



August 10, 2020

**Los Angeles County  
Board of Supervisors**

**Hilda L. Solis**  
First District

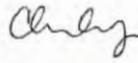
**Mark Ridley-Thomas**  
Second District

**Sheila Kuehl**  
Third District

**Janice Hahn**  
Fourth District

**Kathryn Barger**  
Fifth District

**TO:** Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Janice Hahn

**FROM:** Christina R. Ghaly, M.D., Director   
Department of Health Services

Ray Leyva, Interim Chief   
Probation Department

**SUBJECT: MAINTAINING THE DECREASED POPULATION OF  
INCARCERATED YOUTH IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
(ITEM #10, JUNE 9, 2020)**

**Christina R. Ghaly, M.D.**  
Director

**Hal F. Yee, Jr., M.D., Ph.D.**  
Chief Deputy Director, Clinical Affairs

**Nina J. Park, M.D.**  
Chief Deputy Director, Population Health

On June 9, 2020 the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Probation Department (Probation) and the Youth Development and Diversion (YDD) Office, in consultation with the Public Defender's Office, the Alternate Public Defender's Office, the Independent Juvenile Defender's Office, the District Attorney's (DA) office, the Courts, the Chief Executive Office (CEO), County Counsel, Department of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Health Services (DHS), Department of Public Health (DPH), and community stakeholders to report back in 30 days with a plan for maintaining the reductions – and where possible continuing to reduce – populations of youth in the juvenile camps and halls at or below the levels reached during this pandemic to avoid returning to the higher incarceration numbers and rates at which youth were detained prior to March 2020, including recommendations for:

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- a. Supporting and expanding community-based alternatives to detention services and placement options, including the reallocation of existing resources in order to prioritize such alternatives;
- b. Legislative and local policy changes to support this goal;
- c. Evaluating outcomes for youth released since March 2020, and those diverted or otherwise released early from detention facilities, going forward.

This report is reflective of the collective efforts between YDD and Probation along with other stakeholders. The initial report was due July 9, 2020; however, Probation and YDD requested a 30-day extension in order to convene a small collaborative planning group to review and revise a plan for maintaining the reduced population of incarcerated youth. The



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collaborative planning group included representatives from the Public Defender's Office, Alternate Public Defender's Office, Independent Juvenile Defender Program, DA's Office, Juvenile Court, CEO, County Counsel, DMH, DHS, DPH, Probation, and Los Angeles Youth Uprising Coalition. This group met on July 13th to review and discuss initial recommendations drafted by YDD and Probation and then again on July 27th to offer additional feedback and revisions to the set of updated recommendations.

In addition to the themes reflected below, the group expressed a desire for more time to review data, address questions, and align the proposed plan with the work of the Youth Justice Work Group and other efforts. The group emphasized the need to continue to collaboratively develop and implement strategies for reducing the population of incarcerated youth with increased transparency.

Key themes discussed in these meetings included, but were not limited to the following considerations:

- More and better data about the impact of various interventions.
- Increased transparency.
- Increased community involvement.
- Improved communication and data protections to support collaborative decision-making.
- Timely and consistent connection to meaningful services for youth at all stages.
- Strengthened shared standards and measures of success at all stages.
- Overall, a move away from ineffective and inequitable interventions towards responses to young people that reflect effective practices for improving youth wellbeing and community safety.

Recognizing that more time and more shared discussion is needed to fully address the nuanced hopes and concerns of this group, the short and longer term recommendations listed below reflect the initial approach we believe is necessary to maintain the decreased population of incarcerated youth and continue to learn from one another, so that we can do so more sustainably, more effectively, and more equitably, moving forward.

Short-Term (six-month) Plan for Maintaining Decreased Population of Incarcerated Youth:

1. Expand referrals to YDD to continue to reduce the number of young people arrested for low level offenses and referred to Probation.
  - a. Develop and disseminate a standard YDD referral form for law enforcement agencies countywide to use pre-citation and in lieu of referral to the Citation Diversion Program for cases including, but not limited to those listed in Penal Code Section 640; YDD and Probation will collaborate to explore opportunities to ensure that all cases that could be referred to community-based youth diversion and development instead of the Citation Diversion Program are routed to YDD.
  - b. Grant delegated authority needed to allow YDD's contracts to receive referrals from additional referrers beyond the original cohort of original law enforcement jurisdictions, including schools, Probation, and the DA's Office.

