

2023–2024
Yolo County Civil Grand Jury
June 12, 2024

Yolo County Detention Facilities
A STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE



Stock Photo

YOLO COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY
YOLO COUNTY DETENTION FACILITIES
A STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE



-Stock Photo-

*“Jails and prisons are the complement of schools; so many less
as you have of the latter, so many more must you have of the former”
-Horace Mann*

SUMMARY

The 2023-24 Yolo County Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) inspected the Yolo County Monroe Detention Facility (MDF) on December 20, 2023. This facility houses adult males and females. At the same time, the Grand Jury also inspected the newly completed Walter J. Leinberger Detention Center (LDC). Due to staffing shortages, the LDC is currently vacant with no timeline as to when it will house incarcerated persons. When staffing levels improve, the LDC will house low-risk adult incarcerated persons serving out their sentences, with an emphasis on providing program and medical needs. On January 25, 2024, the Grand Jury toured the Yolo County Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF). These facilities are all located within the City of Woodland. The Grand Jury found the facilities in use to be clean and sufficiently staffed.

BACKGROUND

California Penal Code section 919(b) provides “The grand jury shall inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the county.” To fulfill this statutory obligation, the Grand Jury visited the MDF. The Grand Jury also toured the JDF housing eight juveniles at the time of the Grand Jury’s visit. The MDF is managed by the Yolo County Sheriff’s Office (YCSO), while the Yolo County Probation Department oversees the youth at the JDF.

APPROACH

Before the MDF tour, the Grand Jury watched a training video developed by the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) to learn about visitor requirements and expectations. The Grand Jury also used questions developed by the BSCC related to all areas and activities within a facility to encourage a better understanding of the facility and its operations. Grand Jurors added items to be observed or questions to ask, as desired.

The Grand Jury met with the facility's Correctional Command Team at the beginning of the MDF tour. The focus was on the facilities themselves and jail operations regarding incarcerated person medical treatment, mental health, nutrition, visitation procedures, how grievances are managed, and pre-release programs.

The Grand Jury also toured several areas within the MDF, including incarcerated person intake booking and release, the healthcare wing, incarcerated person housing pods, recreation yard, main kitchen, laundry, central control, staff offices/training rooms, classrooms, and incarcerated person visiting areas. The Grand Jury did not formally interview anyone but did speak to several correctional officers, supervisors and incarcerated persons during the tour. Before the tour, the Grand Jury was provided with a copy of the *Inmate Rules Handbook*.

The Grand Jury reviewed reports from earlier grand juries dating as far back as 2017-18. These reports, mentioned in the 2022-23 Grand Jury report, had recommended improvements to visitation and the grievance system at the facility. The Grand Jury interviewed knowledgeable persons about the programs available to those incarcerated at MDF. This included following up on recommendations made by previous Yolo County Grand Juries. Jail policies and procedures and the BSCC's inspection report on the MDF dated September 11, 2022, were reviewed. The BSCC report showed that the YCSO and its detention facilities were compliant with California law and regulations.

The Grand Jury also reviewed:

1. A report by the 2017-18 Grand Jury titled "Inmate Visitation Policy at the Monroe Detention Facility"
2. A report by the 2021-22 Grand Jury titled "Cancelled: Visitation Policies at the Monroe Detention Facility"
3. A report by the 2021-22 Grand Jury titled "A Snapshot in Time: An Overview of the Yolo County Jail"
4. Recommendations from the 2017-18 Grand Jury which focused on implementing a "more convenient and more family-friendly [visitation] schedule" and an online system for making visitation appointments
5. Recommendations from the 2021-22 Grand Jury that the YCSO prioritize the hiring of a full-time program coordinator

DISCUSSION

Detention Facility Tours

The Monroe Detention Facility (MDF) was built in 1988 and upgraded subsequently with a new booking area and a new medical and mental health wing. The Grand Jury found the facility to be clean, well-lit and with a comfortable temperature overall. There were five program classrooms available to incarcerated persons for a variety of programs that are available to them (listed below under Programs). Tablets are now available to all incarcerated persons that are going to be housed in the facility. The tablets allow them to schedule and conduct virtual visits as well as to file grievances, order items from the commissary and even purchase approved movies and books to read or watch on the tablets. The previous Grand Jury found the grievance procedure was ineffective and the acquisition of the tablets has improved this process.

During short conversations, incarcerated persons praised the MDF, its staff, and the quality and quantity of the food. They felt that staff cared about them as individuals, in contrast with their incarceration experiences at other detention facilities. While touring the kitchen for the MDF, the Grand Jury toured a room that may eventually be used as a culinary school/classroom. Staffing levels currently do not allow for the classroom to be utilized.

