

Inspections of Custody and Corrections Facilities in Humboldt County

SUMMARY

The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury (Civil Grand Jury) annually visits and evaluates the physical condition and management of public prisons (State Conservation Camps are the only prisons in Humboldt County) and may inspect other holding facilities located throughout the County. The 2019-2020 Civil Grand Jury inspected the Humboldt County Correctional Facility, Humboldt County Juvenile Hall, Northern California Regional Center, High Rock Conservation Camp, Eel River Conservation Camp and Sempervirens Psychiatric Health Facility. The Civil Grand Jury issued a separate report regarding the two Conservation Camps above entitled, “Angels in Orange: Service and Rehabilitation in the Conservation Camps of Humboldt County.”

During each of the tours, the staff with whom the Civil Grand Jury interacted during the inspections appeared to be dedicated to their task and were enthusiastic about many of the programs they were providing to help with corrections or rehabilitation of the people housed in their respective facilities. Each of these facilities has several positive attributes and each of these facilities has at least one problem or challenge to overcome. An outline of some of the problems or challenges noted by the Civil Grand jury is:

Humboldt County Correctional Facility

- Difficulty attaining/retaining sufficient number of mental health staff
- Need for Competency Restoration Program
- Possible expansion of private contractors for mental health services

Humboldt County Juvenile Hall

- Attaining trained and certified Substance Use Disorder counselors
- Closure of the Northern California Regional Center

Sempervirens Psychiatric Health Facility

- Located in a facility that is outdated and not conducive to mental health restoration
- Need to increase the hours of Mental Health Crisis Intervention Teams
- Adoption of Laura’s Law to provide additional treatment options for some patients
- Need to provide more step-down housing for patients leaving some facilities

BACKGROUND

The Civil Grand Jury's mandate to conduct inspections of the management and condition of custody facilities is rooted in the State Constitution. The grand jury is one of the oldest civil institutions in America and has been part of California law since statehood in 1850. County civil grand juries are required by the State Constitution (California Constitution, Article 1, Section 23, 1850). The grand jury is an independent body and, as an instrument of the court, subject only to the court's jurisdiction. The primary function of the grand jury is to act as a public watchdog by investigating and reporting on affairs of local government.

As part of this watchdog mandate, the Civil Grand Jury annually visits and evaluates the physical condition and management of public prisons (State Conservation Camps are the only prisons in Humboldt County) and may inspect holding facilities located throughout the county (California Penal Code, Section 919(b)). This includes county jails, mental health facilities, state prisons and work camps, or any place in the County a person in custody may be taken, including all police stations and county work sites.

METHODOLOGY

Members of the Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury conducted inspections and interviews at the locations listed below. Additional research and follow-up interviews were conducted to confirm and clarify details.

Humboldt County Sheriff's Office

Humboldt County Correctional Facility

Humboldt County Probation Department

Humboldt County Juvenile Hall,

Northern California Regional Center

Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services

Sempervirens Psychiatric Health Facility

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Eel River Conservation Camp #31

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, High Rock Conservation Camp #32

The inspections of the Conservation Camps is the subject of a separate report entitled, “Angels in Orange: Service and Rehabilitation in the Conservation Camps of Humboldt County.”

DISCUSSION

Humboldt County Correctional Facility

The Humboldt County Correctional Facility (HCCF) is a clean and well-run institution. In 2011, Governor Brown signed Assembly Bill 109 establishing “realignment” which, among other actions, redirected some felons to serve their time in county jails. After realignment from a county jail to a correctional facility, the HCCF has struggled to adapt to the increase of longer inmate incarcerations and a higher number of high risk offenders.

However, the greatest struggle is overcoming the high number of inmates with mental health issues. This problem is exacerbated by the Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services’ (DHHS) failure to provide round-the-clock, qualified mental health staffing. The 2018-2019 Civil Grand Jury’s report entitled “The Last Resort” detailed the problems associated with mental health issues in the HCCF.

