

Ventura County Grand Jury 2016 - 2017



Final Report

Annual Detention Facilities And Law Enforcement Report

May 18, 2017

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Annual Detention Facilities And Law Enforcement Report

Summary

Pursuant to California Penal Code §919(b) the 2016-2017 Ventura County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) inquired into the condition and management of the detention facilities in Ventura County (County). The Grand Jury inspected the Pre-Trial Detention Facility (Main Jail), Todd Road Jail, the East Valley Jail, all 10 city holding facilities, and two juvenile facilities (one State of California [State] and one County).

The Grand Jury followed a well-established methodology; inspecting facilities, discussing issues with staff, and documenting the findings. The Grand Jury took note of factors affecting the law enforcement agencies over the past year.

The Grand Jury concluded the Ventura County Sheriff's Office (Sheriff) as well as city police departments have a common goal to provide Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training to all patrol-based officers, custody deputies, and dispatchers. This 40-hour training course teaches law enforcement methods to de-escalate situations where an individual is in crisis, typically involving mental illness. The Grand Jury recommends the Sheriff increase the availability of 40-hour CIT training by increasing class size and/or adding additional classes.

The Grand Jury concluded overcrowding exists in both the Main Jail and Todd Road Jail. The Grand Jury recommends the Sheriff's Office continue to advise the County Board of Supervisors on the overcrowded conditions at the jails and the impact of realignment and new sentencing mandates.

The Grand Jury concluded the financial situation in Port Hueneme has resulted in staff shortages. With limited staffing, the safety of citizens and officers could be compromised. This situation is aggravated when sworn officers are required to work overtime as dispatchers or while performing required arrestee transport and booking. The Grand Jury recommends the Port Hueneme City Council consider the feasibility of contracting with a neighboring law enforcement agency for selected services, such as dispatch and arrestee transport and booking.

The Grand Jury concluded body cameras have become a law enforcement best practice. The Simi Valley Police Department is the only city law enforcement agency in the County not using body cameras. The Grand Jury recommends the Simi Valley City Council approve funds to implement a body camera program for sworn officers.

Background

California Penal Code §919(b) requires the Grand Jury to inquire into the condition and management of public prisons within the County. The Grand Jury also inspected all holding and detention facilities in the County.

There are 15 detention facilities in the County including:

- holding cell facilities in the 10 County cities (Camarillo, Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Santa Paula, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, and San Buenaventura [Ventura])
- a post-sentencing jail (East Valley)
- two pre-trial and post-sentencing jails (Main Jail, Todd Road Jail)
- one County Juvenile Justice Facility
- one State-operated juvenile detention facility

Methodology

The Grand Jury carried out its annual inspection of detention facilities in the County. Specific criteria were developed for each facility.

Some of the typical items considered for review were:

- policies and procedures manuals
- juvenile detention logs and procedures
- implementation of improvements recommended by previous grand juries

The Grand Jury continued its inquiry through interviews and internet searches.

(Att-01)

Facts

FA-01. The Sheriff's office and all police agencies in the County participate in Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training. This training teaches law enforcement methods to de-escalate situations where an individual is in crisis, typically involving mental illness. Currently 72% of patrol-based officers (patrol, traffic, school resource), 55% of custody deputies, and 40% of dispatchers have completed the 40 hour CIT training. The Sheriff and the Police Chiefs in the County have agreed to a goal of 100%. Approximately 300 personnel remain to be trained. There are three scheduled training classes a year designed to accommodate as many as 50 participants. Classes currently average 40 participants. (Ref-01, Ref-02, Ref-03, Att-01)

FA-02. Six short-term holding facilities (Camarillo, Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, Port Hueneme, and Ventura) have limited or no English/Spanish signage explaining rights and the booking process. Four of the cities (Fillmore, Moorpark, Port Hueneme, and Ventura) have a 30% or greater Hispanic population. (Ref-04, Att-01)

FA-03. The Main Jail was opened in 1980. On October 17, 2016, it housed 850 inmates. The facility is certified by the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) for a maximum rated housing capacity of 790.

Todd Road Jail was built in 1995. On November 14, 2016, it housed 826 inmates (598 male, 228 female) and has a BSCC maximum rated housing capacity of 796.

