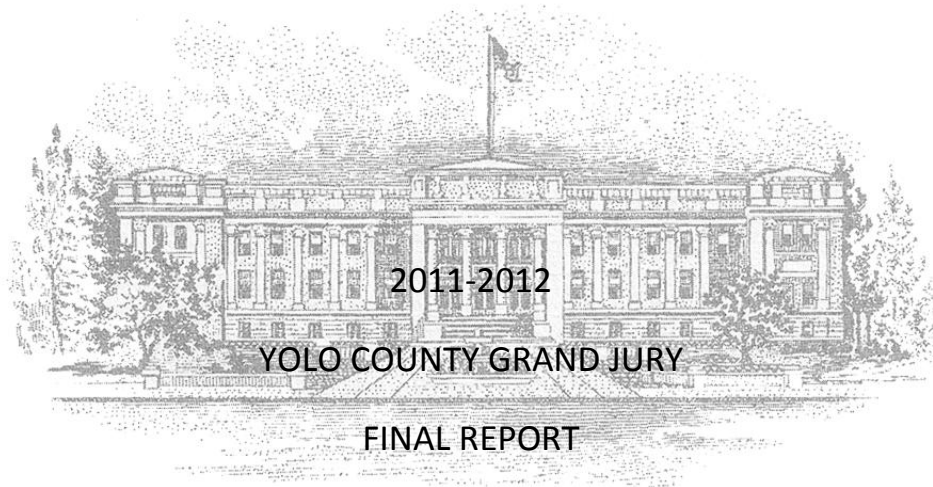


GRAND JURY

County of Yolo



YOLO COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

Yolo County Probation Department

May 3, 2012

YOLO COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATION AND TRAINING

SUMMARY

The 2011-2012 Grand Jury investigation into the Yolo County Probation Department (YCPD) focused on YCPD employee training.

The Grand Jury found that the YCPD Policy Manual has not been fully revised and distributed since 1995 which has contributed to inconsistent direction of supervisors and staff, lower productivity and morale.

The Grand Jury found that YCPD does not have an adequate method to ensure that all new and current employees have the necessary training to perform the routine functions of their jobs. The YCPD has many training requirements including the implementation of State of California Assembly Bill 109 (AB 109) with its new approach to parole. The YCPD does not have a position designated to be in charge of all training requirements, but relies on management, supervisors and some staff members to individually be responsible.

REASON FOR INVESTIGATION

The 2011-2012 Grand Jury conducted a review of issues in the YCPD. In particular, the Grand Jury reviewed YCPD policies and procedures, YCPD employee training and staff morale.

California Penal Code Section 925 provides “The Grand Jury shall investigate and report on the operations, accounts, and records of the officers, departments, or functions of the county, including those operations, accounts, and records of any special legislative district or other district in the county created pursuant to state law for which the officers of the county are serving in their ex officio capacity as officers of the districts.”

ACTIONS TAKEN

The 2011-2012 Grand Jury interviewed HR staff and management, YCPD staff, supervisors and managers. The Grand Jury reviewed the Yolo County website, the YCPD website and the Yolo County Administrative Procedures Manual. The Grand Jury also reviewed the following documents:

- YCPD correspondence

- YCPD Memorandum of Understanding with Yolo County Probation Association (employee union)
- YCPD Training plans, requirements and manuals
- Portions of the YCPD Policies and Procedures Manual
- YCPD Case Management for High Risk Community Corrections Populations
- YCPD Standards of Performance for Probation Officer I/II

WHAT THE GRAND JURY DETERMINED

Overview of the YCPD

The YCPD reports directly to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Yolo County. The YCPD is responsible for supervision, case management and correctional treatment of delinquent youth and their families as well as adult felons on probation. This includes:

- Monitoring youth who are placed in out-of-home settings
- Operating the Juvenile Detention Facility
- Completion of pretrial and presentence assessments and investigations to assist with judicial decision making
- Supervision of pretrial defendants in the community
- Investigation and assessment of all juvenile referrals
- Preparation of juvenile dispositional reports and recommendations
- Providing alternatives to custody such as the work alternative program for adult and youthful offenders

Mission Statement

“Yolo County Probation, in collaboration with our community, is committed to enhancing public safety by using data-driven practices that promote positive behavior change to improve outcomes for those affected by crime.”

Goals

“Develop, implement, and evaluate cost-effective community corrections programming, including supervision, case management, and treatment that supports offender rehabilitation and reduces risk for re-offense.

Develop organizational infrastructure that maximally supports efficient collection of relevant data, analysis, evaluation, and continuous quality improvement.”

YCPD Policy Manual

The Grand Jury found that although some sections of the policy manual have been updated, the entire manual was last revised in 1995 and is not routinely referenced by supervisors and staff. The YCPD Administration has designated resources to complete the update to the manual. The task may take one to two years to complete.