Staffing levels on the correctional side of the YCSO has been an issue for several years. The command staff advised the Grand Jury that they are contracting with a company called “EPIC” to assist in recruitment for the correctional side of the YCSO. The YCSO previously used EPIC on the patrol side and was able to help fill the vacancies.

The Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF) has four pods of which only one is currently being used. This facility is managed by the Yolo County Probation Department. JDF was built in 2005 and designed to house 120 juvenile incarcerated persons. It currently houses eight juvenile incarcerated persons and is significantly underused. At one point it was thought the facility might close. Even with changing trends in the juvenile justice system, it does not appear that facility will close.

Grand Jurors spoke to several juvenile incarcerated persons who said they had no serious complaints about the facility or the staff. They felt the care and attention they received at this facility was of high quality. The JDF overall appears to be in good condition. All employees appeared dedicated to their jobs.

The Grand Jury was allowed to enter one unoccupied cell. The bed, toilet and sink area were visible from the cell door. The mattress, atop a raised concrete slab, was approximately three inches thick. The cell appeared to be clean and in good working order.

Programs

Detention facilities such as the MDF, primarily offer two types of programs: those focused on providing assistance to incarcerated persons and those that can help them have a successful re-entry into the community.

The programs currently available to incarcerated persons are as follows:

1. Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) is the use of medication, in combination with counseling and behavioral therapy, to provide a “whole-patient” approach to the treatment of Opioid Use Disorder (OUD).
2. Substance Use Disorder (SUD) is a medical condition defined by the inability to control the use of a particular substance(s) despite the harmful consequences. Treatment is provided by contracted counseling professionals.
3. A multi-phase cognitive behavioral therapy treatment program offers evidence-based curricula to address criminal thinking and anti-social values. Program classes can continue post-release at the West Sacramento or Woodland locations of the Yolo Day Reporting Center (DRC).
4. A multi-phase cognitive-behavioral parenting program offers participants evidence-based, parent management skills training specifically created for incarcerated parents.
5. An in-custody High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) literacy program prepares participants for the state HiSET exam. The program provides instruction in both Spanish and English languages.
6. A pre-release Medi-Cal Application Program provides all adult eligible incarcerated persons with timely access to Medi-Cal services.
7. A Yolo County Reentry Resources Document is distributed to individuals when they are released from the detention facility. It covers available programs in Yolo County for reentry into the community, including county specific resources such as cell phones, clothing, crisis line, employment and training programs, housing, libraries, mental health, transportation information, food resources and information about replacing lost documents. This document is available in both English and Spanish.
8. A socialization program for incarcerated persons diagnosed by mental health professionals to have limitations affecting the safety and security of the facility. These services are provided by contracted medical providers.
9. An In-custody Re-entry Program establishes a coordinated community re-entry process, that assists people leaving incarceration by connecting them to needed physical and behavioral health services prior to release.

The above listed programs contribute to reductions in the rate of recidivism. The programs available to incarcerated persons vary with the time spent in-custody. In 2022, 86 percent of incarcerated persons in Yolo County detention facilities were in custody for less than 30 days: 40% for 0 days, 25% for 1-3 days, 11% for 4-10 days, and 10% for 11-30 days.

Software

The 2022-23 Grand Jury report “Meeting their Obligations” noted that software can be both the savior and curse of modern detention facilities. The gold standard is to have two major software systems, the Jail Management System (JMS) and Records Management System (RMS),

interact seamlessly. These two systems affect almost all aspects of detention operations so incarcerated persons can be booked, housed, and supported safely, depending on their security status, and all actions taken can be recorded and archived appropriately. MDF staff stated that, to their knowledge, no county in California has yet achieved the goal of integrating the RMS and JMS systems.

In 2018, the YCSO recognized that the current JMS and RMS provider could not meet its long-term needs. Most software systems have short life spans, and the current system is outdated. The YCSO has been working on upgrading both systems since that time. One of the goals of the YCSO is to have a combined JMS and RMS system that can interact in real-time and also reduce paperwork. For example, when a patrol deputy makes an arrest, the information that is entered into the RMS system would automatically populate into the JMS system. This would shorten the amount of time the deputy needs to be off the street filling out paperwork.

The 2022-2023 Grand Jury anticipated that a new JMS and RMS system would be operational no later than December 2023. Due to numerous lengthy delays by the contractor, the YCSO cancelled the contract. The YCSO has recently hired a consultant (National Public Agency Group) to assist in acquiring a combined RMS and JMS system.

The Grand Jury also noted that one of the wish list items for the MDF was an RFID system. YCSO stated that an RFID system would be a great asset to the department and would include real-time movement/management of incarcerated persons. The 2022-2023 Grand Jury report included this in the findings and recommendations. The YCSO responded they were still researching the best system for the MDF.

