

**Sonoma County Juvenile Hall
Inspection Report
Site Inspection: December 28, 2021**

**Submitted by Sonoma County Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC)
Inspection conducted by Commissioners Michael Charpiot and Arnold Rosenfield**

**Los Guilicos Juvenile Justice Center
Sonoma County Juvenile Hall
7425 Los Guilicos Road
Santa Rosa CA 95409
(707) 565-6210**

**Superintendent/Director: Marty Mitchell
Assistant Director: Kilee Willson
Presiding Judge: Hon. Judge Kenneth Gness**

Introduction.

This inspection was requested by Juvenile Hall Superintendent Marty Mitchell in preparation for the Board of State & Community Corrections (BSCC) facility inspection forthcoming in January 2022. Sonoma County Juvenile Hall is undergoing changes in response to the closure of state-level juvenile facilities. Youth from Sonoma County will be housed in the Sonoma County Juvenile Hall. Other counties in California are contracting to have Sonoma County Juvenile Hall house their youth as well, in the absence of that county having their own secure youth facility.

Due to COVID-19 guidelines, for the safety of Commissioners, staff and youth, this in-person inspection was amended compared to previous annual Juvenile Justice Commission inspections. Beginning in March 2020, due to COVID-19, monthly phone check-in reports have been conducted in lieu of in-person inspections for youth facilities in Sonoma County, as agreed by the Sonoma County Juvenile Justice Commission members.

Inspection Report.

Inspection date: December 28, 2021
Last inspection date: November 19, 2019

Occupancy: 28 youth
Facility capacity: 147 youth

The following was submitted by Commissioner Michael Charpiot:

Diversity of Staff.

The Staff of the hall is quite diverse. This was observed throughout the hall and while eating lunch with a number of staff members.

Conditions of Grounds.

Clean and well maintained. Athletic and recreation areas were in good shape and suitable for use by the youth.

Exterior of Building.

Clean and well maintained. Limited inspection due to weather.

Wall Paints Floors Drains etc.

Clean and well maintained. Extra high-capacity filtration units with upgraded filters are found in all units and hallways.

Cleaning Fluids

Locked and safely stored. When they are used by residents the staff apply them to the surface to be cleaned and the residents wipe and scrub.

Weapons Locker.

There is no weapons locker in the units. There is an “armory” in the control center but it mainly contains restraints. The only thing close to a weapon would be pepper spray. Weapons lockers for LE are outside booking and staff entrance for storage. No weapons are allowed inside the facility.

Recreation/sports.

Basketball, whiffle ball, soccer, football, badminton, football, running, handball, and volley ball are all played by the residents. Volleyball apparently is very competitive. An impressive library is available and used by the residents. There is an active book club and incentives for the residents to read. The Boys and Girls club has also resumed in person operations.

Hallways and doors.

Very wide hallways. The doors to the units are not propped open. They are secure and electronically locked and monitored. Resident artwork is displayed in some hallways. Large industrial air purifying units are located in most hallways. They have upgraded filters for COVID-19 mitigation.

Sleeping Rooms and Beds.

Rooms are simple and clean. Beds are 12” off of the floor and provide a cubby for the resident’s personal effects.

Graffiti Present?

Graffiti was not present. There was “tagging” in most if not all textbooks to varying degrees. Unit 5 was very festively decorated for the winter holidays. They won the annual decorating contest. One resident who was interviewed said that the decorating contest was fun.

Ample blankets.

Both residents who were interviewed were asked if they had access to extra blankets. Both had, in fact, requested extra blankets and received them quickly.

Study Area.

There is a classroom in each unit. There is also ample flex space in each unit for studying.

Temperature.

For COVID mitigation more fresh air is pulled in than typical. When cold outside this can cause a slight chill. While it was a very cold day on the day of the inspection, the units were a bit on the chilly side. The building is primarily made of cinderblocks. This could be a partial cause. Many staff members were wearing beanies and watch caps during the inspection. This has been noted previously.

Orientation.

Orientation begins at intake and is continually reinforced during the residents stay. Residents are immediately given a hand book. There are posters throughout the facility that remind residents about the rules and procedures. There are also lessons plans that reinforce this orientation. Meetings on these topics are also held frequently.

Rules and Grievances Posted?

Yes. There is a central bulletin board in each unit that has these. It also had a menu and activity schedule for the week and month.

Meals Served or Cafeteria Style?

Cafeteria Style.

Minors Permitted to Converse During Meals.

Yes they are.

Are Staff Present and Supervising?

Staff were present in all units. The staff's main station can view and oversee the entire unit. One resident interviewed felt that the staff was motivating. The other said he felt some of the staff were role models to him.

Is Weekly Menu Prepared? Posted?

Yes. On each unit's bulletin board along with grievances and other pertinent information.

Are Servings Ample, Nutritious, and Appetizing?

Both residents who were interviewed felt that the food was good. One resident who had to evacuate to Solano County during the fires was particularly fond of the food. He felt that the food in Solano County was terrible and really made him appreciate the food in Sonoma County. The commissioner doing the inspection had the same lunch as the residents that day. The serving size was ample, food was nutritious, and was average to above average in taste.

Eating Time.

Residents are given 30 minutes to eat. This number is lowered to 25 minutes on visiting days.

Appearance.

All residents that were viewed had an acceptable appearance. A haircut is offered to the residents every 2 weeks.

Showers.

