



SOLANO COUNTY GRAND JURY
2012-13

SOLANO COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENTS
HOLDING CELLS

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I. SUMMARY

The 2012-13 Solano County Grand Jury inquired into the operations and conditions of all Solano County Police Departments holding cells. The Grand Jury identified areas regarding the security and safety of arrestees, police officers and the public.

II. INTRODUCTION

California Penal Code §919 provides, “the Grand Jury shall inquire into the conditions and management of public prisons within the county.” California Penal Code §6031.4(b) defines local detention facilities as any city, county, or regional facility used for the confinement of an individual regardless of the length of incarceration.

The Solano County Grand Jury inspected the cities of Benicia, City of Suisun City, Dixon, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Vacaville and Vallejo Police Departments holding cells.

III. METHODOLOGY

- Inspected the Police Departments holding cells
- Reviewed the booking process for detainees
- Inspected sally ports
- Reviewed Police Departments Procedural Manuals
- Interviewed Police Department Staff
- Reviewed emergency and evacuation procedures
- Reviewed Board of State and Community Corrections Inspection Report for Vallejo Police Holding Cells

IV. STATEMENT OF FACTS

The 2012-13 Solano County Grand Jury inspected all city police department holding cells within Solano County.

Benicia Police Department

The Grand Jury viewed the exterior sally port located at the side entrance to the police department. The sally port provides parking for patrol vehicles and a secure area for delivery of an arrestee. The holding cell area was clean and well-maintained. Audio/video surveillance is monitored within the dispatch center of the department. The holding cells have no fire suppression system; however, an emergency and evacuation route was posted.

City of Suisun City Police Department

The Grand Jury was informed that the City of Suisun City Police Department has one holding cell that is rarely utilized. In August and September 2012, the department detained one individual per month in the holding cell for one to three hours. Due to the close proximity of the Solano County main jail, the City of Suisun City Police Department transports the arrestee directly for booking and detention. Fire suppression and video surveillance equipment were present. An emergency and evacuation plan was not presented. The Grand Jury was informed the holding cell will soon be converted into a supply and storage area.

Dixon Police Department

The Grand Jury inspected three holding cells which were clean and well-maintained. The holding cell area has emergency lighting, fire suppression, and audio/video surveillance that is monitored in the administrative office. The booking station is equipped with a separate entrance to reduce public access. The Dixon Police Department has posted an emergency and evacuation plan.

Fairfield Police Department

The Grand Jury was informed that the Fairfield Police Department no longer utilizes the four holding cells and has converted each of them into an interview and assessment room. Due to the close proximity of the Solano County main jail, the department transports arrestees directly there for booking and detention. An emergency and evacuation plan was not presented.

Rio Vista Police Department

The Grand Jury was informed by Rio Vista Police Department personnel that no holding cell exists in their police department. Arrestees are confined in the back seat of a patrol car in an unsecured area or brought into the station and seated in an unsecured chair. While completing paperwork in the office, the arrestee may be left unattended in the back seat of the patrol car. The officer performs periodic visual checks of the arrestee. These two practices are a security and safety concern to the arrestee, the police officer, and the public. This practice violates their department policy 900.1 which states, "Prisoners should be transported to the county jail immediately upon arrest." An emergency and evacuation plan was not presented.

Vallejo Police Department

The Vallejo Police Department has four holding cells with audio/video surveillance that is monitored by the department dispatch center. The cells were clean at the time of the Grand Jury visit but were in need of painting due to graffiti. The holding cells have no fire suppression system; however, an emergency and evacuation route was posted. The fenced sally port is monitored by audio in the dispatch center.

The Grand Jury reviewed the 2010-2012 biennial inspection report by the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) for the Vallejo City Jail. This report is a state mandated review pursuant to California Penal Code Section 6031 and Welfare and Institutions Code Section 209(f).

The BSCC staff found areas of non-compliance regarding adult detainees, which included:

- Title 15 Section 1029 (Policy and Procedures Manual)
- Title 15 Section 1046 (In-Custody Death)
- Title 15 Section 1058 (Use of Restraints)
- Title 15 Section 1081 (Plan for Inmate discipline)
- Title 15 Section 1024 (Training)
- Title 15 Section 1028 (Fire and Life safety training)
- Title 15 Section 1032 (Fire suppression pre-planning)

The BSCC staff found areas of non-compliance regarding juvenile detainees, which included:

- Title 15 Section 1145 (Decision on secure detention)
- Title 15 Section 1027 (Number of personnel)
- Welfare and Institutions Code Section 207.1 (d) (1) (F) (Logs)
- Welfare and Institutions Code Section 207.1 (a) (1) (A) (Temporary Custody)
- Welfare and Institutions Code Section 207.1 (d) (1) (C) (Advisements)
- Welfare and Institutions Code Section 207.1 (d) (E) (Supervision)

Vacaville Police Department

The Grand Jury found the holding cell area to be modern, well-equipped and maintained. The holding cell area has audio/video surveillance that is monitored by the Vacaville Police Department dispatch center. The holding cell area has a fire suppression system and an emergency and evacuation plan. The Grand Jury observed the sally port area was cluttered with loose equipment, such as: plastic rods, fire extinguishers, a metal tire pump and numerous unsecured bicycles that could be utilized as dangerous weapons. There is a chain link fenced area within the sally port that serves as a storage area that was unlocked and open.



V. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Benicia Police Department

None

City of Suisun City Police Department

None

Dixon Police Department

None

Fairfield Police Department

None

Rio Vista Police Department

Finding 1- Rio Vista Police violates its Department Policy 900.1 by not immediately transporting arrestees to county jail.

Recommendation 1 - Adhere to Department Policy 900.1 or modify it accordingly.

Finding 2- Arrestees are held in an unsupervised patrol vehicle while awaiting transport to county jail.

Recommendation 2- Hold arrestees in a secure area within the police department appropriately restrained or follow current Department Policy 900.1.

Vallejo Police Department

Finding 1- Pursuant to the Board of State and Community Corrections Report, the City of Vallejo Jail is not in compliance with California Code of Regulations Title 15 and Welfare and Institutions Code 207.1.

Recommendation 1- The City of Vallejo comply with the Board of State and Community Corrections Report.

Vacaville Police Department

Finding 1- Sally port area contains unsecured bicycles, fire extinguishers and other potentially dangerous items that may be accessible to the arrestee.

Recommendation 1- Properly store all unsecured items in locked cage in the sally port.

COMMENTS

None

REQUIRED RESPONSES

Rio Vista Police Chief (Findings 1 and 2)
Vacaville Police Chief (Finding 1)
Vallejo Police Chief (Finding 1)

COURTESY COPIES

Solano County Sheriff
Benicia Police Chief
City of Suisun City Police Chief
Dixon Police Chief
Fairfield Police Chief
Rio Vista Mayor
Vacaville Mayor
Vallejo Police Chief