

Orange County Juvenile Detention and Treatment Facilities

SUMMARY

At the beginning of 2012, the OC Probation Department operated five juvenile detention and/or correctional facilities in Orange County. Because of the increase in demand for adult jail beds by the Sheriff's Department, the Probation Department lost the use of the Theo Lacy Juvenile Annex. This required the integration of 56 juveniles into the general population of Central Juvenile Hall. These juveniles are considered the most serious offenders in the detention system and are under prosecution as adults. In spite of this increase at Central Juvenile Hall, all juvenile facilities are operating within their rated capacity.

While the juvenile facilities are generally in good condition, certain maintenance issues were identified at Central Juvenile Hall and are included in the findings. An issue exists with respect to the current practice allowing male and female minors to reside in the same unit. This arrangement resulted in a serious breach of security and is explored in this report.

The residential treatment facilities: the Youth Leadership Academy, the Youth Guidance Center, and the Joplin Youth Center are given relatively high marks. The only negative is the runaway rate at the Joplin Youth Center that was somewhat higher than expected.

REASON FOR STUDY

This study is to comply with Section 919(b) of the California Penal Code requiring the Grand Jury to “inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the County.” Although the juvenile detention facilities operated by the Probation Department are not technically “prisons,” they traditionally fall under this category for the Grand Jury investigations.

METHODOLOGY

Following a presentation to the 2011-2012 Grand Jury by the Chief Probation Officer and members of his management staff, the Jury reviewed the distributed documents to gather information regarding the various probation facilities and their programs.

Jury members visited and/or inspected all juvenile detention/correctional facilities. One visit was made to the Theo Lacy Annex and Youth Guidance Center, two visits to the Youth Leadership Academy and Camp Joplin, and three visits to Central Juvenile Hall.

All facility managers (or their designates) were interviewed at length with a prepared set of questions. Jury members also reviewed documents relating to prior inspections performed by the Correctional Services Administration, Health Department and Fire Department.

During the facility visits, jury members interviewed various probation staff and juvenile wards.

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BACKGROUND AND FACTS

During 2011-2012, the Orange County Probation Department operated the following five facilities providing housing and correctional care for youthful offenders under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court:

- Central Juvenile Hall located on City Drive in the city of Orange (next to the Lamoreaux Justice Center);
- Theo Lacy Juvenile Annex, located in the Theo Lacy Jail, next door to Central Juvenile Hall;
- The Youth Leadership Academy, also next door to Central Juvenile Hall;
- The Youth Guidance Center, located across the river from the above facilities on North Hesperian Street in the city of Santa Ana; and
- The Joplin Youth Center located in the foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains in Trabuco Canyon.

Prior to 2012, the Sheriff's Department had loaned the Theo Lacy Juvenile Annex, to the Probation Department. In early 2012, that facility was returned to the control of the Sheriff's Department.

All five facilities are briefly described below. Observations gained during the inspection process are presented in the ANALYSIS section of the report.

Central Juvenile Hall (CJH)

Orange County Juvenile Hall is a 380-bed institution for juvenile law violators. The facility houses boys and girls, generally between ages 12 and 18, who are detained pending Juvenile Court hearings in the adjacent Betty Lou Lamoreaux Juvenile Justice Center or who remain in custody by order of the Juvenile Court.¹

Boys and girls are assigned to living units designed to house 20 to 60 minors. The units have sleeping rooms, restrooms, showers, and a day room for a variety of leisure and structured activities. Residents are generally housed by age group and gender. The Intake and Release Center houses newly arrested minors awaiting an initial court appearance. Each unit is supervised during each shift by Deputy Probation Correctional Officers or "sworn probation staff," who provide individual and/or group counseling and provide supervision.

The Orange County Department of Education provides a fully accredited academic program on-site. Nurses and dentists from the Orange County Health Care Agency provide medical and dental care. Psychiatrists and psychologists from the Health Care Agency evaluate and assist minors exhibiting emotional or mental problems. Other specialized services are provided as needed.

¹ **Program Description, Orange County Probation Department**, posted to web site

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Minors participate daily in outdoor sports and other recreation. Religious and Bible studies are available to youths upon request. Each living unit has a small library, and telephones are available for minors to make collect calls. Visiting hours are scheduled weekly.

Representatives from the Corrections Standards Authority, Juvenile Court, and the Orange County Juvenile Justice Commission monitor conditions and the care of youths at Juvenile Hall.