YCPD Training

The training budget is reportedly \$107,000 for the current fiscal year, with a majority of the budget being spent on consultants and organizations that provide the training. This training covers the overall subjects to comply with the Standards & Training for Corrections (STC) and not the procedures that are necessary for a new employee to function effectively in the Probation Department. Most of the training is provided by the following entities:

- California Narcotic Officers Association
- National Institute of Corrections
- Chief Probation Officers of California
- California Forensic Medical Group
- Drug Endangered Children Training and Advocacy Center
- Sacramento Regional Public Safety Training Center
- Disability Response
- California Probation Parole & Correctional Association
- Custom Training
- California Association of Probation Institution Administrators
- California Institute of Mental Health
- UC Davis Extension/Family Resource Center
- Monterey County Joint Gang Task Force
- Administrative Office of the Courts
- California District Attorney's Association
- American Probation and Parole Association
- Regional Training Center

The YCPD does not have a designated position to coordinate the Department's training programs. Currently, fiscal staff personnel monitor training expenditures and record the attendance of staff members in training sessions.

A designated position could work with supervisors to identify job-required, job-related training needed for employees to perform their job duties; and as appropriate, identify training for career advancement. Additionally, this position could ensure that needs assessment are completed, which would identify individual employee training needs.

State of California Assembly Bill 109

The YCPD was impacted in 2011 by the state's legislation, AB 109, that is designed to reduce the number of prisoners in California State prisons. Nonviolent offenders are returned to their counties and the counties must implement measures to process and monitor them. Yolo County had to develop a plan of implementation with limited direction from the State of California. This situation posed stress and uncertainty on all entities involved in the implementation of the legislation, including the YCPD, the courts and others.

In May 2011, the first AB 109 training materials from the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) were distributed to all affected employees in YCPD. The YCPD Administration established an Implementation Team (I-Team) composed of volunteer staff members from various units within the YCPD, with the task to prepare a plan and to train staff members to properly implement the requirements of AB 109.

In June 2011, the first meeting of the I-Team was held and training on AB 109 was commenced. This voluntary training was offered to every employee in the YCPD. However, not all units were represented at this early stage of the training. This non-representation at this early training placed some staff at a disadvantage and made it more difficult to implement the changes required by AB 109 in an accurate and timely manner.

According to testimony, training continued in the Probation Department without any direction from any state entity or authority. A YCPD staff member was authorized to coordinate the activities of groups (Court, District Attorney and Public Defender) implementing AB 109 during July and August 2011. Additional training was conducted during September and October 2011 by Probation Department Staff and an appointee of the court, with this training being the first training by any "authority" on sentencing related to AB 109 that had been organized in the state. Other counties have benefited from the training organized by YCPD. The Probation Department did receive \$55,000 for AB 109 training from Standards & Training for Corrections for fiscal year 2011-2012 and is projected to receive \$72,000 for fiscal year 2012-2013.

YCPD Staff Annual Reviews

The staff is required to have annual reviews conducted by their supervisor, reviewed by the Administration and then sent to Yolo County HR. Some of the reviews are not being completed in a timely manner and the staff has questions concerning the purpose of the reviews and forms used in the reviews. The Grand Jury determined that some staff and supervisors are not comfortable with expressing their concerns and do not feel that their issues will be resolved if they are raised. The office morale, work place environment and employee productivity is affected by the lack of understanding between the employee and supervisor.

Staff Morale

The 2011-2012 Grand Jury determined that the YCPD management has been provided by HR with information regarding staff morale and workplace issues with the intent of making positive change and enhancing the performance of the department. Through consistent testimony, recommendations made by HR have not been fully implemented and no significant change has occurred.

FINDINGS

- F1.** Administration, Supervisors and Staff do not have clear directions on what is required of them within the Probation Department. The lack of an updated Policy Manual has resulted in inconsistent direction from different supervisors and department productivity may be affected.
- F2.** Lack of a designated position in charge of the training program has resulted in some employees in the YCPD not having an individualized training plan.
- F3.** There is no training in place for employees entering the YCPD, which defines routine requirements and procedures for them to become productive and eligible career advancement.
- F4.** Annual reviews are necessary to provide the employee and supervisor with a clear understanding of what is expected of each other and help to develop a good working relationship and trust between the two.
- F5.** The type of annual review forms presently used lack the information necessary for supervisors to clearly inform employees of their performance, what they need to do to improve and what they need to do for advancement.
- F6.** Implementation of the HR recommendation could provide valuable information of the status of the workplace environment and identify areas that still need improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1.** The YCPD Policy Manual should be completely revised and distributed to all employees by July 1, 2013.
- R2.** The Probation Department should designate a position to be in charge of the training program to ensure that employees have the necessary skills to properly perform the

duties of their job in compliance with the Mission Statement and to meet the goals of the YCPD.

- R3.** All employees in the Probation Department need to be evaluated on an annual basis. A follow up system needs to confirm that the reviews are completed.
- R4.** The format and purpose of employee reviews should be made clear to all employees.
- R5.** The HR Department should implement periodic interviews with staff and supervisors to determine the employee morale and their concerns about the office environment in the Probation Department. This information should be shared with the CAO, Chief and Assistant Chief Probation Officers.
- R6.** YCPD management should conduct follow-up interviews with YCPD staff to determine if the workplace environment and morale have been improved.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

Pursuant to California Penal Code Sections 933(c) and 933.05, the Grand Jury requests a response as follows:

From the following governing bodies:

Yolo County Probation Department: R1, R2, R3, R4, R6

Yolo County CAO: R5, R6

Yolo County HR Department: R3, R4, R5

DISCLAIMER

This report was issued by the Grand Jury with the exception of one member who may have had a perceived conflict of interest. This juror was excluded from all parts of the investigation, including interviews, inspections, deliberations, and the preparation and acceptance of this report.