



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Juvenile Justice Realignment Plan

San Diego County Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council, August 31, 2021



Contents

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Executive Summary..... | 2 |
| Introduction | 2 |
| Development of the Realignment Plan..... | 3 |
| Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council Subcommittee | 3 |
| Research to Inform Development of the Plan | 3 |
| Background | 4 |
| Probation Department – Youth Development and Community Support Services | 4 |
| DJJ Realignment Plan | 5 |
| Part 1: Subcommittee Composition (WIC 1995 (b)) | 5 |
| Part 2: Target Population (WIC 1995 (C) (1)) | 5 |
| Part 3: Programs and Services (WIC 1995 (C) (2))..... | 7 |
| Part 4: Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant Funds (WIC 1995 (3)(a))..... | 8 |
| Part 5: Facility Plan..... | 15 |
| Part 6: Retaining the Target Population in the Juvenile Justice System | 16 |
| Part 7: Regional Effort..... | 17 |
| Part 8: Data | 17 |
| Works Cited..... | 19 |

Executive Summary

Introduction

National research has demonstrated that youth in long-term custody experience the best outcomes when they reside close to home, remain in regular contact with supportive adults, and the local agencies can prepare for their reentry on their first day in custody. Senate Bill (SB) 823, known as the Juvenile Justice Realignment: Office of Youth and Community Restoration (OYCR), was enacted on September 30, 2020, to close California's Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and establish local programs consistent with best practices. The law allocates resources to counties to supervise and provide services to realigned youth closer to their homes. The passage of SB 823 provides San Diego County's juvenile justice partners with the unique opportunity to fully implement juvenile justice transformation. San Diego County's proposed plan includes a strength-based, developmentally appropriate approach to treatment, rehabilitation, and positive growth in our young people. Local stakeholders and national researchers have consistently recommended programs, services, and staff trainings that enhance successful outcomes and encourage justice-involved youth to thrive in the community. Fully implementing this plan will allow us to support a San Diego region that is building better health, living safely, and thriving for every resident.

In December 2017, the County of San Diego began implementing the Youth in Custody Practice Model (YICPM) with eighteen months of technical assistance from the Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators (CJJA) and the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR) at Georgetown University. The process included a review of existing practices and recommendations to align training, policies, and procedures with national best practices. County leadership also visited juvenile detention facilities and programs in jurisdictions that have embraced a developmentally informed approach. To reduce racial and ethnic disparities, stakeholders invested in ongoing research to identify justice system decision points where disparities exist and to develop targeted interventions to reduce those disparities. The Probation Department collaborated with the County Board of Supervisors, Juvenile Court, Public Safety Group Executive Office, The Children's Initiative, Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), and the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) to implement the recommendations. The County followed this effort through additional technical assistance projects with CJJA and CJJR.

The San Diego County Juvenile Justice System partners including the San Diego County Probation Department, Juvenile Court Bench, District Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, County of San Diego Public Safety Group, and the Children's Initiative, collaborated on a Transforming Juvenile Probation Capstone Project with CJJR in 2019, which included developing a set of shared Core Beliefs. The Core Beliefs are based on twenty plus years of national research, evidence-based practices, and nationally recognized promising approaches to improve outcomes for youth and keep communities safe. The Core Beliefs reflect that the partners prioritize prevention and early intervention programs and services for at-risk youth to help redirect delinquent behavior and support the healthy development of youth. Programming should match the youth's assessed needs. The partners recognize proven juvenile justice approaches, including the use of individualized, strength based, trauma informed practices involving family members and the use of data to guide decisions.

Development of the Realignment Plan

Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council Subcommittee

As a requirement to receive funding through the Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant Program, counties must create a subcommittee within the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) per WIC 1995 and submit a plan to OYCR by January 1, 2022. Thereafter, the plan must be submitted annually to OYCR by May 1st and the JJCC Subcommittee must convene to review the plan every three years. The subcommittee is chaired by the Chief Probation Officer and representatives, as required by WIC 1995, are included from the District Attorney, Public Defender, Department of Social Services/Mental Health, County Office of Education, the Court, and at least three members of the community: 1) individuals who have experience providing community-based youth services; 2) youth justice advocates with knowledge of the juvenile justice system; and/or 3) individuals who have been directly involved in the juvenile justice system. The representatives included in the JJCC Subcommittee who are developing the DJJ Realignment Plan for San Diego County are listed in the following table (Part 1).