Figure 1 – Central Juvenile Hall - 2011 Average Daily

Population (ADP)

The rated capacity for this facility is 434. In July 2009, Probation Management set the operational capacity at 380 for budgetary reasons.

While the population has been running comfortably below the rated capacity, it has been very close to the operating capacity.

In June 2011 for example, the Average Daily Population was 373, just seven under the operating capacity.



According to the data provided by the Probation Department,² just under 90 percent of the Central Juvenile Hall residents are boys.

Theo Lacy Annex

The Theo Lacy Juvenile Annex is one module of the adult Theo Lacy jail operated by the Sheriff's Department. Prior to December 2011, the Theo Lacy Juvenile Annex in the City of Orange, near the Lamoreaux Justice Center, housed up to 56 older teenage boys either pending court hearings or serving Juvenile Court commitments. This section housed the Extreme Security Risk Unit consisting of minors who have been charged with the most serious offenses such as murder, attempted murder, rape and robbery.

On October 1, 2012, Assembly Bill (AB) 109 was implemented in the state of California. This legislation requires counties to keep certain, non-serious felons in county jail rather than

² **Monthly Institutional Population Report**, Orange County Probation Department

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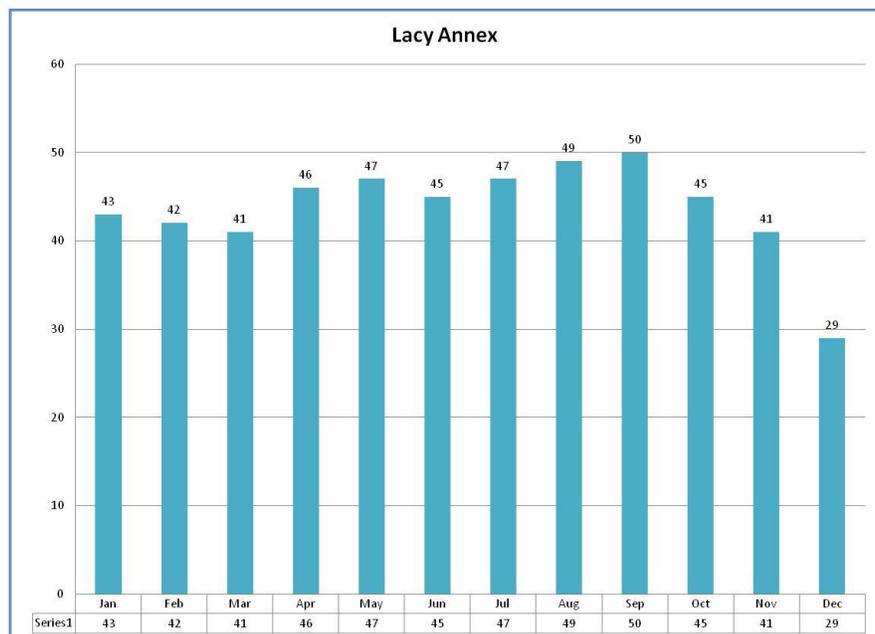
committing to state prisons. In addition to an increase in sentenced prisoners, the length of sentence is longer for this new jail population: up to three years as opposed to one-year for misdemeanor sentences. Because of this change in law, and the resulting requirement for additional jail beds, the Sheriff's Department found it necessary to resume control of the Theo Lacy Juvenile Annex.

The Probation Department began moving juveniles out of the Theo Lacy Annex in December 2011 and completed the move in January 2012. The juveniles remaining in custody at Theo Lacy were transferred to Central Juvenile Hall.

Figure 2 – Theo Lacy Annex – 2011 Average Daily Population

(ADP)

As shown in Figure 2, the Theo Lacy Juvenile Annex normally housed between 40 and 50 minors. At the end of December 2011, the number was down to 29. In January 2012, the remaining minors were moved to Central Juvenile Hall. All beds in this former juvenile facility are now controlled by the Sheriff's Department for housing adult inmates.



Youth Leadership Academy (YLA)

The Youth Leadership Academy is a 60-bed secured treatment facility located in the City of Orange adjacent to Central Juvenile Hall. This facility, classified as a camp, opened in 2006. The academy originally was housed in three buildings and had a capacity of 120 juveniles. Two identical buildings were used for holding male residents and the third, a smaller building, served as the administration building. One of the residential buildings has been closed for budgetary reasons.

