



SOLANO COUNTY GRAND JURY
2011-12

**JUSTICE CENTER DETENTION FACILITY
(MAIN JAIL)
AND SENTENCED DETENTION FACILITY
(CLAYBANK)**

JUSTICE CENTER DETENTION FACILITY (MAIN JAIL) AND CLAYBANK SENTENCED DETENTION FACILITY

2011-12 Solano County Grand Jury

I. SUMMARY

The 2011-12 Solano County Grand Jury performed its mandated inquiry into the operation of Solano County's two adult detention facilities, inspecting them in October 2011. The Sheriff's Office is operating to the best of its ability given the current budgetary constraints. Areas of concern were timely responses to emergencies and lack of adequate perimeter cameras at the Claybank facility.

II. INTRODUCTION

The Solano County Sheriff's Office is responsible for maintaining the County jails and is dedicated to the safety and well-being of all persons within Solano County. There are two facilities: the Justice Center Detention Facility (CDF) and Sentenced Detention Facility (Claybank). The Justice Center Detention Facility is located at 500 Union Avenue in Fairfield. This facility started operations June 29, 1989, as a Level II¹ pre-sentenced facility. The Sentenced Detention Facility is located at 2500 Claybank Road, Fairfield, operating since 1979, and is a Level III-IV detention center, initially designed for sentenced and work-furlough inmates.

California Penal Code §919(b), states: "the Grand Jury shall inquire into the condition and management of the Public prisons within the county." Pursuant to this statute the 2011-12 Grand Jury inspected Solano County's two jail facilities on separate dates in October 2011.

III. METHODOLOGY

The Grand Jury:

- Interviewed Sheriff's Office staff
- Inspected the Justice Center Detention Facility and Sentenced Detention Facility, including:
 - Secured entries (sally ports)
 - Booking/classification areas
 - Property storage area
 - Control centers
 - Kitchen facilities
 - Day rooms
 - Cells

¹ Levels of facilities are determined by Title 15, California Code of Regulations, §3375 Classification Process

- Tunnel and court holding facility at the Justice Center Detention Facility
- Area from which the Alternative Sentencing Program operates; the Grand Jury also inspected equipment used in the program
- Commissary warehouse at the Sentenced Detention Facility which includes the training facility for a forklift certification program
- General Education Development (GED) classroom at the Claybank facility
- Work furlough processing area at the Sentenced Detention Facility
- Area housing medical services at the Sentenced Detention Facility
- Viewed a videotape of the Custody Response Team (CRT), interviewed members of the team, and inspected their equipment
- Reviewed documents related to the Inmate Welfare Fund (IWF)
- Reviewed documents related to contracts for services to inmates provided by outside vendors

IV. STATEMENT OF FACTS

Justice Center Detention Facility

This facility is a five-story Level II for the detention of pre-sentenced persons pending trial, military detainees, and inmates with disabilities.

The original design capacity was for 401 beds. Due to overcrowding, partial double-bunking of jail cells was completed in 1989 to create an additional 136 beds. In 1999, an expansion project was completed to increase the total capacity to 740 beds. This is an 85 percent bed increase over the original design. The cells are double occupancy except those designated as single occupancy for inmates who are a higher security risk. When there is a large influx of inmates and no beds are available, inmates are given a portable bunk and assigned to sleep in the day room. On the day of the Grand Jury visit, October 14, 2011, the inmate population was at 649. Of those 649 inmates, 73 were being held in single occupancy cells for security reasons.

Sentenced Detention Facility

The Sentenced Detention Facility opened in 1979 as a Level III/IV facility, designed to house inmates who have been sentenced and inmates participating in work furlough programs. At the time of the inspection, a vast majority of the inmates held at the Sentenced Detention Facility were pre-sentenced persons awaiting trial and sentencing. The average length of stay was 24 days.

The original design called for 203 beds. Since that time, 216 beds have been added by double-bunking in the minimum security area. At the present time, the facility has 419 beds. This is a 106 percent increase over the original design.