A program working well for some inmates with mental health issues is a mental health diversion program. An inmate can be assigned to that program only through a court order. The inmate undergoes a rehabilitation program designed specifically for the inmate. Successful completion of the program results in the initial charges being dropped and the inmate being prepared to re-enter society.

The physical layout of the HCCF for the General Population is two-tiered dorms in which inmates are allowed free movement within the dorms while under supervision by a single correctional officer. Additionally, there are individual cells for a higher level of security to either protect an inmate from others or protect others from an inmate.

As noted in a previous grand jury report, there is no security barrier in place to prevent an inmate from attempting suicide by jumping from an upper tier. It has been well-established that a large proportion of inmates have mental health disorders, and many inmates are at an elevated risk for suicide. There was an allocation for construction of a barrier in the 2015-16 budget that was not implemented.

Construction of a major addition to the HCCF had been approved and was expected to begin within two years. Unfortunately, issues with state finance kept delaying final approval of construction. A portion of the addition will be dedicated to mental health services to enable better treatment of inmates with mental health issues. These delays due to state bureaucracy are having a negative affect on our most fragile inmates – those with mental health issues. Much of the new construction is dedicated to preparing inmates who are soon to be released for transition to the community. Such programs reduce recidivism, are a great benefit to the community and the inmate.

The Sheriff's Office is considering publishing a Request for Proposals to contract with a private provider for mental health services. Wellpath, (formerly California Forensic Medical Group) is currently providing medical service in HCCF. Wellpath provides medical and mental health service to institutions throughout the nation, however, their ability to deliver quality care has been questioned. They have been cited in a wide array of public articles regarding substandard care, and they have been the defendants in numerous lawsuits alleging negligence. The advantage of Wellpath is their ability to provide qualified staff and a Competency Restoration Program. As a part of their contract, Wellpath maintains malpractice insurance and a legal team that addresses any claims that might be filed.

The County has had a difficult time recruiting qualified staff, particularly in the mental health arena for HCCF. Interviews conducted with management leaders shed light on this very pressing need. The easiest and most immediate solution is to utilize outside, for-profit contractors to fill these positions. This tactic may be just a band-aid approach to deeper problems. The reasons why recruitment has failed needs to be more fully examined.

Several interviewees stated that extended delays (sometimes months) in onboarding of potential employees is the norm. The greatest need, and by extension, the hardest to fill positions, in the HCCF and other mental health settings, is for licensed mental health professionals, such as psychologists, nurses with mental health speciality certification, and psychiatric physicians.

The hiring process should be streamlined because all applicants are thoroughly vetted by state licensing bureaus and all health professionals have governing bodies in place maintaining standards. As the Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury heard from team leaders, applicants are often not hired and onboarded by the County in a time frame that these professionals expect, exacerbating the vacancy problem. Further bureaucratic hurdles, such as required background checks to work in a custody institution should be fast-tracked with the utmost urgency. The entire recruitment and hiring process does not appear to be as nimble as the targeted hiring groups require. Wages do not appear to be offered at a level comparable to what private contractors provide. Even the cost-effectiveness justification of utilizing private contractors may be somewhat illusory. Rather than outsourcing these jobs, at premium pay, the County would be further ahead to expend the necessary effort to become more savvy in attracting qualified applicants, with comparable compensation to private contractors.

Delving into a root cause analysis as to how we got to this point and raises the question: How are private contractors able to find willing workers, and we are not? A serious examination of County hiring practices, and a budget analysis of compensation would appear to be a good start.

This issue of hiring is part of a larger recruitment problem suffered for years throughout the medical and mental health community in Humboldt County. Large numbers of "Nurse travelers" and "Physician locums" are being used daily by local area hospitals. These travelers come from all across the country and work for contractors. They are paid at a higher rate than their colleagues who live here and therefore are a higher total cost.