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While the remaining dormitory is mostly self-contained, the residents must attend school next door at Central Juvenile Hall. YLA provides a variety of programs designed to prepare older juveniles for return to the community.

The resident population consists of young men between the ages of 17.5 and 20 years of age who have a moderate to high risk to re-offend. They have also experienced problems with aggression, anti-social attitudes, belief systems, behavior and peers. They are often drug and alcohol dependent and lack self-control. The average length of commitment is 120 days.

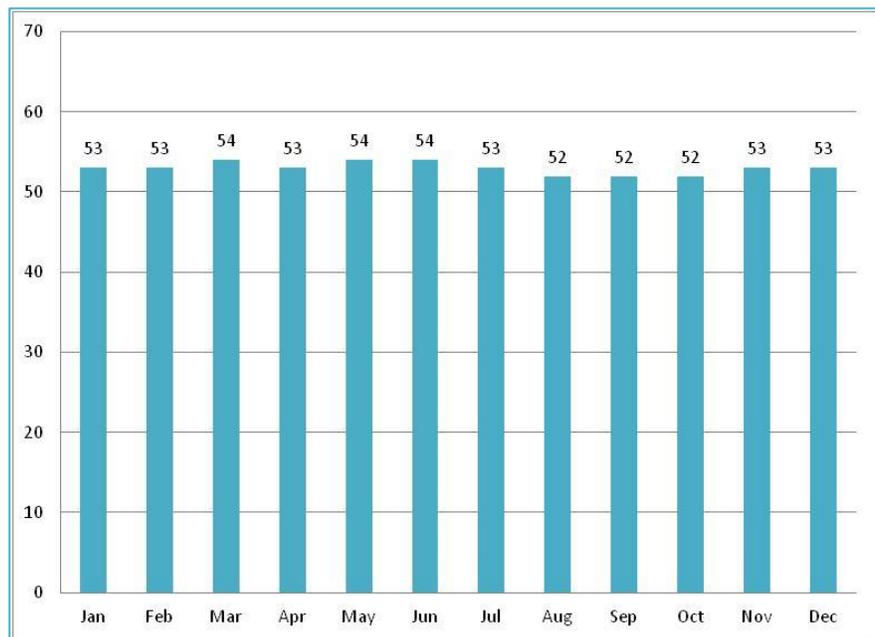
The YLA program is designed to prepare youth to transition back into the community through a comprehensive program that includes remedial education, substance abuse programs and mental health services. The Orange County Department of Education provides a school program. The Orange County Health Care Agency provides on-site medical services. The Clinical Evaluation and Guidance Unit provides individual and family counseling. Drug and alcohol education, assessments and treatment programs are available as needed.³

Figure 3 – Youth Leadership Academy – 2011 Average Daily Population

(ADP)

As seen in Figure 3, the average daily population of the Youth Leadership Academy has been stable at about 53 residents.

This is near, but still under the operational capacity of 60.



Youth Guidance Center (YGC)

The Orange County Youth Guidance Center (YGC) is centrally located in Santa Ana across the river from Central Juvenile Hall and the Youth Leadership Academy. The facility has a total of 80 beds: 60 are for boys and 20 for girls. The facility offers substance abuse rehabilitation for male and female minors ranging from 13 to 20 years of age. All residents participate in an academic program at the on-grounds Rio Contiguo High School operated by the County

³ Orange County Juvenile Justice Commission, **Annual Report, 2010**

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Department of Education. Students normally attend six classes per day. Selected students, however, may attend off-grounds college courses or available correspondence and televised courses for college credit.

All residents perform basic housekeeping, assist with the laundry, perform building and grounds maintenance, and take part in the culinary arts program.

The facility offers two programs directed toward the treatment of drug and alcohol abusers. They focus on the wide range of needs existing among the offenders in residence. “The primary goals are to provide cognitive behavioral interventions designed to encourage pro-social thinking and to develop each minor behaviorally, vocationally and academically in preparation for re-entry into the community.”⁴

