



**SOLANO COUNTY GRAND JURY**  
2013-2014

**SOLANO COUNTY**  
**JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY COMPLEX**

# **Solano County Juvenile Detention Facility Complex**

2013-2014 Solano County Grand Jury

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

California Penal Code §919 subdivision (b) provides, *The Grand Jury shall inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the county.* Pursuant to the statute, the 2013-2014 Grand Jury inspected the Solano County Juvenile Detention Facility Complex.

The Juvenile Detention Facility Complex (JDFC), which is under the auspices of the Solano County Probation Department, is located at 740 Beck Avenue, Fairfield, California. JDFC is a 126-bed facility. There are three separate units within JDFC. The units are the Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF), New Foundations (NF) and the Challenge Unit (CU).

The JDF is a locked facility with a total capacity of 68 beds for juveniles who have been arrested and awaiting court proceedings or for convicted juvenile offenders who have been sentenced by the Court.

The JDFC population at the time of the Grand Jury's visit was 68 in the JDF and 18 in NF. The average stay for the juveniles in the JDF is 17 days. The staff of the JDFC consists of 63 allocated Group Counselors operating on rotating shifts, four allocated Senior Group Counselors and four allocated Supervising Group Counselors.

The NF is a 30-bed unit within the JDFC. Juveniles who have been sentenced by the Court may be placed in NF for up to 120 days. NF focuses on family reunification and drug and alcohol abuse intervention.

Programs in all units consist of education, anger avoidance, self-esteem building, self-discipline and personal accountability.

The CU is a 28-bed unit also located within the JDFC. Currently, CU is closed due to the low number of juveniles at JDFC.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

Toured the Juvenile Detention Facility Complex:

- Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF)
- New Foundations (NF)
- Challenge Unit (CU)
- Intake Center
- Medical Center
- Food preparation area

Interviewed:

- Juvenile Detention Facility Staff
- Educational Personnel
- Teachers
- Para-educator Personnel (Certified teacher's helpers)
- Several resident minors
- Supervisory Counselors
- Unit Counselors
- Medical Staff
- Food Service Staff
- Probation Department Staff

Reviewed:

- California Code of Regulations, Title 15, *Minimum Standards for Juvenile Facilities*
- Previous Grand Jury Reports
- Intake Screening Form
- Booking Information Form
- Custody Classification Assessment Form
- Property Record Form
- Minor Orientation Checklist
- Non-Bookable Offenses Reference List
- Juvenile Visiting Hours and Regulations
- Solano Juvenile Institutions Web Site
- Various pamphlets and handouts provided by the JDF staff
- Upgraded Surveillance System Contract

### **III. STATEMENT OF FACTS**

Upon intake the following is completed:

- Booking Information
- Health screening
- Custody assessment classification
- Property record
- Minor orientation
- Visitation rules
- Shower required for hygiene
- Issue of clothing

Previously, two Grand Jury reports identified the lack of an effective surveillance system. While touring the facility it was noted that the surveillance system still does not have recording capability. The Grand Jury was informed during their visit on January 31, 2014 that there is a contract to upgrade this system that has been recommended. The Grand Jury was further informed that the installation of the upgraded surveillance system was delayed due to a dispute over the prevailing wage.

When asked about the escape that occurred last year, the Grand Jury was informed that the apparatus that contributed to the escape has been removed. The failure to follow the established procedure involving the lack of supervision resulting in the previous escape has been corrected.

The Grand Jury observed educational facilities that are available. State approved Common Core Standards have been implemented throughout the facility. The Solano County Office of Education certifies all programs and educators as mandated by the state. There are four core subjects: English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science. This allows the students to earn a high school diploma or a General Educational Development (GED) equivalency certificate.

A typical classroom has 15 students, one teacher and one para-educator. A screening process is used to identify students requiring an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). In addition, there is an Accelerated Credit Accumulation program available based upon self-study that allows earned credits to be transferred to traditional high schools.

The Grand Jury visited the medical facility and was informed that 30% of the juveniles admitted to the facility were on prescribed psychotropic (behavior altering) medication upon entry. These medications must be administered in the proper amount and must be monitored continuously by the medical staff. The medical staff consists of:

- Registered Nurses
- Medical Assistants
- Physician in residence twice a week
- Physician's Assistants
- Psychiatrist
- Mental Health Clinician
- Licensed Vocational Nurse
- On-call Physicians

Several volunteer programs offered by the community have been implemented and are well received:

- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Planned Parenthood
- AIDS Awareness
- Religious services and Bible study
- Youth mentoring
- Solano Community College Interns
- Motivational speakers
- Girl Scouts of America
- Military outreach

Internal Staff programs offered:

- Thinking for a Change
- Anger Avoidance
- Family Reconciliation
- Forward Thinking
- Teen Matrix Model
- Cognitive Life Skills, i.e. retraining thought processes

#### **IV. SUMMARY**

The Grand Jury visited the Juvenile Detention Facility Complex with concentration on:

- The surveillance system upgrade completion
- The cause of the previous year's escape
- The educational opportunities
- The medical/mental services provided
- Internal and external programs available

#### **V. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Finding 1** – The Grand Jury reports of 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 noted the surveillance system was deficient and the 2013-2014 Grand Jury noted it has still not been upgraded.

**Recommendation 1** – Finalize the contract and complete the system installation.

**Finding 2** – The 2013-2014 Grand Jury determined the staff is operating the Juvenile Detention Facility Complex effectively.

**Recommendation 2** – The Juvenile Detention Facility Complex staff continue their operation and maintenance procedures at the professional level observed during the Grand Jury inspection.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES**

Solano County Probation Department

**COURTESY COPIES**

Clerk of the Solano County Board of Supervisors  
Facility Manager, Juvenile Detention Facility Complex