Visitation and Grievances

During the last several Grand Jury reports, it was noted that there was an issue with both visitation policies and grievance procedures. The YCSO responded this would be fixed with a new JMS and RMS system. As noted above, the YCSO is still working on these two systems. Fortunately, this had not interfered with the updating of the grievance and visitation policies and procedures. The company that was hired to run the commissary at the jail was able to work it into their system to add video visitation and an on-line grievance procedure. This resolves issues that were brought up by previous Grand Juries and noted in the 2022-2023 Grand Jury report.

FINDINGS

The Grand Jury makes the following findings:

- F-1 The Correctional Division of the Yolo County Sheriff's Office is understaffed. Until staffing levels can be improved the Walter J. Leinberger Detention Center cannot be opened and operated.
- F-2 With adequate staffing, the culinary class proposed for the Monroe Detention Facility kitchen will be an excellent addition to other programs offered at the facility.

- F-3 A new vendor is needed to provide seamless and robust Record Management System/Jail Management System capabilities, resulting in paperwork reduction and an increase in staff and officer availability.
- F-4 The Yolo County Sheriff's Office continues to seek an online RFID system that would work best in their facility. This technology would significantly boost the Yolo County Sheriff's Office's ability to further meet the needs of incarcerated individuals while maintaining accountability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Grand Jury makes the following recommendations:

- R-1 The Yolo County Sheriff's Office should continue to strive to find new ways to hire new staff so that the Walter J. Leinberger Detention Center can be opened.
- R-2 The Yolo County Sheriff's Office should continue to fill vacant positions to offer the culinary training as an added program to assist incarcerated persons to develop marketable skills that can be used upon release.
- R-3 The Yolo County Sheriff's Office should continue to find a contractor to procure Record Management System/Jail Management System programs within the 2024-2025 budget year.
- R-4 The Yolo County Sheriff's Office should continue the search for an RFID system that is compatible with the facilities and, if found, submit a request to the Yolo County Board of Supervisors by April 1, 2025, to invest in this technology.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Grand Jury requests responses for the following Findings and Recommendations within 90 days:

- Yolo County Board of Supervisors F-1, F-2, F-3, F-4; and R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4
- Yolo County Sheriff F-1, F-2, F-3, F-4; and R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4

COMMENDATIONS

The Grand Jury found that incarcerated persons appreciated the professionalism of staff and the excellence of the food provided by the MDF.

The Grand Jury commends the In-Custody Program Manager. All programs are now functioning, and the Program Manager continues to make improvements to the programs. This position

creates opportunities to support incarcerated persons and helps them prepare for successful re-entry into the community.

The Grand Jury commends the classroom teacher for the dedication, instructional abilities, enthusiasm, and encouragement given to the students.

ACRONYMS/GLOSSARY OF TERMS

BSCC: The Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) is a California agency that conducts biennial inspections of state, county, city, and court detention facilities. The BSCC also posts its biennial reports on its website.

DRC: A Day Reporting Center(DRC) is a non-residential, highly structured program that combines supervision, treatment, and re-entry services. It is designed for moderate to high-risk offenders, often with substance abuse or mental health issues. The program includes mandatory reporting, program participation, drug testing, community service, and other conditions as determined by the relevant authorities.

JMS: Lawinsider.com defines a Jail Management System (JMS) as “a software program utilized by a jail facility to store jail data and to track inmate information and status beginning at booking and until release.” More specifically, a JMS provides a single entry, comprehensive incarcerated person management system that makes real-time incarcerated person information available to any system user. Typically, this involves a software program utilized by a jail facility to store jail data and to track incarcerated person information and status from the time of booking through release.

RFID: Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) is a technology that uses radio waves to identify people or objects. It consists of two things: a tag and a receiver. The tag is a small chip that is attached to or implanted in an object. A nearby reader can use radio waves to read the RFID tag without any visual contact. The technology facilitates the wireless discovery and tracking of any object using high-frequency radio waves.

RMS: The Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, defines a Records Management System (RMS) as “an agency-wide system that provides for the storage, retrieval, retention, manipulation, archiving, and viewing of information, records, documents, or files pertaining to law enforcement operations.”

Types of Facilities: The Monroe Detention Facility (MDF) is a Type II medium/maximum detention facility rated to house adult incarcerated persons with all security classifications, depending on their perceived public safety risk. The BSCC classifies county facilities in its 2022 report as:

- Type I Facility: a local detention facility used for the detention of persons for not more than 96 hours, excluding holidays, after booking. May also be used for short-term sentences, depending on local policy.
- Type II Facility: a local detention facility used for the detention of persons pending arraignment, during trial, and upon a sentence of commitment.

- Type III Facility: a local detention facility used only for the detention of convicted and sentenced persons.
- Type IV Facility: a local detention facility or portion thereof designated for housing under Penal Code Section 1208 for work/education furlough or other programs involving access into the community.

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.