Figure 4 – Youth Guidance Center (YGC) – 2011 Average Daily

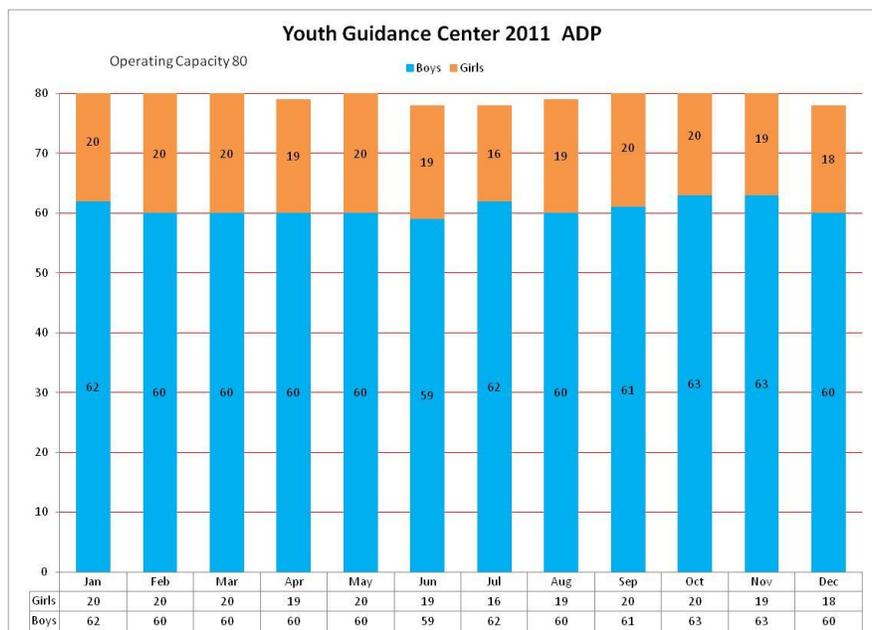
Population

YGC has a rated capacity of 125 but has an operating capacity of 80 beds. The remaining 45 beds have been closed for budgetary reasons.

As shown in Figure 4 the 2011 average daily population was stable with approximately 60 boys and 20 girls in residence.

The programs establish individual treatment plans tailored to each subject’s specific needs. Each of the four living units has a

dedicated on-site psychologist and drug counselor as well as an onsite probation officer who, along with an assigned deputy juvenile correctional officer and the school staff, establish objectives and goals for the residents to follow and achieve during their stay. Volunteers and mentors from the community enhance the overall program.



Joplin Youth Center (JYC)

The Joplin Youth Center is a juvenile correctional facility providing residential treatment for

⁴ Supra, Probation Department **Program Description**

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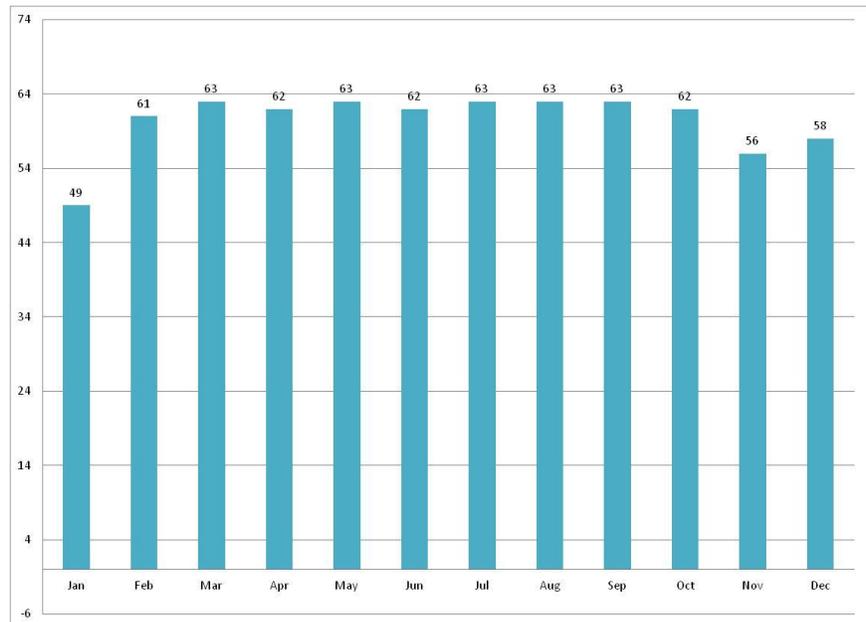
teenage boys ages 13 to 16. Classified as an “open camp”, it is located in a rustic setting in the foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains at an elevation of 1,800 feet. The buildings, which include administration, dormitory, and schools plus a large recreational area, cover about 20 acres.