In 2011 AB 109 transferred the responsibility of incarcerating certain kinds of felony offenders from State prisons to county jails in a process known as realignment. (Ref-05)

In 2014 Proposition 47 re-categorized some non-violent felonies as misdemeanors. Misdemeanants are housed in County jails rather than State prisons. (Ref-06)

- FA-04.** Inmates with mental illness are housed primarily at the Todd Road Jail. A \$61 million medical/mental health facility is expected to be completed by December, 2020. The 64-bed facility will be used to treat inmates with severe and persistent mental illness. (Ref-07, Ref-09)
- FA-05.** Financial problems in the City of Port Hueneme are well documented and have impacted staffing at all levels of the police department. Recruitment and retention of dispatchers has been difficult. On a regular basis, sworn officers are required to work overtime as dispatchers. There is only one dispatcher scheduled per shift. Occasionally, that individual is the only staff member in the building when detainees are in the holding cells. It is expected officers will be away from the holding facility while on patrol or when transporting arrestees to the Main Jail, a procedure which could last over one hour. (Ref-10)
- FA-06.** The Santa Paula Police Department building is small and cannot accommodate all staff members. The detective unit is located in an off-site building.
- FA-07.** Repairs and renovation of the Santa Paula station continues to be a priority. Expensive asbestos abatement and roof repairs, noted in past grand jury reports, have been addressed. However, exposed wiring and missing ceiling tiles were noted by the Grand Jury.
- FA-08.** Simi Valley is the only city law enforcement agency in the County that does not employ body cameras or in-car video (dash cams). The agency has received three Requests for Proposal (RFP) from various providers. The Simi Valley City Council has rejected grant funding and voted not to approve funding for the devices. According to the Cato Institute, "Police body cameras undoubtedly have potential to improve police accountability and assist police misconduct investigations." (Ref-08)

Conclusions

- C-01.** The Grand Jury concluded CIT training is an important aspect of law enforcement. The 100% goal for CIT training has not been achieved. (FA-01)
- C-02.** The Grand Jury concluded six city holding facilities have insufficient signage in the pre-booking areas explaining rights and procedures in both English and Spanish. (FA-02)
- C-03.** The Grand Jury concluded both the Main Jail and the Todd Road Jail are overcrowded, regularly exceeding their rated inmate capacity. (FA-03)
- C-04.** The Grand Jury concluded Todd Road Jail has become a de-facto mental health facility. Constructing a new mental health facility at the jail will take at least three years and it will continue to be challenging to meet the needs of these inmates in the interim. (FA-04)
- C-05.** The Grand Jury concluded the financial situation in Port Hueneme has resulted in staff shortages. With limited staffing, the safety of citizens and officers could be compromised. This situation is aggravated when sworn officers are required to work overtime as dispatchers or while performing required arrestee transport and booking. (FA-05)
- C-06.** The Grand Jury concluded the size of the Santa Paula police station is inadequate to accommodate current and future needs. The existing building has exposed wiring and other maintenance problems. (FA-06, FA-07)
- C-07.** The Grand Jury concluded body cameras have become a law enforcement best practice. The Simi Valley Police Department is the only city law enforcement agency in the County not using body cameras. (FA-08)

Recommendations

- R-01.** The Grand Jury recommends the Sheriff increase the availability of 40-hour CIT training by increasing class size and/or adding additional classes. (C-01)
- R-02.** The Grand Jury recommends the police departments in Camarillo, Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, Port Hueneme, and Ventura post signage in the pre-booking areas, explaining rights and procedures, in Spanish as well as English. (C-02)
- R-03.** The Grand Jury recommends the Sheriff continue to advise the County Board of Supervisors on the overcrowded conditions at the jails and the impact of realignment and new sentencing mandates. (C-03)
- R-04.** The Grand Jury recommends the Board of Supervisors take all reasonable steps to ensure on-time construction of the medical facility at Todd Road Jail. (C-04)

- R-05.** The Grand Jury recommends the Port Hueneme City Council consider the feasibility of contracting with a neighboring law enforcement agency for selected services, such as dispatch and arrestee transport and booking. (C-05)
- R-06.** The Grand Jury recommends the Santa Paula City Council formally review the feasibility of upgrading or replacing their police facilities. (C-06)
- R-07.** The Grand Jury recommends the Simi Valley City Council follow best practice and approve funds to implement a body camera program for sworn officers. (C-07)

Responses

Responses Required From:

Port Hueneme City Council (C-02, C-05, R-02, R-05)
Santa Paula City Council (C-06, R-06)
Simi Valley City Council (C-07, R-07)
Ventura County Board of Supervisors (C-04, R-04)
Ventura County Sheriff (C-01, C-02, C-03, C-04, R-01, R-02, R-03)

Responses Requested From:

Ventura Police Department (C-02, R-02)

References

- Ref-01.** Ventura County, Crisis Intervention Team, Mission Statement, <http://www.venturacountycit.org/> (accessed April 18, 2017)
- Ref-02.** CA Commission on Police Officers Standards and Training, The Crisis Intervention Team, <https://www.post.ca.gov/crisis-intervention-team.aspx> (accessed April 18, 2017).
- Ref-03.** National Alliance on Mental Illness, What is CIT? <http://www.nami.org/Law-Enforcement-and-Mental-Health/What-Is-CIT> (accessed April 18, 2017).
- Ref-04.** United States Census Bureau, Quick Facts, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table> (accessed on April 18, 2017).
- Ref-05.** California Legislative Information, 2011 AB 109, April 4, 2011. https://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/11-12/bill/asm/ab_0101-0150/ab_109_bill_20110404_chaptered.pdf (accessed May 9, 2017).
- Ref-06.** Proposition 47, “The Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act”, Appendix I, May 2016. <http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/Prop-47-Information.pdf> (accessed May 9, 2017).

