

Sonoma County 2025-2026 Civil Grand Jury
Observation of the County’s Detention Facilities

June 2026

California Penal Code Section § 919(b) requires that each county’s civil grand jury “inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the county”.

While Sonoma County has no public prisons, it has two detention facilities: the Main Adult Detention Facility (MADF) and the Juvenile Hall.

The Penal Code does not require a formal report of the Grand Jury’s inquiry. Instead, the Sonoma County 2025-2026 Civil Grand Jury prepared this review based on inspections of the two facilities that it conducted in October 2025 and information and documents provided at that time.

Both MADF and Juvenile Hall are also inspected by the California Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) to be sure they meet California Title 15 requirements. The BSCC inspection of MADF was completed on February 24, 2026. The Juvenile Hall inspection by the BSCC was completed on April 29, 2025. The BSCC reports received by the Grand Jury, indicate that both facilities were in compliance with the minimum [Title 15 California Code of Regulations](#) “Crime Prevention and Corrections”, include the following items:

- Article 3. Training, Personnel, and Management
- Article 4. Records and Public Information
- Article 5. Classification and Separation
- Article 6. Programs and Services
- Article 7. Discipline

- Article 8. Minors in Jails
- Article 9. Minors in Temporary Custody in a Law Enforcement Facility
- Article 10. Minors in Court Holding Facilities
- Article 11. Medical/Mental Health Services
- Article 12. Food
- Article 13. Clothing and Personal Hygiene
- Article 14. Bedding and Linens
- Article 15. Facility Sanitation and Safety

SONOMA COUNTY MAIN ADULT DETENTION FACILITY (AKA: The County Jail)

From 2019 to 2023, Sonoma County's law enforcement found it very difficult to fill vacancies. There were several reasons for the vacancies, but a large number were created by staff members retiring during the COVID epidemic. Due to the vacancies, Sonoma County resorted to mandatory overtime in order to maintain staffing levels. This also led to the closing of the North County Detention Facility and contracting with Solano County to house some prisoners that could not be housed in the MADF. Prisoners had to be kept in their cells for all but an hour a day due to possible COVID contamination and lack of staff to monitor them when they were out of their cells. The MADF also had to cancel many of the successful prisoner programs they had implemented. ([View Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury 2023-2024 Report.](#))

In 2024, the County Human Services and Sheriff's Departments intensified employee recruitment resulting in numerous vacancies being filled. Recruitment is an ongoing process to maintain staffing levels. The 2025-2026 Grand Jury found that mandatory overtime has been reduced from over 100 plus hours per officer per month to fewer than 20 hours per officer. Out of cell exercise time has increased from one hour per day to six plus hours per day. With staffing levels returning

to normal MADF has been able to reinstate prisoner programs and consider additional programs. Among the current programs:

Five Keys High School - The Sonoma County Jail does not offer a GED preparation program. Instead, the facility operates an accredited high school program on site through Five Keys High School. This program allows eligible incarcerated individuals to earn high school credits and work toward a traditional high school diploma, rather than a GED certificate.

Anger Management - A structured group class that teaches participants to recognize, understand, and manage anger using evidence-based techniques to improve emotional regulation and reduce aggressive behavior.

GEO – MRT (Moral Reconciliation Therapy) - A cognitive-behavioral intervention that addresses criminal thinking patterns and improves moral reasoning, decision-making, and prosocial behavior to reduce recidivism.

GEO – Maintaining My Recovery - A recovery maintenance program reinforcing sobriety skills, relapse prevention strategies, and long-term recovery planning.

GEO – CBISA 1 (Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Substance Abuse I) - An evidence-based cognitive-behavioral curriculum focused on identifying substance use triggers and developing coping strategies to prevent relapse.

GEO – CBISA 2 (Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Substance Abuse II) - A continuation of CBISA 1 that builds on cognitive-behavioral skills and strengthens long-term recovery tools and behavioral change strategies.

(GEO is a company that provides re-entry services and is contract by the MADF)

Job Skills - A vocational readiness course covering résumé development, interview preparation, workplace expectations, and job search techniques to improve post-release employment outcomes.

Santa Rosa Junior College – Communications - A college-level communications course designed to strengthen written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills to support academic and workforce success.