Joplin is an open camp with very little security. Residents must therefore be screened for suitability. Youths with a runaway history are not good candidates for this setting.⁵

Figure 5 – Joplin Youth Center – 2011 Average Daily

Population

This facility has a rated and operational capacity of 64 residents. As shown in figure 5, the average daily population of this camp has been at or near capacity for most of 2011. January, November and December were slightly under capacity.



The school day at Joplin consists of five 55-minute classes in which the boys work on individualized courses of instruction. They also receive special education classes, employment training, library access, and math tutoring as needed. The Joplin program stresses rehabilitation and academics. Camp staff and the Orange County Health Care Agency provide counseling for boys who have abused drugs or alcohol. Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous hold meetings on-site on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

Alternative Confinement Programs (ACP)

Although technically not part of the juvenile detention facilities, the alternative confinement programs operated by the Probation Department offer an alternative to detention or commitment to an institutional correctional program. A brief description of the program and operational data are included here.

“ACP was established in 1996 by authorization of the Presiding Judge of the Orange County Juvenile Court. A standing court order permits probation staff to release certain minors from Central Juvenile Hall to complete their court commitment on a day reporting program under GPS

⁵ Supra, Probation Department Program Description

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monitoring (added in 2006). Minors may also be committed directly to this program by the court.⁶

Eligibility for release requires that minors have 120 days or less remaining on their commitment and pose minimal risk to the community. Minors who have committed certain serious offenses are not eligible for the program.

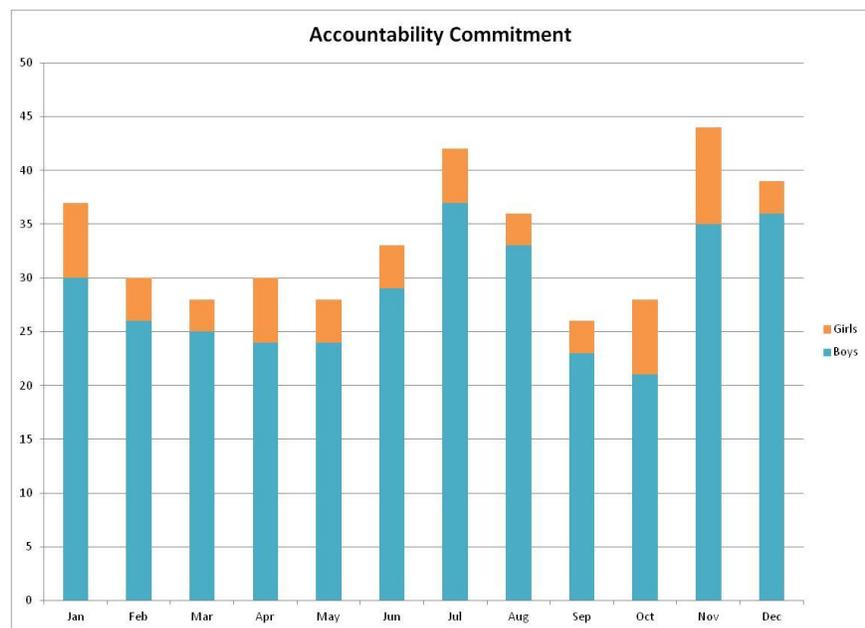
The program is a joint effort of the Probation Department and the Orange County Department of Education. Participants attend school in the morning and are assigned to work crews or counseling programs in the afternoon. Deputy Juvenile Correctional Officers supervise the afternoon activities.

Figure 6 – Accountability Commitment 2011 Average Daily

Population

The number of participants ranged from a high of 44 in November to a low of 26 in September.

The average daily population for 2011 was 29 boys and 5 girls for a total of 34.



ANALYSIS

Presented in this section are the observations of the Grand Jury inspection teams during the orientation and inspection visits. These facilities are also inspected by a number of agencies that include:

- State of California Correctional Standards Authority - bi-annual inspections
- Orange County Health Department – annual inspections
- Orange County Fire Authority – annual inspections
- Orange County Juvenile Justice Commission – annual inspections

⁶ Program Description by Orange County Probation Department

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- Presiding Judge, Orange County Juvenile Court – annual inspections

Central Juvenile Hall

Review of Inspection Documents and Physical Inspection

Grand Jury members visited Central Juvenile Hall on three occasions. The first was a general orientation tour, the second a review of inspection documents and physical inspection of the facility and the third, a follow-up visit following the news story regarding a sex incident that is described later in this report.

