



## SAN BENITO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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**DARREN THOMPSON**  
SHERIFF-CORONER

July 30, 2018


The Honorable Steven Sanders  
Presiding Judge  
Superior Court of California, County of San Benito  
450 Fourth Street  
Hollister, CA 95023-3833

Dear Judge Sanders:

Please find attached the San Benito County formal response to the Grand Jury Report for FY 2017-2018. We are responding at this time to reports addressing the Sheriff's Office Corrections Division (County Jail). This response fulfills Penal Code Section 933 that mandates a response to the Grand Jury Report within 60 days of the report.

Please extend our appreciation to the Grand Jury for their continued dedication and service to the community.

Sincerely,



Darren Thompson, Sheriff-Coroner

San Benito County Sheriff's Office

Attachment: San Benito County Sheriff's Office Responses.

Cc. County Counsel, County Administration

### MISSION STATEMENT

TO SERVE THE PUBLIC BY ESTABLISHING A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY; TO PROTECT LIFE AND PROPERTY,  
PREVENT CRIME AND SOLVE PROBLEMS

RECEIVED  
JUL 31 2018  
Superior Court of California  
County of San Benito

## Grand Jury Report 2017-2018, County Jail Response

### FINDINGS

1. Female inmates are only allowed exercise every other day, while male inmates are provided daily exercise in the yard. With the 'Expansion Plan' of the jail for 2019 currently there is no goal or objective to add additional exercise yard(s).

#### DISAGREE PARTIALLY

We disagree partially with this finding in that the new "Expansion Plan" does in fact have two recreation yards; one for each of the two housing units. If the female inmates were to occupy one of the two housing units, they would have more frequent access to the recreation yard.

2. Currently many of the appliances within this full functioning kitchen do not work.

#### AGREE

3. There is a staff shortage; often shifts are covered via overtime which cost more money.

#### AGREE

4. County does not have enough medical staff to cover a full 24 hour day. Nor does it have the staff to support the mental health needs of an inmate at the jail.

#### DISAGREE PARTIALLY

We do not have enough medical staff to cover a full 24 hour day. We do have an agreement with County Behavioral Health to provide service and care for those with mental health needs, and we are in compliance with state regulations.

5. Programming like counseling, education and rehabilitation needs to be improved.

#### DISAGREE PARTIALLY

Although the inmates could potentially benefit from a greater level of programming, we take exception to the Grand Jury's use of the phrase "needs to be improved." We are currently in compliance with the law and keeping pace with our contemporaries. We are underway in the implementation of some programs and the analysis of others.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *We recommend that the "expansion Plan" Committee reevaluate the need for additional exercise yard(s), maybe by creating an exercise yard specifically designed for the female inmates. Our concern is that by the expansion and the increasing of the inmate population, female inmate yard time may be reduced more.*

THIS RECOMMENDATION WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED

We are in compliance with Title 15 minimum standards and will remain so. In addition, we will search for opportunities within the current design to provide more exercise opportunities for our female inmates.

2. *Our recommendation is to open the Food Staging Area to a full functioning kitchen, by replacing or repairing non-operating appliances. This will also allow inmates to further develop their skills and possibly offer a Kitchen Work Program.*

THIS RECOMMENDATION WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED

We appreciate this recommendation and have taken steps to bring back a fully operational kitchen. The kitchen has not been in use for many years, and our pre-prepared food is brought in through an outside vendor. Our intent is to provide quality nutrition and provide an educational platform that will result in a food services certificate, referred to as a "Safe Serve Certificate".

Our daunting issue is repairing the drains and plumbing in the kitchen to return it to meeting health and safety standards. The estimate of repair is approximately \$150,000.00 plus whatever it will take to operate while the kitchen area is being demolished and rebuilt. These repairs have been applied for via the Capital Improvement Programs manager's request to the board of supervisors. Should the project be approved and funded, we will reconsider the implementation. Without funding, this recommendation will not be implemented.

3. *We concur with the Sheriff's Department who expressed the desire for hiring more COs.*

THIS RECOMMENDATION WAS IMPLEMENTED IN JUNE 2018 AS A BUDGET REQUEST.

4. *We encourage the Sheriff's Department to continue its negotiations with Mental Health Services. Furthermore the Sheriff's Department should seek funding sources for full-time 24/7 medical staff.*

THIS RECOMMENDATION WILL BE IMPLEMENTED

The recommendation is to continue negotiations with Mental Health Services, and we are doing just that. The second portion of the recommendation is to seek funding sources for full-time 24/7 medical staff. Both of those efforts have been made. The results of those efforts are still developing. We received an additional \$135,000 from the Board Of Supervisors in our 18/19 budget which will net us four additional hours of medical service per day. We hope to eventually secure funding for 24/7 medical services at some time in the future.

5. *Programming like counseling, education and rehabilitation needs to be improved. The Sheriff's Department wants to help inmates develop skills to reduce the recidivism rate. We recommend possibly adding horticulture, canine mentoring, equine therapy, expand the library, more classes and even a transition center.*

PORTIONS OF THIS RECOMMENDATION HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED, SOME REQUIRE FURTHER ANALYSIS, AND SOME ARE NOT FEASIBLE.

Adding horticulture or canine mentoring at this time is not feasible due to the physical restrictions of the structure. We are however evaluating strategies to make modifications.

Equine therapy is not feasible due to the physical restrictions of the jail.

The expansion of the library is not feasible due to the physical restrictions of the jail, but expanding the hours of our library is under analysis. That analysis will be completed in less than six months.

Adding more classes has been implemented. We have expanded Substance Abuse Counseling.

The County Probation Department currently operates a Transition Center, and we are pursuing a greater level partnership with them at this time. In an effort to improve and expand jail and reentry services, the Reentry Program Manager (employee of the Probation Department) has been meeting regularly with the Jail Transition Team and providers of education, counseling and rehabilitation. We are currently vetting all current programs and prioritizing these services to ensure all pods and genders have access. Furthermore, vocational training programs are slated to be added in the near future. Our goal is to complete an additional classification program assessment to better evaluate the needs of the inmate population and match them up with services that meet their needs. In addition, a transition plan will be developed with inmates who will be released on community supervision. This plan will reflect goals for release including referrals to and continuation in education, counseling and rehabilitation services in the community. We are striving for a smooth transition in coordination with the Probation Department, Health and Human Services and Behavioral Health.

We have recently developed a new Jail Security Clearance Application, a new Programs Application, and provided training for 59 volunteers/providers of service to our inmates. We have also produced a Code of Conduct Handbook for volunteers/providers.