Much of the problem in attracting qualified professionals here is that Humboldt County doesn't have the social amenities that many highly educated, urban lifestyle-oriented people demand, such as shopping variety, regular available forms of entertainment, and a large cohort of other equally educated professionals with whom to interact. Humboldt county community colleges and HSU programs do not produce this level of professionals in sufficient quantities to fill local medical needs.

Wellpath is a legal business fulfilling the needs of customers for qualified staff, but with a business model based on profit. They are somehow able to both pay a higher wage *and* make a profit. To minimize costs, quality and continuity of care may be diminished. This business plan of cost containment by minimizing staff has been the charge in over 100 lawsuits nationwide. If we are going to expand the use of private contractors for mental health into HCCF it is imperative that we demand (contractually) that quality patient care be maintained.

Wellpath is being used in the HCCF to fill medical positions, with no bad outcomes reported so far. However, it may be only a matter of time with an increasing number of employees being provided by private contractors that their business model of cost containment to generate shareholder profit may erode quality of care.

A Request For Proposals (RFP) is being considered for mental health employees in HCCF and the Competency Restoration Program. As the present need is quite dire, a short-term contract for private contractors to fill these positions may be the only logical choice until the aforementioned deficiencies in recruitment, hiring, and onboarding are improved. The Civil Grand Jury believes this growing trend of utilizing outside contractors should be a subject of diligent study. Not only does it *not* bring permanent employees to Humboldt County, but increasingly scarce health care dollars are siphoned off to pay investors' profit.

Competency Restoration Program (CRP)

When a person is charged with a crime and becomes an inmate at HCCF and their competency to stand trial related to their mental health status is in question, they are sent to a California State Hospital to participate in a Competency Restoration Program (CRP). This is an expensive and time-consuming process. Lack of competency delays the accused from going to court by adding another requirement. The process delays the trial and the passage of time decreases the accuracy of testimony which has an adverse effect on the outcome. If an inmate is returned to HCCF with competency restored and they do not promptly attend court, the restoration may not remain stable without ongoing treatment. Therefore, the process may need to start over again.

HCCF and HC Mental Health are planning to contract with a private provider to provide a CRP locally. Until a private contractor takes over mental health services, day-to-day inmate mental health care will continue to be provided by HC Mental Health. At this writing, HCCF is remodeling individual cells to meet the requirements for CRP. This will be a much more efficient and humane way to treat inmates with mental health issues in need of competency restoration. Such a program will interface with other mental health programs within Humboldt

County Mental Health, allowing treatment to continue seamlessly when the patient is released from custody. If a Competency Restoration Program becomes successful in HCCF it is possible that other California counties' correctional facilities may send inmates to this program. This will add income to the County to offset costs. It will also relieve some of the burden from State Hospitals.

Humboldt County Juvenile Hall



Rendering of the New Humboldt County Juvenile Hall, Currently Under Construction

The Humboldt County Juvenile Hall facility is over 50 years old. Planning for the replacement of the building began over 10 years ago and construction of the replacement began over two years ago. Unfortunately, construction was halted due to problems with the contractor. Last year the County resolved those problems and construction has recommenced with a different contractor. The new structure is adjacent to the existing facility. Staff are anxious to see this new facility completed as they hope to be able to improve service to the youths who will be housed there. The current plan for opening of the new facility is June of 2020. Once the new facility is occupied, the old facility will be demolished to provide a secure outdoor exercise area for the new Juvenile Hall. The delay in the construction of the new Juvenile Hall is hampering staff from providing more effective programs for the youth they supervise.