The JJCC Subcommittee oversees development of the DJJ Realignment Plan that describes the facilities, programs, placements, services, supervision, and reentry services needed to provide rehabilitation and supervision to youth who are realigned from DJJ. The Realignment Plan utilizes the term “youth” to represent those up to the age of 18 as well as young adults up to the age of 24, with a recognition that the developmental and chronological age needs of youth and young adults must be considered in care.

Research to Inform Development of the Plan

To prepare for DJJ realignment, San Diego County juvenile justice partners collaborated with the Criminal Justice Research Division of the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) to conduct research on the characteristics of youth committed to DJJ and recently released. In January of 2021, SANDAG issued their report entitled, *Preparation for the Realignment of Department of Juvenile Justice Youth: A Study of the Population, Best Practices for Rehabilitation, and Evidence-Based Recommendations*. The research was intended to capture the experiences that youth had while detained in Juvenile Hall and DJJ, including their opinions regarding in-custody curriculum and staffing. Information was also gathered on best practices for rehabilitating youth who have committed serious offenses. Recommendations included information about client needs and appropriate programming; educational supports; importance of a therapeutic environment; quality assurance in the implementation of the program; and a focus on re-entry.

Prior research from SANDAG on *Seeking Alternatives: Understanding the Pathways to Incarceration of High-Risk Juvenile Offenders* (SANDAG, 2015) identified the following recommendations:

- Institute standardized trauma screening
- Provide family-based treatment
- Develop policies that support non-discretionary spending across systems
- Develop an interconnecting treatment and service delivery system that spans Child Welfare, schools, law enforcement, behavioral health, juvenile justice, and community-based services

This research and its recommendations were presented to the JJCC and formed the basis of the local Action Plan for realignment.

Background

Over the last five years, stakeholders in San Diego County have worked to transform the local juvenile justice system that will oversee this new program. The Board of Supervisors supports the San Diego County Comprehensive Strategy for Youth, Family, and the Community, a collaborative and integrated systems-approach to reducing delinquency which calls for evidence-based practices that emphasize family-strengthening and positive youth development with appropriate sanctions and interventions for serious, violent, or repeated delinquency. The County, through its public safety and youth serving agencies, also partners with the Juvenile Court and community partners to support and implement the work of the Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RRED) Committee. San Diego County's Juvenile Justice realignment plan responds to the requirements of SB 823 and reflects the values and beliefs of local juvenile justice stakeholders.

Probation Department – Youth Development and Community Support Services

To support best practices for positive youth development, the Probation Department established Youth Development and Community Support Services (YDCSS), a separate juvenile administration to provide strong leadership at the agency and facility levels. Based on core values of Respect, Equity, Commitment, Compassion, Motivation, Positivity, Innovation, and Collaboration, this administrative structure was designed to support the principles of trauma-informed care and a developmental approach to youth rehabilitation. YDCSS envisions a fair and equitable system of support for youth and families involved in the juvenile justice system that values the youth's individual needs and provides access to meaningful and relevant opportunities for success.

Probation Department – Youth Development and Community Support Services

Mission

To fully support youth and their families with evidence-based practices that focus on rehabilitation, healing and positive youth development.

Guiding Principles

- Public safety is our priority
- Maintain fiscal stability
- Promote a culture that values diversity, fairness & equity
- Conduct business with transparency and accountability
- Act with integrity
- Continually challenge ourselves to enhance our knowledge and expertise

DJJ Realignment Plan

Part 1: Subcommittee Composition (WIC 1995 (b))

List the subcommittee members, agency affiliation where applicable, and contact information:

| Department | Representative |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Probation (Chair) | Cesar Escuro, Interim Chief Probation Officer |
| Juvenile Court | Honorable Ana España, Presiding Judge, Juvenile Court |
| District Attorney's Office | Lisa Weinreb, Deputy District Attorney |
| Public Defender's Office | Mary Beth Wirkus, Deputy Public Defender |
| Health and Human Services | Yael Koenig, Deputy Director, Behavioral Health Services |
| Behavioral Health | Fran Cooper, Assistant Medical Services Administrator, Behavioral Health Services |
| County Office of Education | Tracy Thompson, Executive Director, Juvenile Court and Community Schools |
| Community Representative | D'Andre Brooks, Lived Experience |
| Community Representative | Laila Aziz, Pillars of the Community |
| Community Representative | Joy Singleton, Singleton Law Firm |

Part 2: Target Population (WIC 1995 (C) (1))

Briefly describe the County's realignment target population supported by the block grant:

The County of San Diego will provide treatment in a secure setting to address the risks and needs of youth ages 14-24 who have committed offenses described under Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) section 707(b) and who formerly would have been committed to a period of custodial treatment and rehabilitation with DJJ. In recent years, local commitments to DJJ have ranged from 14-24 youths annually with an approximate overall population of 55 San Diego youth at DJJ.