All stalls are private and can only see hands and feet. Four shower stalls in each unit.

Condition of Clothing.

All residents viewed had similar clothing. It was observed to be adequately fitting and in good condition.

Access to Religious Services.

A “spiritual advisor” visits each unit once a week.

Programs. Sex Offender.

There is both specialized confinement and programming for juvenile sex offenders. Other counties in Northern California utilize the resources found here for this type of confinement and programming.

Visiting.

In-person visits have resumed after being postponed because of COVID-19 pandemic precautions/guidelines. All residents have the opportunity for visits. While visits are allowed in person, the number of visitors per visit was reduced from 2 to 1 due to COVID. JH recognizes the importance of pro-social family involvement and looks forward to having more visitors allowed in the facility once safe to do so. Both residents interviewed were pleased by this. Both also expressed some frustration trying to get a non-family member approved for visits. In one case it was the resident’s step brother.

School.

The school has been recently segregated. Students who are in secondary school remain in the unit classrooms. Students who are taking Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) classes are doing them in a newly reconfigured vacant unit. It has a much more “college like vibe”. There are cubicles for the students to do their work. There are plans for a future “lounge” like area for SRJC students to pursue their studies. One of the residents interviewed “loved” the new space for the older students. He felt it made him more productive. Most residents who are over 18 years old are taking junior college classes. All of the secondary students are taking classes. Each unit is equipped with a classroom space. In unit 5 on the day of the inspection there were 10 students in class with a substitute teacher. This was because of the winter holiday for the regular teacher. The classroom is warm, well lit, with ample space. For the most part supplies are readily available. Although one resident stated that if he had had access to a graphing calculator his algebra class would have been “So much easier”. The textbooks are old and this is a concern. One of the residents shared 2 of his textbooks: A Biology book that was from 2006 and a US History text from 2001. Further communication between the commission and the school will

School Continued ...

help to clarify and hopefully rectify the situation. The secondary curriculum follows a traditional middle/high school credit recovery model. There is a garden on site for vocational education with plans for a large expansion of the garden and the program.

Medical.

Residents receive regular medical, dental, and mental health services. There is access to vaccines on site. Residents are strongly advised to receive a COVID-19 vaccine dose and follow up ones as well.

The following was submitted by Commissioner Arnold Rosenfield:

Health Services.

Provided by nurses in separate services area. Only medical personnel is allowed. There is an examination room where general physicals are done, and a pharmacy where medications are stored and distributed by nurses. Doctors are under contract and on call. Each youth is examined and interviewed by nurses upon admission to determine medical history and needs. Outreach to identified medical care providers is done if necessary to get specifics. There is a separate single chair dental exam room. A dentist is on call to visit as needed. The premises was clean, orderly and in good repair.

Housing Unit 4.

This is the only co-ed unit. There are 8 youths housed. The unit was quiet as residents were in school. It had just been cleaned and the Christmas decorations were taken down. There is an attempt to do decorations during some holidays during the year. There was a staff supervisor on duty to address problems if they arise.

Housing Unit 1.

Has been re-designed for residents over 18 years of age to allow for a little bit more independence. There is a large library in the unit which used to be browsable but was not able to be used much because of population restrictions. It has been repurposed as a multi-usage community room for meetings, education and programming for the over-18 group in the unit. There are three separate sections to be able to accommodate a variety of uses. On the unit floor, cubicles have been installed which are individual work stations for each resident. They are allowed to decorate it and personalize it for their own purposes. Programming is provided and is education-oriented. Residents can work on their GED or graduate work through certificated programs. There is some partnership with SRJC although not any on-site teaching.

Commissioner Rosenfield spoke with one 20-year-old resident female who had been in and out of facilities as a dependent, and juvenile and adult offender since age 13. She is working on personal development in the unit and hopes of getting a loan to attend school when she is released in the near future. She stated that it was good to have some personal workspace but problematic because she can only use it 4 hours per day – too short a period in her opinion. She also said that the necessity for adhering to the same behavioral point system and personal

Housing Unit 4 continued ...

conduct rules as the under-18-year-old group was frustrating. The young woman was generally happy with the arrangements.

Once again the unit was clean and in good repair and a supervisor is present at a desk on the floor.

Programming.

Programming is getting back into full swing for all residents after the repairs necessitated by the [2019 Glass] Fire, which destroyed parts of the building. Money has come in to fund new programs as well. A Gardening program with a planned new greenhouse which will be the centerpiece, will soon be built in a large plot behind the facility. A running program has started up each afternoon for any interested resident. It is an 8-week program for 1 hour each weekday afternoon on a course inside the perimeter. Each participant is provided with a new pair of running shoes to keep and Gatorade after the run. There are a large number of programs available during the week. A lot of them provided by volunteers and various organizations. Listings of what is available to all are provided (attachment).

General Observations by Commissioner Arnold Rosenfield.

All units I visited were clean, tidy and in excellent repair. Supervising staff are readably available and present to meet needs, answer questions, and deal with any problem or issue that arises. Almost all residents that I came in contact with or saw were busy or in school.

Report submitted via email to:

Marty Mitchell, Director, Sonoma County Juvenile Hall
David Koch, Chief of Probation, County of Sonoma
Honorable Judge Kenneth Gness, Sonoma County Juvenile Justice Center
Allison Gantner, Deputy Director, BSCC
Elizabeth Gong, Field Representative, BSCC

January 6, 2022