Both the County Juvenile Hall and the Northern California Regional Facility (NCRF) are managed and staffed by Humboldt County Probation Department personnel. The capacity of the current Juvenile Hall is 25 detainees. The facility is co-ed with individual cells from two perpendicular hallways. The staff screens potential detainees to determine medical and dietary needs as well as the detainees' general state of mind. Personnel from Humboldt County Mental Health evaluate and participate in programs with all detainees. Visitors are permitted two days a week. Juvenile length of stay can be from a few days to six months, the average stay being 20-30 days. The clean kitchen provides three meals a day, at least one of which is served hot. Behavior expectations, daily activity schedules, and menus for the Juveniles are posted. Detainees are

strongly encouraged to participate in developmental programs. During their incarceration the juveniles attend school in the facility, to continue their education.

Staff stated that “... most of the youth within the Facility have co-occurring disorders,” (i.e., a dual diagnosis which includes Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and/or a formal mental health diagnosis). Therefore, the SUD portions of the program must be as well-researched and as effective as possible. SUD represents the third leading cause of preventable death in America and is a primary co-factor in juvenile crime. In a region of the State that has embraced widespread drug cultivation and production, it is difficult to have a real discussion of the problems associated with drugs in general and marijuana in particular. It would be of no surprise to find that the majority of the residents in the facility have histories of drug abuse. Every effort should be made to address these concerns.

However, there are concerns with the Substance Use Disorder program. Staff stated that they were “surprised” to learn that DHHS had hired uncertified SUD counselors to work with the youth, and that only one of the three SUD counselors completed counselor certification requirements. While State regulations allow the hiring of “counselors-in-training” provided that they are actively enrolled in recognized certification studies, this is considered a contentious practice among many SUD professionals. The current ratio of two “counselors-in-training” to one certified counselor is concerning and seems potentially suboptimal. It should be noted that the State’s current SUD counselor certification requirements (for a general certificate) do not mandate specialized training for dealing with youth. Any current SUD counselor that has not received this specialized training, should be required to successfully complete this training in a timely manner.

When queried, Probation staff did not know, and could not name the SUD program or methodology of the treatment. Without knowing the name or type of program being utilized, there is no way to verify its adherence to best practices. All marketed SUD programs claim effectiveness; but many do not offer independent verification.

One of the changes the staff would like to see is an increase in local volunteers to come to the facility to work with the youths. Community based organizations that have something to offer to the residents are encouraged to contact probation personnel to determine if there is a good fit for their programs.

New Horizons Transfer from the Regional Facility to Juvenile Hall

The Northern California Regional Facility in the past has been utilized by other County Juvenile Probation Departments throughout the State for the placement of at-risk youth. It is anticipated the NCRF will be closed by the end of this fiscal year. Closure is due to declining enrollment. Anticipated annual savings of the closure will be approximately \$650,000.

New Horizons is the program used to improve the lives of the residents of NCRF and will continue in operation in the new juvenile hall facility. The Humboldt County website describes the agencies involved with New Horizons as follows:

- The Probation Department administers the program and its funding. Probation is responsible for the correctional/custodial care, court reporting, and community aftercare supervision.
- The Humboldt County Health and Human Services - Mental Health Branch provides intensive day treatment services five days per week. Day treatment staff provide mental health assessment, rehabilitation activities, alcohol and other drug counseling, individual, group, and family therapy, and medication support services.
- The Humboldt County Office of Education provides the New Horizons educational program. The services consist of a 250-day, year-round school with instruction from a full-time certified teacher and instructional aide.
- The Humboldt County Health and Human Services - Social Services Branch participates and has assisted in the development of the New Horizons independent living skills program, the recruitment and retention of foster care families, and in assisting with casework activities that promote wraparound services to these high-risk children and families.

New Horizons continues to assist juveniles and their families after release from custody. Mental health support includes counseling, medication, and case management. A multi-agency family intervention process is used to strengthen the child and develop family unity.

Sempervirens Psychiatric Health Facility

Sempervirens Psychiatric Health Facility is the only publicly operated psychiatric hospital in Humboldt County and has been in operation for 50 years. This secure facility has 16 patient beds plus an additional four patient beds in the Crisis Intervention Unit. This bed limit is based on space, staffing, and licensing. The facility can exceed the licensed number of patients for brief periods, as needed, but reporting to the State is required.