Demographics of identified target population, including anticipated numbers of youth served, disaggregated by factors including age, gender, race or ethnicity, and offense/offense history:

San Diego County anticipates serving approximately 20 youths in secure youth treatment during the first 12 months.

As of January 2021, there were 55 local youths from San Diego County in DJJ custody. In 2020, 24 local youths were transported to DJJ to begin commitments:

Most Common True Findings for the 24 San Diego youth committed to DJJ in CY 2020:

- [REDACTED] Assault by means likely to produce great bodily injury
- [REDACTED] Robbery
- [REDACTED] Murder
- [REDACTED] Assault with a deadly weapon other than firearm or Great Bodily Injury force
- [REDACTED] Voluntary manslaughter

- [REDACTED] Lewd act upon a child
- [REDACTED] Kidnapping for robbery, rape, spousal rape, etc.
- [REDACTED] Conspiracy to commit a crime

Demographics of all (24) youth transported to DJJ in Calendar Year 2020:

- Male [REDACTED]; Female [REDACTED]
- Hispanic (54%), Black ([REDACTED]), White ([REDACTED]), Asian/Pacific Islander ([REDACTED])
- Youth transported to DJJ in CY 2020 ranged in age from 16 to 20 with an average age of 17.7
- All youth transported to DJJ in 2020 received True Findings for WIC 707(b) offenses

The County of San Diego is seeking to reduce disparities in this population. The RRED committee, a joint effort of the County’s Public Safety Group, Probation Department, District Attorney, Public Defender, Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), and partners in the Juvenile Court, SDCOE, and The Children’s Initiative, is working to implement on-going improvements to justice system policies and procedures to create a more equitable system where racial and ethnic disparities are reduced and social justice is enhanced.

These efforts strive to reduce the entry of youth of color into the juvenile justice system, reduce the disparate treatment of youth of color within the juvenile justice system, and reduce their movement deeper into the system. The County has supported this endeavor by implementing best practices including:

- Application of a Dispositional Matrix to structure decision-making for determining dispositions and use of detention;
- Using a validated risk assessment tool to inform supervision decisions;
- Engaging the family and community;
- Training staff on diversity/inclusion and implicit bias;
- Hiring staff who reflect the communities we serve; and
- Monitoring data and conducting research to identify disparities and initiate changes in policies and procedures to reduce disparities.

Describe any additional relevant information pertaining to identified target population, including programs, placements and/or facilities to which they have been referred.

In a sample of 30 local youth committed to DJJ in 2020 and 2021, the Probation Department found the following history of interventions:

- [REDACTED] had no history of prior commitments
- 67% (20/30) had prior Breaking Cycles or Urban Camp commitments
- [REDACTED] had a prior Youthful Offender Unit (YOU) commitment (all of these also had prior Breaking Cycles Commitments preceding the YOU commitment)
- [REDACTED] had participated in substance use treatment services
- [REDACTED] had attended Achievement Centers
- [REDACTED] had received CHOICE services
- [REDACTED] had received mentoring services through Resilience

In a survey of ■ local youth committed to DJJ, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) found:

- 50% had participated in Breaking Cycles (before the program was administratively ended)
- 30% participated in Diversion and Substance Abuse Services
- 10% had no prior interaction with the Probation Department

If they attended, the majority (greater than 75%) completed these programs successfully. Furthermore, multiple youth referenced the specific certificates they received for the completion of the programs. Other local programs noted were San Diego Police Department (SDPD) boxing program, Project AWARE, Gang Diversion, and Life Skills.

