

Approved: _____

Superior Court Judge

8/15/14

FILED
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SONOMA

SEP - 5 2014

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM BY _____

Deputy Clerk

Report Title: Up Against the Wall: Sonoma County Detention Facilities

Report Date: Final Report 2013-2014

Response by: Steve Freitas

Title: Sheriff-Coroner

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: F1, F2, F3
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: _____
(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons therefor.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered F1, F2, F3 have been implemented.
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered _____ have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered _____ require further analysis.
(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.)
- Recommendations numbered _____ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: 8/5/14

Signed: _____

Number of pages attached 3

SONOMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
RESPONSE TO THE 2013-2014 GRAND JURY REPORT

Up Against the Wall: Sonoma County Detention Facilities

Pages 35 - 38

FINDINGS

F1. Realignment continue to pose challenges to adult detention facilities.

RESPONSE: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F2. Mandatory overtime is an increasing burden for correctional personnel.

RESPONSE: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F3. Inmates with medical and mental health issues make significant demands on the MADF staff and facilities.

RESPONSE: The respondent agrees with the finding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. The Sheriff's Office continue to improve the expansion and safety of adult detention facilities.

RESPONSE: The recommendation has been implemented.

The Sheriff's Office is continually working with the County's General Services Department, Facilities Development Management Division (FD&M) to develop immediate and long term solutions to meet the facility's expansion needs and the desire to continually improve the safety of inmates and staff. Sheriff's Office requests for the County's FY 14-15 Capital Project Plan (CPP) included a list of over 28 detention facility and facility planning projects totaling approximately 5 million dollars. While some of the projects are related to maintaining the aging facilities, the bulk of the projects are related to improving the facilities so that they can better accommodate the increasing inmate population and provide safer facilities for both inmates and Detention staff. One of the projects submitted is specifically dedicated to facility expansion planning.

In addition, Detention staff are continually researching alternative ways to maximize the use of existing facilities and resources in the most cost effective manner. For example, a web-based software scheduling application and video visiting have been evaluated and will be implemented in the near future to free up space in the lobbies and create efficiencies for visitors and staff. Programs such as the Pre-trial Services Program and Electronic Monitoring Program directly reduce the overall average daily population (ADP) which takes pressure off the facilities and staff. The purchase of a body scanner is being contemplated in FY 14-15 which will dramatically decrease the amount of contraband that is brought into the facilities thereby increasing overall safety.

R2. The Sheriff's Office keep up its efforts to hire new personnel to deal with the growing inmate population.

RESPONSE: The recommendation has been implemented.

The respondent agrees with the recommendation that efforts should be ongoing to hire new personnel. Since FY 12-13, with the Board of Supervisors approval and funding, the Sheriff's Office has engaged in an intensive hiring effort to increase the rate at which new staff are hired. This effort continued throughout FY 13-14 and included adding a significant amount of resources to the Sheriff's Office Personnel Bureau. Based on the results over the past two years, we have learned that this effort has assisted with the hiring deficit, but has been inadequate to keep up with attrition. To truly meet the objective of getting and staying ahead of the hiring curve on-going resources will have to be dedicated to this effort. For example, although 15 and 19 new correctional deputies were hired in FY 12-13 and FY 13-14 respectively, 13 vacancies still exist as of the writing of this document. This is due to normal, continual staff turnover. The lowest vacancy rate in the correctional deputy job class during this intensive hiring effort has been six. Fatigued staff continue to become sick and injured as a result of the current staffing shortages. This has increased the number of correctional staff who are unavailable to cover required shifts to unprecedented levels, compounding the need for mandatory overtime as existing staff are required to cover the open shifts.

The Board of Supervisors has approved one-time funding for temporary staffing support for the Sheriff's Office Personnel Unit. This funding will be fully expended by December 2014. It is evident that the hiring needs of the Sheriff's Office are ongoing. To continue the hiring efforts necessary to insure continued adequate staffing of the Sheriff's Office as a whole, and in particular the Detention Division, the Sheriff's Office Personnel Unit needs to be restored to pre-2009 staffing levels. Since 2009 the Personnel Unit has lost 5 permanent allocations, almost half of the pre-2009 total staff of 12. The Unit is in need of permanent allocations in the area of background investigators, internal affairs investigators, supervision, and office support.

R3. The Sheriff's Office continue treating inmates with mental and physical health issues to improve their changes for successful adjustment to independence upon release.

RESPONSE: The recommendation has been implemented.

The respondent agrees with the recommendation to continue treating inmates with physical and mental (behavioral) health issues while in custody to improve an inmate's chance for post-release success. Detention staff remain in close contact and coordinate with the medical and mental health providers to ensure quality treatment is being provided to inmates. In FY 13-14, the Detention Division medical program provider was thoroughly evaluated, including the assessment of a variety of available providers, to ensure the Sheriff's Office objectives were being effectively met. The Sheriff's Office mental health program was also evaluated in FY 13-14 and resulted in the Sheriff's Office increasing its behavioral health staffing by 3.85 full time employees.

The Sheriff's Office appreciates the need for an inmate's continuity of care pending their release from custody. Continuity of care is a significant factor in increasing the likelihood that an inmate will not return to custody. The County's Behavioral Health Program includes a discharge planner that not only places inmates into mental health treatment upon their release, but also links inmates to essential post-release services such as financial, food, and housing assistance. In addition to the treatment being provided, the Detention Division administers classes and programs for behavioral health inmates. PATHS is just one example of the type of programming provided. PATHS includes content focused on P-prevention, A-art and anger management, T-thinking cognitively, H- health issues, and S-stress reduction. The program is offered as an intervention for inmates with mental health issues.

Finally, the Sheriff's Office, in coordination with partners throughout the County, are in the process of implementing a local approach to execution of the Affordable Health Care Act (ACA) which will aim to enroll inmates into appropriate health plans prior to their release, thus insuring the likelihood that essential care will be continuous.