Patients are housed under various Welfare and Institutions Codes (WIC) that allow involuntary committals.

- 1) WIC 5150, an involuntary 72 hour hold due to the patient being a danger to themselves, a danger to others, gravely disabled, or unable to care for themselves due to a mental health condition
- 2) WIC 5250, based on a probable cause hearing, extended involuntary hold for 14 days due to patient's continued need for treatment
- 3) WIC 5260, extends 5250 for an additional 14 days
- 4) WIC 5270, may extend hold for additional 30 days, may lead to the patient being conserved via court hearing.

Since these are suspensions of individual civil rights, there are strict guidelines that must be met prior to a patient being admitted to the facility.

Sempervirens Psychiatric Health Facility is housed at the old General Hospital building, which houses several county offices on Harris Street between H and I Streets. This building is

quite old and may not be seismically safe, though it has seen several interior remodel projects over the years. The Sempervirens Psychiatric Health Facility is bracketed between the Coroner's Office and the Building/Planning Departments.

It is common for Sempervirens to be at or over capacity. The atmosphere in Sempervirens is dated; it has an early 20th century sanitarium feel which is not conducive to mental health rehabilitation. The space is crowded and there is no room in the building for expansion. The need for mental health services will only expand over time. Humboldt County should plan and build or locate a new psychiatric health facility as soon as possible.

Some of the concerns expressed by the staff of the facility include the need for more patient beds in the Crisis Intervention Unit and a separate housing unit to provide crisis intervention for juveniles. If there is an adult patient in the Crisis Intervention Unit, a juvenile patient cannot be lodged. If there is a juvenile patient in the Crisis Intervention Unit, an adult patient cannot be lodged.

An increase in available patient beds in the County's Psychiatric Health Facility based on increased space, increased staffing, and approved licensing, would provide more service to the community.

Additional needs include step-down housing so every patient leaving the psychiatric hospital will have a stable housing situation after initial treatment. Over the past several years available step-down housing locally has been inadequate. More step-down housing would reduce the decompensation rate of former patients. This would help maintain optimum treatment outcomes while reducing impacts to the patient's family, emergency rooms, law enforcement, and the community.

The Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services staffs a Mobile Response Team which responds to critical mental health incidents in the community and at hospital emergency departments. The team members are able to evaluate the patient and determine if the patient needs to be admitted to Sempervirens or be released from the 5150 hold. This team is available during limited hours, however there is a proven need for 24/7/365 service. Added staffing and hours of service would greatly relieve the burden of frequently overwhelmed hospital emergency departments and support law enforcement during critical incidents.

Laura's Law

Laura's Law (AB 1421, passed 2002) allows Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) available in California when a county has adopted the law. Laura's Law was modeled on a New York Statute referred to as Kendra's Law. Forty-four states have enacted similar laws. Involuntary Assisted Outpatient Treatment is sustained court-mandated care in the community that can help those overcome by the symptoms of a severe mental illness. The treatment is only in place until a person is well enough to maintain his or her own care.

A person may be placed in Assisted Outpatient Treatment only where a court of law finds that all of the following have been met. The person must:

- 1) Be eighteen years of age or older;
- 2) Be suffering from a mental illness;

- 3) Be unlikely to survive safely in the community without supervision, based on a clinical determination;
- 4) Have a history of non-compliance with treatment that has either;
 - a. Been a significant factor in his or her being in a hospital, prison or jail at least twice within the last thirty-six months; or
 - b. Resulted in one or more acts, attempts or threats of serious violent behavior toward self or others within the last forty-eight months;
- 5) Have been offered an opportunity to voluntarily participate in a treatment plan by the local mental health department but continue to fail to engage in treatment;
- 6) Be substantially deteriorating;
- 7) Be, in view of his or her treatment history and current behavior, in need of assisted outpatient treatment in order to prevent a relapse or deterioration that would likely result in the person meeting California’s inpatient commitment standard, which is being:
 - a. A serious risk of harm to himself or herself or others; or
 - b. Gravely disabled (in immediate physical danger because unable to meet basic needs for food, clothing, or shelter);
- 8) Be likely to benefit from Assisted Outpatient Treatment; and
- 9) Participation in the Assisted Outpatient Program is the least restrictive placement necessary to ensure the person’s recovery and stability.

