR MORE THAN SIX HOURS? IF YES, LIST THE DATES, STARTING AND ENDING TIME AND CIRCUMSTANCES FOR EACH INSTANCE.

No

X. Minors Interviewed (Comments):

No minors present during inspection.