



# San Diego County Probation Department

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*Adolfo Gonzales, Chief Probation Officer*

January 30, 2020

Yvette Klepin  
Juvenile Justice Commission Chair  
2901 Meadow Lark Drive  
San Diego, CA 92123

## **Response to the 2019 Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) Facility Inspection Report for Kearny Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility**

Dear Ms. Klepin:

We are in receipt of the Juvenile Justice Commission 2019 Facility Inspection Report for Kearny Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility. Below, please find the San Diego County Probation Department responses to the JJC Recommendations as it pertains to Kearny Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility.

### **RECOMMENDATION A:**

The Juvenile Justice Commission strongly encourages and recommends the Probation Department review, evaluate, and implement changes to OC use and de-escalation tactic practices to ensure the safety of youth and staff.

### **RESPONSE A:**

The department has contracted with the Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators for an evaluation of our de-escalation and use of force practices. First actions include:

- **Town Halls:** Work with our employee organizations to host 6 town halls with custodial staff and representatives to seek input on custodial practices, policies, and facilities culture.
- **De-Escalation Techniques:** Evaluate the two (2) conflict de-escalation training programs recommended in the report (Mandt and Safe Crisis Management) and develop a plan to train all custodial officers in national best practices for conflict de-escalation and effective intervention tools.
- **Training:** All newly hired staffing completing the Juvenile Institutions Core academy have been receiving adolescent brain development, trauma-informed care, restorative practices, and implicit bias trainings ("enhanced trainings") since February 2018. Beginning in February 2020, all Urban Camp staff will receive "enhanced trainings"

through San Diego State University Research Foundation. These trainings will be completed by June 30, 2020. The Department will also finalize a training curriculum that is exclusive for youth officers (custodial and field) to begin implementation in Fiscal Year 2020-21.

- Youth First Names: All Kearny Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility staff will begin communicating with youth by their given first names, in alignment with best practices.
- Youth Advisory Councils: Probation is piloting a Youth Advisory Council at East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility to align with Georgetown University's Youth in Custody Practice Model. The Department will work with the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council to evaluate progress with youth feedback and recommend expanding Youth Advisory Councils to all facilities in Fiscal Year 2020-21.
- Partner Juvenile Detention Sites: Probation staff and juvenile justice partners have visited model juvenile detention systems around the country that do not carry O.C. including the Santa Clara County Probation Department, Department of Youth and Rehabilitative Services in Washington, D.C., and Missouri Division of Youth Services. The Probation Department will continue seeking out additional facilities to better understand how staff operate without OC.
- Volunteer Coordinator Consultant: The Probation Department will work with the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council to add this resource in Fiscal Year 2020-21.

Skills, training and practices that reduce the need for officers to use force continue to be a high priority for the Probation Department. During this fiscal year we plan to expand our training in the areas of Implicit Bias, Adolescent Brain Development, Childhood Disorders, Trauma Informed Care and Restorative Practices.

#### **RECOMMENDATION B:**

The Juvenile Justice Commission recommends the Probation Department review medical services (in particular "med pass") to ensure youth obtain their medications in a timely manner.

#### **RESPONSE B:**

Probation Department and its contracted medical services provider are committed to the timely administration of scheduled medications. Recently, the contracted medical services provider has enhanced juvenile detention facilities clinics with an additional 28 hours of evening coverage. The contracted medical services provider routinely reconciles youth's medications and tracks and evaluates the number of medications administered on a monthly basis in order to ensure, among other measures, timely administration of medications. The Department carries out quality assurance reviews for all contracted services.

#### **RECOMMENDATION C:**

The Juvenile Justice Commission strongly recommends the Probation Department review and update their policies and procedures to ensure practice and policy are in line with one another.

**RESPONSE C:**

The Probation Department has procured technical assistance from LexiPol to update our policies and procedures for Institutional Services. Revisions are in progress and we anticipate that updated policies and procedures will be issued throughout 2020.

**RECOMMENDATION D:**

The Juvenile Justice Commission recommends the Probation Department continue their hiring, training and retention efforts to ensure the safety of youth.

**RESPONSE D:**

The Probation Department agrees with this recommendation. The Department has hired 116 new Correctional Deputy Probation Officers since April of 2018 and anticipates additional hiring in the coming months. To promote safety and wellness, the Department is creating a pipeline to ensure the Department remains fully staffed in our Institutions throughout the year. The Department anticipates holding three Juvenile Institutions (J.I.) Core academies annually to fill vacancies promptly, enabling the Department to provide positive engagement and rehabilitative programming.

**RECOMMENDATION E:**

The Juvenile Justice Commission recommends the Probation Department train staff in report documentation in order for staff to present a clear understanding of what occurs during an incident.

**RESPONSE E:**

The Probation Department agrees with this recommendation and will continue to provide training to staff to clarify report expectations.

**RECOMMENDATION F:**

The Juvenile Justice Commission recommends that the Probation Department insert in future worksheets a short summary of appropriate Manual sections in addition to the citation to a particular policy (such as Policy section 5.4.5.2 regarding LGBTQI). We don't believe that there are any privacy concerns in summarizing any Manual provisions.

**RESPONSE F:**

The Probation Department agrees with this recommendation and will implement summaries in future submissions.

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the Juvenile Justice Commission 2019 Facility Inspection Report for Kearny Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility.

Very respectfully,

ADOLFO GONZALES  
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

CC: Ruben Leyva, Assistant Chief Probation Officer  
Scott Huizar, Executive Deputy Chief; Youth Development and Community Support Services  
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