Implementation of Laura’s Law is a legal option for the County Board of Supervisors’ consideration. Adoption of Assisted Outpatient Treatment in Humboldt County would allow for longer and more detailed involuntary holds for mental health evaluation and treatment. A risk of this law’s implementation, which would allow a government agency to deny a person their civil rights, could culminate in the abuse of that law. The Civil Grand Jury observed that Humboldt County Mental Health personnel are sensitive to the civil rights of their patients. Any time any involuntary hold is considered for a patient, mental health personnel are careful to ensure the patient’s rights are maintained. If Humboldt County adopts Assisted Outpatient Treatment, clear guidelines and oversight by the County’s Patient’s Rights Advocate would be appropriate.

Reduction in Harmful Events when Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) was Implemented in Nevada County

Key Indicator	Pre-AOT	Post-AOT	Savings
Hospitalization	1404 days	748 days	46.70%
Incarceration	1844 days	637 days	65.10%
Homelessness	4224 days	1898 days	61.90%

Emergency Contacts	220 contacts	123 contacts	44.10%
Hospitalizations	\$346,950	\$133,650	\$213,300
Incarcerations	\$78,150	\$2,550	\$75,600

Heggarty, M. Behavioral Health Director, Nevada County. "The Nevada County Experience," Nov. 15, 2011

Nevada County adopted Laura's Law in April 2008 with a savings of \$1.81-\$2.52 for every dollar spent and receiving services under Laura's Law caused a reduction in actual hospital costs of \$213,300. It also caused a reduction in actual incarceration costs of \$75,600, according to Michael Heggarty, M. Behavioral Health Director, Nevada County.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors passed funding to adopt Laura's Law in November of 2014, it went into effect in July 2015. This occurred after a tragic series of homicides committed by Fort Bragg area resident Aaron Bassler, who had a long history of undiagnosed mental health issues and multiple encounters with law enforcement. Among his encounters with law enforcement was an incident in February 2009 in San Francisco where he threw objects that looked like dynamite into the Chinese Consulate. Bassler murdered several people in the Fort Bragg area in August 2012. Mendocino County Sheriff's office and 30 other law enforcement agencies hunted Bassler for 36 days before he was located and killed by a SWAT team in a wooded area, near where he had been hiding, outside the City of Fort Bragg. This whole Aaron Bassler episode cost Mendocino County a great deal of stress and money.

Initially, there were objections to the implementation of Mendocino County's Laura's Law due to the \$792,000 start up cost, however, upon further analysis, it became clear that the cost of the single incident with Bassler cost the County much more money. Mendocino County may provide a template for implementation of Laura's Law since it has a similar demographic and remote geographic area as Humboldt County.

There is funding for Laura's Law as a result of Proposition 63 Mental Health Services Act passed by voters in 2004. It is a 1% tax on millionaires to help clients who have severe mental illness and to help with treatment to prevent mental illness from becoming severe. As of 2019 it has raised over \$15 billion. If all counties in California adopted Laura's Law the estimated statewide saving annually would be \$19 million. These savings come primarily from decreased hospitalization and incarceration costs.

The Civil Grand Jury believes adoption of Laura's Law would benefit those with mental health issues in Humboldt County. Although there will be initial costs involved with implementation of AB 1421, including education of law enforcement, county mental health personnel, court personnel, and emergency room personnel, it is believed that the long-term cost savings to Humboldt County will far outweigh these costs.