Part 3: Programs and Services (WIC 1995 (C) (2))

Provide a description of the facilities, programs, placements, services and service providers, supervision, and other responses that will be provided to the target population:

The Youth Development Academy (YDA) will be located at East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility (EMJDF). EMJDF is a secure facility in the East Otay Mesa area of San Diego County. The facility opened in June of 2004 and has been the home of the YOU, a medium-term commitment program serving a previously realigned population of youth between the ages of 16-20 who would have otherwise been sent to the DJJ as non-WIC 707(b) offenders. The program design at EMJDF includes a Crisis Awareness and Response team to quickly respond to developing situations and provide a therapeutic and team approach to de-escalate situations and attempt to resolve the youth's issue or primary stressor without the need for the use of force or room confinement. In July 2021, the YOU began its transition to a trauma-informed, clinical model known as the Healing Opportunities for Personal Empowerment (HOPE) that is aligned with national best practices for serving youth in custody. HOPE includes intensive clinical services while in custody, expanded Cognitive Behavioral Therapy curriculums, social emotional learning program, restorative circles to resolve conflict in a nonviolent manner, address harm done to the victim/survivor, create other outlets for the youth to express frustration such as physical activities and mindfulness practices such as yoga and meditation, expand empathy building skills such as pet care, and aftercare support.

Youth committed to YDA will benefit from a variety of recent improvements to the living and physical environment designed to better meet foundational needs and increase their amenability to treatment. These include mattresses which are twice the thickness of typical correctional facility bedding, art, and murals throughout the facility, and a newly created athletic field. Nutrition has been shown to have an impact on behavior and amenability to treatment, with one study showing that individuals who received improved nutrition committed 26% fewer facility rule violations while in custody (Gesch, 2013). Youth in local custody receive meals which have been prepared fresh on-site from a menu designed to appeal to youth, and informed by regular youth surveys to ensure quality, as well as fresh fruit bowls in each unit to ensure easy access to healthy snacks between meals.

The Probation Department is assessing additional improvements to make this setting more homelike, trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate, and livable for longer commitments. Potential improvements include resurfacing or replacing sleeping room doors, painting walls, resurfacing concrete

floors in sleeping rooms, purchasing homelike (but heavy duty) furniture, area rugs for two living spaces in each day room, large photo murals of local outdoor scenes, removal of upper bunks in rooms that have them, and extending utilities to the quad area for a career technical education (CTE) portable building.

The Probation Department employs a diverse and experienced staff of direct supervision officers who will work with this population. The officers are 50% Hispanic, 24% White, 14% Black, 10% Asian & Pacific Islander, and 2% Native American. 59% are male and 41% are female. On average they are 40 years old and have 11 years of experience with the County. We anticipate a ratio of 1 direct supervision officer for every 6 youths during waking hours, surpassing the national best practice standard of 1 to 8.

The Probation Department's direct supervision staff receive a state approved core training curriculum which includes diverse topics such as professionalism and ethics, crisis communication and de-escalation, group dynamics, responding to medical emergencies, fire and life safety, cultural diversity and ethnic disparity, gender identity, case planning, addressing and reporting child abuse, preventing sexual assault, trauma, signs and symptoms of substance abuse, suicide prevention, as well as other core correctional practices to support safety. In addition to the state curriculum, the Probation Department has added trainings on Trauma Informed Care, Implicit Bias, Wellness, LGBT, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, Adolescent Brain Development, Childhood Disorders, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Positive Youth Development philosophy, and an overview of the YICPM. Altogether, direct supervision staff receive 10 weeks of training during their first year on the job.

Direct supervision staff have also recently received a series of four trainings from the San Diego State University School for Professional Excellence addressing Implicit Bias, Adolescent Brain Development, Restorative Practice, and Trauma Informed Care. In the coming fiscal year, direct supervision staff will receive training in the Mandt system, a comprehensive, integrated approach to preventing, de-escalating, and if necessary, intervening when the behavior of an individual poses a threat of harm to themselves and/or others. The Mandt system is designed to be developmentally appropriate for use in youth-serving workplaces. It seeks to develop a culture that provides emotional, psychological, and physical safety for everyone, where youth can say that "In this place, and with these people, I feel safe."

Part 4: Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant Funds (WIC 1995 (3)(a))

Describe how the County plans to apply grant funds to address the mental health, sex offender treatment, or related behavioral or trauma-based needs of the target population:

The County will utilize grant funds to promote family engagement in the treatment process, expand the number of mental health clinicians serving realigned youth, and procure additional evidence-based services for this population including treatment for violent sex offenders.

