



HUMBOLDT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

WILLIAM F. HONSAL, SHERIFF/CORONER

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July 30, 2019

Honorable Joyce Hinrichs, Presiding Judge
Humboldt County Superior Court
825 5th Street
Eureka, CA 95501

RECEIVED
JUL 31 2019
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

RE: Grand Jury 2019 Report: Homeless

Dear Honorable Joyce Hinrichs,

Attached is my response to the 2019 Grand Jury report regarding homelessness in Humboldt County. Homelessness continues to be a community issue throughout the state of California. The Sheriff's office is committed to working with the community to find attainable long-term solutions. I appreciate the Grand Jury's report, findings and recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W. F. Honsal".

Sheriff, County of Humboldt
707.268.3618

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT

Report Title: Les Miserables: The Criminalization of the Homeless in the City of Eureka

Report Date: July 8, 2019

Response by: William F. Honsal, Humboldt County Sheriff

FINDINGS

4. The Sheriff's office partially agrees with the Grand Jury's findings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

9. This Grand Jury Recommendation requires further analysis.

Date: 7/30/19

Signed: 

Number of pages attached: 2

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT – FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY STATEMENT

Findings

F4. The City of Eureka and Humboldt County governments are not effectively working together in coordination to solve the problem of homelessness.

PARTIALLY AGREE

Response – The Sheriff’s Office and Eureka Police Department participate in many different work groups related to ways to improve homelessness throughout the county. Our Departments both work with the DHHS MIST and believe in this program to help find solutions to homelessness. The Sheriff’s office is committed to work with public safety agencies, Community Based Organizations (CBO), Churches, and the Department of Health and Human Services to look at alternatives to solve the law violations that are often caused by persons that are homeless. I recognize that enforcement of the law may not be the best solution to solve the homeless crisis in Humboldt County. However, with the limited resources in this community, Law Enforcement is often the only responding agency to deal with the criminal issues surrounding homelessness. The reporting parties that have homeless persons trespassing on their land, urinating in public, using narcotics openly in public, disposing of needles/drug paraphernalia, disturbing the peace, littering, and damaging the environment also demand a response. I urge the CBO’s and local churches to reach out and help solve this problem, before Law Enforcement has to act.

Recommendations

R9. The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends the City of Eureka and Humboldt County collaborate to conduct leadership group meetings at least monthly to address homelessness and other shared issues. This should be completed by October 1, 2019.

Response: **The recommendation requires further analysis.**

Response –The Sheriff’s Office currently participates in a monthly Law Enforcement Chiefs Association, Humboldt (LECAH) meetings which is comprised of the chief and commanders of all local law enforcement where shared issues are discussed. We have invited the Human Rights Commission, community advocates, NAACP, and Social groups to provide information to the Chief’s meeting group to assist with policy decisions. Concerns over criminal activity at homeless camps has been an ongoing topic of discussion at the meetings. Setting up another meeting for this specific purpose requires further analysis to ensure that productivity is achieved. We are always collaborating to find better solutions to these community issues. The Sheriff’s office is committed to working alongside with our public safety partners and community to address the issues outlined in this report.