FINDINGS

F1 The use of outside, for-profit contractors to provide medical and mental health practitioners may shield the County from lawsuits, but such contracts may sacrifice quality of care, as numerous lawsuits against those contractors throughout the country have alleged. (R1)

F2 Lengthy vetting, onboarding, recruitment and retention problems in both the Humboldt County Correctional Facility and Humboldt County Mental Health impede the effective delivery of mental health care. (R2)

F3 Use of a local Competency Restoration Program would improve service to inmates in need of mental health support prior to court appearances and could reduce cost to the County. (R3)

F4 Increasing the training and certification of Substance Use Disorder Counselors in Juvenile Hall should increase effectiveness of treatment for juvenile detainees. (R4)

F5 Sempervirens Psychiatric Health Facility has a physical atmosphere that is not conducive to mental health rehabilitation. This facility needs to be replaced with a larger, modern facility designed to accommodate both adults and juveniles for the patients' well-being. (R5)

F6 Mental health services would be improved if step-down housing was provided for patients as they exit secure facilities. (R6)

F7 Increasing the Mobile Response Team hours of availability would improve service to those in need of immediate mental health intervention while reducing the burden incurred by law enforcement and hospital emergency rooms. (R7)

F8 Laura's Law (AB1421) has been found to be beneficial in the California counties that have adopted it. Adoption of Laura's Law by Humboldt County would provide a major option for treatment of people suffering from mental illness. (R8)

F9 Opportunity for self-improvement of youths housed in the Humboldt County Juvenile Hall would improve if volunteer-community organizations were able to provide additional learning programs. (R9)

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1 The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends Humboldt County Sheriff's Department use outside, for-profit contractors to fill vacant staff positions for mental health

services only when exhaustive efforts of recruitment have failed. Such contracts should be well-scrutinized to assure quality, cost-effectiveness, adequate oversight, and accountability, effective October 1, 2020. (F1)

R2 The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends that the Humboldt County Human Resources Department and Department of Health and Human Services thoroughly examine and improve their effectiveness in hiring, onboarding, and recruitment processes to better fill vacancies. These changes should be implemented by January 1, 2021. (F2)

R3 The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends Humboldt County Sheriff's Department proceed with implementation of a State approved Competency Restoration Program in coordination with Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Service, effective January 1, 2021. (F3)

R4 The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends Humboldt County Probation Department provide trained and certified Substance Use Disorder counselors to increase effectiveness of treatment for detainees in Juvenile Hall, effective January 1, 2021. (F4)

R5 The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends Humboldt County Board of Supervisors complete and approve the comprehensive infrastructure plan relative to County buildings and grounds, and specifically include Sempervirens Psychiatric Health Facility as a high priority project. This plan should be completed by January 1, 2021. (F5)

R6 The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services integrate the use of step-down housing for patients being discharged from secure facilities. These services should be available to all patients by January 1, 2021. (F6)

R7 The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services expand staffing of the Mobile Response Team to around-the-clock (24/7/365), effective October 1, 2020. (F7)

R8 The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends Humboldt County Board of Supervisors adopt and implement the components of Laura's Law (AB1421) as another option for evaluation and treatment by mental health professionals, effective January 1, 2021. (F8)

R9 The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends Humboldt County Probation Department proactively seek volunteer-community organizations that can provide learning opportunities to the youths housed in the Humboldt County Juvenile Hall. (F9)

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code section 933.05, the Grand Jury requests responses as follows:

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors (F2, F5, F6, F7, F8, R2, R5, R6, R7, R8)

Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8)

Humboldt County Human Resources Department (F2, R2)

Humboldt County Probation Department (F4, F9, R4, R9)

Humboldt County Sheriff's Department (F1, F2, F3, R1, R2, R3)

INVITED RESPONSES

None.

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.

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