The County plans to use a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) approach to develop Individual Rehabilitation Plans with each youth. This MDT team will include the youth, their family, representatives of behavioral health, education, ancillary treatment providers, and Probation. Treatment goals will be developed based upon the youth's assessed risks and needs (utilizing the San Diego Risk and Resiliency II, a validated assessment instrument) as well as the youth's own perceived strengths and input from their family. The establishment of the Individual Rehabilitation Plan will be done by a care coordinator. This

person is responsible for gathering input from stakeholders, monitoring progress for completing goals and updating the plan as goals are achieved and new priorities are identified. Once youth complete their high school education, or its equivalent, care coordinators will support youth with identifying potential career pathways—education or employment. San Diego will establish partnerships with local community colleges to offer traditional Associate of Arts (AA) or CTE pathways that lead to meaningful employment. Dedicated staffing, with a unique understanding of the barriers facing the justice-involved population, will help local youth navigate enrollment, financial aid, and other important tasks. A community-based organization will support youth with transportation to classes and purchasing course materials. A partnership with the SDCOE will help custodial youth with tutoring and homework assistance when college youth are in custody.

Each youth's Individualized Rehabilitation Plan will be uniquely tailored with input from members of the MDT based on the following principles:

- Include youth, families, and supportive individuals
- Address family strengths, risks, and needs
- Identify positive community supports for the youth and family
- Include community-based services that are evidence-based and trauma-informed
- Involve services for mental health, substance use treatment, cognitive behavioral therapy, life skills, academic support, enrichment programs, and physical activity
- Immediately involve re-entry planning to identify goals and a pathway towards successful release and transition to the community
- Assist with overcoming barriers to success such as tickets and fines, school access, immigration status, securing vital documents, and other legal challenges
- Include prosocial activities and recreational elements (e.g., sports, gym membership, music enrichment, art, or other social activity) as part of each youth's transition to the community
- Address harm to the victim and community

MDT staff members and involved systems professionals will receive training in national best practices to support re-entry needs. They serve as program liaisons to the education and treatment providers in and out of custody. MDT meetings will occur regularly and in response to any emerging issues. Regular reviews are conducted with youth and their family to review the case plan and discuss progress. Youth receive case management that includes effective communication and planning involving all supports with a focus on re-entry. Probation will ensure that the Court receives meaningful information about the case plan development and the youth's progress toward completion of goals at an initial review hearing within 30 days of commitment and at regular reviews at a minimum of every six months thereafter, and as needed.

The MDT will have a variety of program options to address identified risks and needs of each youth.

Planned services include:

- Substance use education and counseling
- Cognitive Behavioral Treatment and Moral Reasoning
- Mental health support
- Sex offender treatment

- Anger management
- Child and family parent engagement and family visitations
- Parenting skills
- Self-care and emotional regulation
- Healthy relationships
- Independent Living Skills
- Financial Literacy
- Education support
- Career and technical education and support
- Mentorships utilizing lived experience and gang intervention
- Physical, Mental and Sexual Health awareness and education

The contract or agreement to provide these services will be supported in part by grant funds.

Programming for girls is designed to respond to research showing the disproportionate levels of trauma and abuse in the backgrounds of girls who enter the juvenile justice system. They are more likely than their male peers to have suffered victimization and abuse, and experience depression, self-esteem issues, mental illness, substance abuse, truancy, sexual promiscuity, and interaction problems with partners and parents.

In addition to risks and needs assessment, youth committed to local secure youth treatment will receive screening/assessments at intake to identify mood/anxiety symptoms, risk of suicide/self-harm, history of alcohol/drug use, history of trauma, current traumatic stress symptoms, risk of violence/sexual victimization, and risk of commercial sexual exploitation.

| Screening Tool | Description |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI-2) | MAYSI-2 is a brief behavioral health screening tool designed for juvenile justice programs and facilities that identifies important behavioral health needs for youth. |
| Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) | C-SSRS is an evidence-supported questionnaire used to assess suicide risk that has been successfully implemented in the justice system. |
| Commercial Sexual Exploitation Identification Tool (CSE-IT) | CSE-IT is a validated tool widely used in child welfare and probation agencies that is designed to improve early identification of children who are commercially sexually exploited. |
| Risk of sexual victimization or perpetration | This tool is designed to meet Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) guidelines. |
| Texas Christian University Drug Screen (TCU) | TCU Drug Screen 5 screens for mild to severe substance use disorder and is particularly useful when determining placement and level of care in treatment. |

Results of any of these screenings that indicate cause for concern or follow-up by behavioral health clinicians will be forwarded to the Behavioral Health Provider, which is currently managed by Juvenile

Forensic Services Stabilization, Treatment and Transition (STAT) Team, operated by County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency (HHS), Behavioral Health Services (BHS).