The Corrections Standards Authority inspection showed compliance in all areas but noted that the older units were showing extensive signs of wear and tear. A Health Department report was critical of the condition of the paint, general maintenance and housekeeping in several units. The Grand Jury team inspected unit I and found it to be in generally poor condition. Of particular concern was the peeling paint that appears to have been stripped from the walls by the minors housed in that unit. The Health Department also noted toilet tissue debris clogging the air vents.

The Grand Jury inspectors were also concerned about an apparent lack of attentiveness of staff on duty to the behavior and expressed needs of one of the juveniles in the unit. They observed a young male, obviously emotionally upset and in need of attention, to be basically ignored by the staff on duty.

Several issues were identified by the Grand Jury inspectors with respect to the trailer housing the visiting facility. These include:

- The visitation trailer shows signs of having worn and soiled carpeting and poor air conditioning;
- The signage with visiting rules is faded and difficult to read; and
- There is a lack of seating near the entrance for visitors arriving early.

A Newsworthy Incident

On February 12, 2012, a male and female resident were found together in the female's room. The story, reported by the Orange County Register,⁷ claimed that the two were together in the room for approximately four-hours and had engaged in sex. While facts are limited at this time because the matter is under investigation by the Sheriff's Department, the Probation Department and the Office of Independent Review. Indications are, however, that the two were housed in a coed unit and were not supervised according to policies and procedures pertaining to room checks.

This is the first use of the Office of Independent Review outside the Sheriff's Department. The Grand Jury believes this is a logical expansion of the duties of this office and should lead to a broader role with respect to the Probation Department Juvenile Facilities.

⁷ Hernandez, Salvador – Orange County Register – “Watchdog” – February 25, 2012

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Youth Leadership Academy

The 2011-2012 Grand Jury made two visits to this facility. There were no compliance issues either in the review of the documents or the physical inspection. The program in place appears to be well planned and professionally implemented.

Youth Guidance Center

The 2011-2012 Grand Jury also made a single visit to the Youth Guidance Center. Members found this facility to be an attractive environment with a strong drug treatment program. The interaction with the juveniles in residence was helpful to gain a perspective on the difficulties of treating young people with serious drug problems. There is a strong connection with the Regional Occupational Program (ROP) that provides residents with meaningful work experience in such areas as culinary arts and landscaping.

Joplin Youth Center

The 2011-2012 Grand Jury made two visits to the Joplin Youth Center. Because of the age of the facility, maintenance and repairs need continuous attention. In spite of this, the overall impression, as with the Youth Guidance Center, is very attractive. The grounds are very well maintained by the boys in residence who appear to be benefitting from the camp regimen and life-style.

Although the commitments are in the 90-day range, the average length of stay is approximately 35 days. This short term of stay is a major concern. Based on interviews with staff, there appears to be an opinion held by some school and probation staff, that the program benefits would be enhanced by longer terms in residence. The Grand Jury believes that the any behavioral gains may be short lived given the brief length of stay. Coordinating a meaningful educational program given the limited time available for each student and the rapid turn-over in the classroom is problematic.

The only other concern at Joplin was the fact there had been seven runaways during the past year. Recognizing that there no effective security exists (except for the remote location) extra care must be taken at the intake level to ensure that minors with a high runaway potential are not accepted into the program.

School Programs

As part of the inspection process, the 2011-2012 Grand Jury also visited each school providing educational services to detained minors. The group was favorably impressed with the quality of the classroom environment and the dedication of the teaching staff. The overall impression is that staff do a stellar job under very difficult circumstances created by the daily turnover and their often brief stay in residence.

A Message to Probation Management and Staff

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Members of the 2011-2012 Grand Jury as a whole as well as the inspection teams were treated with great courtesy by Probation Management and staff. The criminal justice committee of the Grand Jury recognizes that working in the juvenile correctional environment can be very difficult at times, but also very rewarding. With shrinking budget resources, staff is asked to do more with less. While a few areas of concern are articulated in this report, we found, the facilities overall were in good condition and well managed.

Managers, supervisors and staff working in the various juvenile institutions impressed the committee as highly professional and well-motivated.