During the Grand Jury's inspection of this facility, staff stated that they met the minimum ratios of staff to inmates in accordance with Title 15. If an emergency was to occur, it would take time to get additional help into that section. Correctional staff would not be able to leave inmates

unattended, and would have to secure the inmates located in their individual housing area, before responding to an emergency.

Solano County began a \$3 million safety renovation at the Sentenced Detention Facility in December 2011. This renovation, when completed, will provide:

- New cell door locks
- Better electronic control of passage halls and living areas
- Implementation of a new interior surveillance system to include color monitors
- New Control System Panel to control access and egress
- New Control Center with updated computer servers

Sheriff's Office staff informed the Grand Jury that the exterior perimeter cameras were not sufficient but would not be upgraded during the safety renovation.

Sheriff's Office eliminated the following positions over the past two years:

- 19 Correctional Officers
- 25 Sheriff Service Technicians
- 18 Cooks
- 3 Building Trade Mechanics
- 1 Building Trade Mechanic supervisor

Funding provided by California State Assembly Bill (AB) 900, and matching funds from Solano County, a new jail called The Claybank Adult Detention Facility is scheduled to be built on the grounds adjoining the current Sentenced Detention Facility. This facility will house 362 convicted felon inmates requiring maximum security.

Governor Edmund G. (Jerry) Brown, Jr. signed AB 109 and AB 117, significant legislation that will enable California to close the revolving door of low-level inmates cycling in and out of State prisons. The law mandates that individuals sentenced to non-serious, non-violent, or non-sex offenses will serve their sentences in county jails instead of State prisons. No inmates currently in State prisons will be transferred to county jails or released early. The impact of this legislation on Solano County jails cannot be determined at this time.

INMATE PROGRAMS

The Sheriff's Office has developed three alternatives to custody programs designed to save money and reduce inmate recidivism. These programs are:

Work Furlough

In order to participate, inmates must be sentenced to more than 30 days. The program allows participants to leave the jail facility to go to school or work, with their out-of-facility time limited to 12 hours. While on Work Furlough, inmates who remain in the "good behavior"

program can earn time off their sentence.

Work Release

This program is mandatory for inmates sentenced to 15 days or less. It is optional for inmates sentenced to 16 to 30 days, and is offered in lieu of incarceration. While required to work at designated facilities this program allows participants to continue to live at home. The participants are monitored by jail staff to ensure compliance with program restrictions. Individuals who participate in Work Release are covered by workers compensation. Jail staff stated that sometimes this is the first job that the participant has had.

Electronic Home Monitoring

This program is offered in lieu of incarceration. Several types of equipment are used in the monitoring. Participants are monitored via a secured Internet service, with the monitoring agency promptly reporting non-compliance, such as breaking curfews, equipment tampering, or breaking restrictions on use of alcohol to Sheriff's Office staff. Sheriff's Office staff also conducts random home compliance checks.

Other In-Custody programs are available such as:

- Forklift Certification
- Alcohol and drug recovery
- Anger Management provided by ANKA Behavioral Incorporated
- Counseling
- Life skill program known as Recovery 2 (R2)
- Chaplain program
- Library service

V. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1 – The planned renovation of the Sentenced Detention Facility does not include upgrading of the exterior perimeter cameras.

Recommendation 1 – Sheriff include an external day/night security surveillance camera system as part of the safety renovation.

Finding 2 – Staffing levels at Sentenced Detention Facility are in compliance with Title 15 minimum requirements; however, timely response to emergencies would be difficult.

Recommendation 2 - Sheriff adjust staffing levels to enable timely response to emergencies.

COMMENTS

The Sheriff's Office is to be commended for their earnest attempt to work within budgetary restraints, and still be able to provide the citizens of Solano County a safe environment to work, play, and live in. The Grand Jury would like to thank the Sheriff and his staff for the excellent

cooperation during our visit. The Sheriff's transparency in providing data and information made the inquiry informative.

State AB 109 went into effect on October 1, 2011 and it is too early to study or report on the impact of this law to the Solano County Jail and its budget. Additional investigation and further review will be warranted in the future.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

Solano County Sheriff-Coroner
Solano County Board of Supervisors