The STAT Team provides a full continuum of mental and behavioral health services such as: crisis intervention, behavioral health assessment, traditional psychotherapy, competency evaluations, competency restoration work, trainings, psychiatric evaluation and medication management in the detention facilities and commitment programs. This includes preparing some youth for transition back to the community and serving youth on probation who have been released and are living in the community for a brief period. Treatment is provided by a multi-disciplinary team that includes psychiatric nurses, licensed therapists, psychologists, predoctoral psychology interns, and psychiatrists. Current clinical staffing at EMJDF consists of a program manager, a psychiatric nurse, Licensed Mental Health Clinicians, Clinical Psychologist, Sr. Clinical Psychologist, and 24-hour on-call psychiatrist coverage. With the realignment of up to 55 high risk youth to local custody, grant funds will be used to partially offset the cost to increase the number of clinical and administrative staff supporting the behavioral health and treatment needs of the youth.

Daily behavior is addressed through a positive behavior management system called the Daily Achievement System (DAS). Developed during a period of technical assistance through the YICPM, the DAS is a behavior management system based on positive reinforcement and the evidence-based principle that behavior modification is most effective when youth receive five positive recognitions to every one negative intervention. The DAS encourages program staff to look for and reinforce positive behavior. This supports the “coach” mindset; actively looking for strengths that can be acknowledged to achieve improved outcomes and encourage responsible behavior while reducing negative interactions between youth and staff.

The DAS offers multiple opportunities for youth to earn “achievements” during the day by demonstrating safe conduct and showing effort. As youth earn more “achievements,” they gain additional privileges such as access to video game systems, personal mp3, DVD players, and longer-term incentives. Grant funds will be used in part to offset costs associated with procuring these incentive items.

Describe how the County plans to apply grant funds to address support programs or services that promote healthy adolescent development for the target population: (WIC 1995 (3) (B))

San Diego County Probation Department pursues a strength-based strategy of positive youth development. This intentional, pro-social approach engages youth in their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances youth’s strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths. This approach supports positive outcomes by building on strengths, working collaboratively with the youth, and promoting a sense of fairness and support for the youth. Studies have shown that youth are more likely to accept responsibility for their actions, comply with authorities, and embrace pro-social activities when they perceive systems to be fair (National Research Council, 2013). Providing for a strong youth voice in the system, allowing youth to see a neutral and fact-based decision-making process, treating youth with respect and politeness, and acting out of benevolent and

caring motives, have all been shown to increase youth perceptions of a fair system (Fagan & Tyler, 2005).

Probation has supported this strategy by transforming the role of direct supervision staff from a referee mindset, in which they look to penalize infractions, to a coach mindset whereby they offer support, encouragement, opportunities to debrief and learn from mistakes and role play for better outcomes. This effort has included introducing positive youth development in the core training curriculum for supervision staff and training staff members in adolescent brain development, trauma informed care, restorative practices, and implicit bias. The approach is further strengthened through a youth advisory council in which youth are able to provide suggestions and feedback directly to the facility superintendent, with the introduction of regular youth surveys conducted in collaboration with Performance Based Standards (PbS), and by placing an emphasis on and encouraging youth and family participation in the development of individualized treatment plans.

The County will utilize grant funds to procure services for this population which are evidence-informed, rehabilitative, developmentally appropriate, and support the positive youth development model. Treatment providers will be required to support pro-social development by including the youth's voice in programming decisions, offering programs that support financial literacy, job readiness, artistic expression and enrichment, and opportunities for leadership development.

Healthy development is further supported through the provision of appropriate care including screening for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), medical, mental health, and dental screenings, and providing preventative care including dental cleanings every six months.

Describe how the County plans to apply grant funds to address family engagement in programs for the target population: (WIC 1995 (3) (C))

The family are the youth's greatest support and possess extensive knowledge about the youth and his or her background. Family visits for youth in custodial settings have been linked to decreased rates of symptoms of depression (Monahan, Goldweber & Cauffman, 2011). Youth who receive regular family visits also perform better academically and are involved in fewer behavior incidents compared to their counterparts (Villalobos Agudelo, 2012). Reentry programs that prioritize involving families early in the youth's treatment process have also been shown to reduce the prevalence and seriousness of subsequent offending (Winokur-Early, Chapman & Hand, 2013).