- Ref-07.** Gonzalez, Hector, *Moorpark Acorn*, "County jail for mentally ill inmates moves forward with state grant", May 6, 2016, http://www.mpacorn.com/news/2016-05-06/Front_Page/County_jail_for_mentally_ill_inmates_moves_forward.html (accessed April 24, 2017).
- Ref-08.** Feeney, Mathew, *Cato Institute*, "Watching the Watchman: Best Practices for Body Cameras," October 27, 2015, <https://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/watching-watchmen-best-practices-police-body-cameras> (accessed April 18, 2017).
- Ref-09.** Gonzales, Hector, *Moorpark Acorn*, "County moves forward with facility for disabled inmates", September 30, 2016, http://www.mpacorn.com/news/2016-09-30/Community/County_moves_forward_with_facility_for_disabled_in.html (accessed April 18, 2017).
- Ref-10.** Kallas, Amy, *Ventura County Star*, "Port Hueneme budget woes worsen", January 4, 2017, <http://www.vcstar.com/story/news/local/communities/port-hueneme/2017/01/04/huenemes-budget-woes-worsen/96164824/> (accessed May 2, 2017).

Attachments

- Att-01.** Detention Facilities Inspection Summary

Glossary

<u>TERM</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>
BSCC	Board of State and Community Corrections
CIT	Crisis Intervention Team
Grand Jury	2016-2017 Ventura County Grand Jury
Main Jail	Pre-Trial Detention Facility
RFP	Requests for Proposal
Ventura	City of San Buenaventura
Sheriff	Ventura County Sheriff's Office
State	State of California

Attachment 01

Detention Facilities Inspection Summary

Detention Facilities Inspection Summary

Jail Facilities

	Detention Facilities										Jail Facilities				
	Camarillo	Fillmore	Moorpark	Ojai	Oxnard	Port Hueneme	Santa Paula	Ventura	Thousand Oaks	Simi Valley	East Valley / TO	Main Jail	Todd Road	Juvenile Justice	Corrections Facility
<u>Policy And Procedure Manuals</u>															
Training for natural disasters	S	S	S	S	S	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Medical incidents	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	F	S
Crisis intervention											S	S	S	S	S
CIT Training	S	E	S	S	S	S	F	S	S	F					
Routine operations procedures	S	S	S	E	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Inmate classification procedure												E	F	S	S
Inmate request procedure												S	S	S	S
Grievance procedure												S	S	S	S
<u>Physical Facility Observations</u>															
Certifications current	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Average population/crowding												N	N	E	S
Average detainee sentence/stay												S	S	S	S
Cell cleanliness/sanitation	E	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	E	S	S	S	S
Clothing/personal hygiene												S	S	S	S
Bedding /linens												S	S	S	S
Toilet/ accessibility	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	E	S	S	S	S
Shower accessibility												S	S	S	S
Bodily fluids cleaners/drainage	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Safety/maintenance	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	E	S	S	S	S	S	S
Lighting/environment												S	S	S	S
Phone accessibility	S	S	S	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	E	S	S	S	S
Kitchen cleanliness/adequacy												S	S	S	S
Food/preparation												S	S	S	S
Food/snacks/water	S	S	S	E	S	S	S	S	S	S	S				
First aid/AED, log	S	S	E	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Medical infrastructure												E	S	S	S
Exercise/recreation facilities												S	S	E	S
Accommodation for restraints	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S				
Appro. English/Spanish signage	N	N	N	N	S	N	S	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Staff Spanish ability	S	S	S	S	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Staffing adequacy	S	S	S	S	N	N	S	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Inmate programs												S	E	E	S
<u>Accommodation for Juveniles</u>															
Appropriate use of restraints	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S					
Segregation from adults	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S					
Shouting distance to staff	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S					
Phone call to parents	S	S	S	S	S	E	S	S	S	S					
Pre-transfer interview	S	S	S	E	S	S	S	S	S	S					
Log	S	E	E	S	S	E	S	S	S	S					
Average/longest time held	S	S	E	S	S	S	S	S	S	S					

E=Excellent, S=Satisfactory, N=Needs Improvement

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