FINDINGS/CONCLUSIONS

*In accordance with California Penal Code Sections §933 and §933.05, the 2011-2012 Orange County Grand Jury requires responses from each agency affected by the **Findings/Conclusions** presented in this section. The responses are to be submitted to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court with a copy to the Grand Jury.*

F1. The placement of male and female detainees in a coed unit at Central Juvenile Hall at Central Juvenile Hall resulted in a boy and girl being together, in the female's room for an extended period of time possibly engaging in sexual conduct without staff's knowledge or consent.

F2. Maintenance in Unit I at Central Juvenile Hall needs attention with respect to the condition of the painted surfaces and general cleanliness of the unit.

F3. Improvements are needed in the CJH visiting area including modification to the trailer to improve the general appearance (new carpeting), comfort (upgrade air conditioning), improve signage, and provide outdoor seating at the visitor's entrance for early arrivals.

F4. The runaway rate at the Joplin Youth Center exceeded the norm during the past year. This is most likely because of the failure to screen minors with high runaway potential at the intake process.

F5. The brief length of stay at the Joplin Youth Center results in a high rate of turnover of students creating a difficult situation for the school teaching staff and minimizes the lasting effects of a positive rehabilitative experience.

F6. The risk management aspects of operating juvenile detention and correctional facilities could benefit from the availability of the Office of Independent Review to follow-up on serious behavioral incidents and assist in investigating allegations of staff misconduct.

RECOMMENDATIONS

*In accordance with California Penal Code Sections §933 and §933.05, the 2011-2012 Orange County Grand Jury requires responses from each agency affected by the **Recommendations***

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presented in this section. The responses are to be submitted to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court with a copy to the Grand Jury.

R1. The Probation Department should review and possibly reconsider the placement of male and female juveniles in the same living unit. (See F1).

R2. Probation Department management should review and revise policies and procedures, training and performance of staff responsible for supervision and security in the unit where the alleged sexual misconduct occurred. (See F1).

R3. Probation Department management should conduct a thorough inspection of Unit I and other units to determine the condition of painted surfaces, cleanliness of vents and other maintenance problems and issue work orders to take corrective action where indicated. (See F2).

R4. Probation Department management should budget for replacement of the carpeting and improvement of the air conditioning in the visitation trailer. (See F3).

R5. During the intake process, minors should be thoroughly screened for high runaway potential and those who have such potential should not be placed at Joplin Youth Center, an open camp with little security. (See F4)

R6. A bench should be installed near the entrance to the visitation trailer for early arrivals. (See F3).

R7. Probation Department Management should review the need for limiting the Joplin Youth Center Program average length of stay. Any time less than 90 days does not appear to be an effective use of facility resources.

R8. The Board of Supervisors should expand the scope of work for the Office of Independent Review to include reviews of the Probation Department Juvenile facilities operations. (See F6).

REQUIREMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS:

The California Penal Code §933 requires any public agency which the Grand Jury has reviewed, and about which it has issued a final report, to comment to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court on the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of the agency. Such comment shall be made *no later than 90 days* after the Grand Jury publishes its report (filed with the Clerk of the Court); except that in the case of a report containing findings and recommendations pertaining to a department or agency headed by an elected County official (e.g. District Attorney, Sheriff, etc.), such comment shall be made *within 60 days* to the Presiding Judge with an information copy sent to the Board of Supervisors. Furthermore, California Penal Code Section §933.05 (a), (b), (c), details, as follows, the manner in which such comment(s) are to be made:

- (a.) As to each Grand Jury finding, the responding person or entity shall indicate one of the following:

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- (1) The respondent agrees with the finding
 - (2) The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the finding, in which case the response shall specify the portion of the finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons therefore.
- (b.) As to each Grand Jury recommendation, the responding person or entity shall report one of the following actions:
- (1) The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action.
 - (2) The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a time frame for implementation.
 - (3) The recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a time frame for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or head of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This time frame shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury report.
 - (4) The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation therefore.

If a finding or recommendation of the Grand Jury addresses budgetary or personnel matters of a county agency or department headed by an elected officer, both the agency or department head and the Board of Supervisors shall respond if requested by the Grand Jury, but the response of the Board of Supervisors shall address only those budgetary /or or personnel matters over which it has some decision making aspects of the findings or recommendations affecting his or her agency or department.

Responses Required:

Respondent	Findings	Recommendation
Chief Probation Officer	F1, F2, F3, F4, F5 & F6	R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6 & R7
Office of Independent Review	F6	R7
OC Board of Supervisors	F6	R7

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