Parenting - A skills-based class that promotes healthy parenting practices, effective communication with children, and strengthening of family relationships.

Relapse Prevention - A structured program teaching participants to identify high-risk situations, manage cravings, and develop individualized plans to maintain sobriety

Class Enrollments at the MADF

Class	Enrollees
Anger Management	17
Five Keys High School	84
GEO-MRT	60
GEO-Maintaining My Recovery	44
GEO-CBISA 1	37
GEO CBISA 2	6
Job Skills	17
SRJC-Communications	5
Parenting	11
Relapse Prevention	15

One issue that continues to plague the jail is the large number of inmates with mental and behavioral health issues. Some of these inmates are pending court appearances or serving time imposed by court sentencing. Others have been found not competent for court appearance, and/or are considered a danger to themselves, or to others. Some of these individuals could be handled and monitored by behavioral health facilities if beds and space were available. While the jail staff does a good job of trying to place these individuals in care facilities after they must be released, there is a lack of sufficient beds and program space in outside facilities to monitor them. Many are homeless or destitute and cannot afford private care facilities. This is not a Grand Jury investigation, however, based on its inquiry into the detention facilities of Sonoma County, the Grand Jury supports the Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury 2023-2024 report

recommendation that the Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff continue to seek funds, either through grants or state /federal funds that can be used to build a mental health addition to the MADF (see Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury Report 2023-2024) and/or obtain bed space in a secure behavioral health facility.

INMATE POPULATION SUMMARY MADF - October 2025

MADF	Count	Percentage
Sentenced Males	193	26%
Sentenced Females	26	3%
Unsentenced Males	480	63%
Unsentenced Females	56	8%
Total Count	755	100%

TOTAL MENTAL HEALTH POPULATION - October 2025

Total Mental Involved Inmates	345
Total Mental Health Acute Inmates	254

COMMENDATION

The Civil Grand Jury commends the MADF staff for their dedication and work ethic in what is not an easy job.

SONOMA COUNTY JUVENILE HALL

Juvenile Hall is a direct supervision facility run by the Juvenile Division of the Probation Department. Direct supervision means that a Juvenile Hall staff member is with a group of detainees throughout the day. The facility can house 120 detainees. At time of the Grand Jury visit, the Juvenile Hall facility was at less than half of its

capacity. They also contract with other counties to house some of their detainees. This usually accounts for 10 detainees. One of Juvenile Probation's goals is to work with the youth to resolve any issues that keep them from being returned to a stable home environment.

Juvenile Hall is kept very clean, and the Juvenile Hall Staff have created therapeutic spaces to support rehabilitation. The murals brighten the rooms and bring intrigue and wonder to areas that lacked color, helping to reduce stress and promote a calmer atmosphere for staff and detainees.

Juvenile Hall, like the county jail, had to temporarily shut down many group programs during COVID to avoid spreading the virus. It has since reinstated many of the programs including aggression training, healthy relationships, drug and alcohol counseling, and others. Staff also work with community organizations who provide services at the Hall that can be accessed by the detainees when they return to their families, such as Boys and Girls Club. One important aspect of the programs is a focus on education. Detainees have access to grade appropriate classes and have a library available. Detainees are also able to continue their education with online community college courses. Some complete enough credits to transfer into four-year colleges after their release. The Grand Jury observed volunteers who were providing reading and academic support.

The facility has a music studio where detainees can learn how to play instruments and record their music using professional recording equipment. Staff and detainees, worked together to build an aquaponics green house where detainees grow herbs and vegetables in addition to a regular garden.

The overall goal of Juvenile Hall is to return youth to the community with skills and experiences that help them be better prepared for the many challenges they will face.

COMMENDATION:

Like the jail staff, Juvenile Hall staff and volunteers are recognized for their dedication and work ethic in providing supervision and guidance for the troubled youth of our communities.



Photos provided by The Sonoma County Probation Department which partnered with artists Amanda Lynn and MJ Lindo-Lawyer (pictured above with the Juvenile Hall Director) to create nine large murals at Sonoma County Juvenile Hall. The project was funded through AB 178, which supports improvements to juvenile halls in California, and the Youth Programs and Facilities Grant Program Part A, which helps redesign therapeutic and programming spaces.