- c. Building on the recommendations for implementing Senate Bill 439, establish at least one additional staff position for YDD to ensure there is capacity to better resource the expansion of meaningful programming for youth referred pre-citation, including the facilitation of capacity-building for providers, implementation of new referral partnerships, and communications/outreach.
    - d. Develop and share countywide standards for diversion.
  2. Probation and YDD will enhance and expand training/outreach to law enforcement and other pertinent juvenile justice partners to provide pre-arrest options available through YDD and other community-based partners; ensure a shared understanding of Probation's detention practices; and equitably reduce the number of young people detained, exploring opportunities to share written protocol (s).
  3. Where appropriate, Probation will continue to limit detention to youth with sex offenses (PC 290.008(c)), mandatory detention per Welfare and Institutions Code section 625.3 (i.e., youth 14 or older who are taken into custody for the personal use of a firearm in the commission or attempted commission of a felony or for any offense listed in subdivision (b) of WIC Section 707), and placement youth in warrant status or who require re-placement.
    - a. Develop and disseminate a standard YDD post-release (juvenile hall) referral process in collaboration with community and other stakeholders to support youth and caregivers through referral to the YDD network.
    - b. Increase connection to supportive services for youth and families while youth are detained, specifically in juvenile hall.
  4. Informed by the role of the bench warrant protocol in reducing the population of incarcerated youth during COVID-19 and dependent on support from the Juvenile Court, support proposal to cite bench warrants without new arrest charges to court and start supervision (for those youth on Probation) rather than detain for non-sex offense (290.008 (c)), non 707(b), non-felony or attempted felony with personal use of a firearm.
  5. YDD and Probation will collaborate to evaluate outcomes for youth detained and released since March 2020, and those diverted or otherwise released early from detention facilities, going forward. This assessment should include data collection, analysis, and communication of findings in the following categories:
    - a. Demographic characteristics of youth released, diverted, and detained to better understand equity in access;
    - b. Information about the stage at which and reason for which a young person is diverted or released;

- c. Timeframes of detention, release, referral, and enrollment in services by type to better understand how quickly young people are being connected to diversion and reentry services;
  - d. Outcomes for young people experiencing various interventions, including measures of youth wellbeing and any further contact with the justice system;
  - e. Opportunities to invest in promising practices and reduce gaps and barriers to services for young people and families.
  - f. Opportunities to use findings to inform data collection and assessment practices moving forward.
6. YDD, Probation, and the collaborative group that convened to work on these recommendations will share the short and longer term plans to the Youth Justice Work Group to ensure that the questions and plans that were not fully addressed in the current 60-day timeline are further explored, improved, and integrated into the Youth Justice Work Group's design.

Longer-Term (12-month) Plan for Maintaining Decreased Population of Incarcerated Youth:

1. To continue to coordinate collaborative decision-making along the youth justice continuum, YDD will work in collaboration with key stakeholders to establish a Multi-Disciplinary Learning Community informed by the Youth Justice Work Group's research and recommendations related to collaborative decision-making, the Dual Status Work Group's 241.1 Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) process, and other existing MDT practices.
  - a. This learning community will include leadership from Probation, the DA's Office, Defense Bar, DMH, DPH, DHS, Department of Children and Family Services, Superior Court, Los Angeles County Office of Education, community-based organizations, and representatives from the Youth Justice Work Group and will meet regularly to discuss standards and measures of success for MDTs; assess challenges and opportunities to improve electronic communication; develop protocol for protecting youth information; and identifying opportunities for expanding collaborative decision-making at intercept points along the continuum, including reentry services for youth.
2. YDD, Probation, and CEO will establish a crosswalk of existing funding for youth and family services to identify gaps and better understand utilization of funds to reduce duplication of efforts and leverage resources for effective and promising strategies (e.g., expansion of YDD in Los Angeles Unified School District schools with Family Resource Centers who provide pre-booking diversion for youth on their campuses).

3. YDD, Probation, and the Center for Strategic Partnerships will collaborate to convene philanthropic and community partners, including youth leaders and Ready to Rise stakeholders, to identify resources and develop strategies to expand resource community-based youth services and build capacity needed to continue to reduce the population of incarcerated youth.
4. The long-term strategy for reducing the population of incarcerated youth should be part of the work of the Youth Justice Work Group.

As plans are implemented to maintain the reductions of populations of youth in the juvenile camps and halls, the focus will remain on keeping at or below the levels reached during this pandemic to avoid returning to the higher incarceration numbers and ensure the health and safety of all involved. Although the short-term plan does not include legislative recommendations, future reports will provide recommended legislative and local policy changes to support ongoing efforts.

YDD and Probation will provide a six and 12-month progress report on updates, assessment results, and any additional recommendations in alignment with the above directives.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Judge Peter Espinoza, Director of the Office of Diversion and Reentry, at (213) 418-3643.

CRG:RL:pe

c: Chief Executive Office  
County Counsel  
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
Alternate Public Defender's Office  
Department of Mental Health  
Department of Public Health  
District Attorney's Office  
Independent Juvenile Defender's Office  
Probation Department  
Public Defender's Office  
Superior Court