Shifting this population from distant DJJ facilities to local treatment offers a tremendous opportunity to harness the positive rehabilitative benefits of strong family bonds and collaborative involvement of family in the youth's treatment. Local secure treatment is designed to engage the family as part of the treatment team from the beginning of the program, inviting and encouraging their participation in developing the initial treatment and re-entry plans. Family will be encouraged to collaborate as a partner during the regular multi-disciplinary treatment team meetings throughout the youth's commitment. They will be invited to attend program graduations and other milestones during the youth's commitment, and Probation will hold regular family engagement events to encourage their presence in the program. Programming procured for this population using grant funds will be designed to include a strong role for the family and we will seek best practices and innovative approaches to

maximize family participation in treatment such as transportation assistance, options for virtual attendance, flexible hours, support for incarcerated parents, and monetary support for attending clinical programming when their role is necessary.

These strategies build upon policy and procedure changes the Probation Department has enacted in recent years to encourage family engagement and support. To increase visitation for youth in custody, the definition of “family” was expanded to allow visits from aunts, uncles, cousins, adult siblings, non-biological relatives, and more; visitation areas were made more welcoming; visitation hours/days were greatly increased; and special events were introduced. As a result, the percent of youth in custody who received at least one visit per month increased by 49% over the last three years (from 53% during FY 2017-18 to 79% during FY 2020-21). During FY 2021/22 YTD, 89% of youth in custodial commitment programs at East Mesa Juvenile Detention Center and Urban Camp received at least one visit per month. Probation will seek to continue, and improve upon, these results with the realigned population.

Describe how the County plans to apply grant funds to address reentry, including planning and linkages to support employment, housing, and continuing education for the target population: (WIC 1995 (3) (D))

The County embraces a philosophy that re-entry planning should begin at the start of a youth’s commitment. To that end, the multi-disciplinary team that works with the youth and family to develop their Individualized Rehabilitation Plan within the first 30 days will also identify any obstacles to be overcome, existing supports which can be leveraged, and new supports which can be developed to prepare each youth for successful return to the community upon completion of their in-custody treatment. This plan will continue to be regularly reviewed and updated through the multi-disciplinary team, including the youth and their family, throughout the youth’s commitment.

San Diego’s shared philosophy calls for youth to remain in secure treatment for the shortest term necessary to achieve the specific rehabilitative goals of the Court and promote safe and successful re-entry. Regular reviews address whether the youth’s rehabilitative needs can be safely met in a stepdown location, through furloughs (day releases), or on supervised release within the community.

Senate Bill 92 requires local jurisdictions to use the existing parole consideration intervals for the DJJ until the Judicial Council establishes new guidelines. These parole consideration intervals are based on the severity of the most serious offense for which the youth received a true finding. Currently, youth committed to the DJJ may reduce their parole consideration date by half based on good citizenship and participation in their treatment program. San Diego’s program continues this practice.

Senate Bill 92 also calls for youth to appear before the Court every six months for an update on their progress toward completing their Individualized Rehabilitation Plans. As the youth nears completion of their program, Probation will report to the Court on the youth’s willingness to continuing their treatment at a stepdown location, using furloughs, or on community supervision.

The County intends to use furloughs within the parameters of the Judicial Council guidelines to support re-entry by offering youth in the final stages of their custodial treatment opportunities to visit the services they will utilize upon re-entry and eventually attend some services, education, and employment in the community while returning to the detention facility at the end of the day. The goal of these

furloughs will be to acclimate youth to services and locations, and build rapport with service providers, to reduce anxiety and increase the youth's comfort in attending these services and functions upon release. The County plans to use grant funds to partially offset the cost of obtaining community-based transitional living, transportation, employment support, and college and vocational education opportunities for this population.

The SDCOE will continue to support the high school education needs of youth as well as all mandated transition services. The County plans to supplement their services through grant supported partnership(s) with a local college, vocational school, and/or community-based organization to provide continuing education and vocational training to this population. The proposed agreement establishing a vocational training partnership will include a focus on licensure, apprenticeship, journeyman positions, and paid work upon release as well as entrepreneurial support.

Describe how the County plans to apply grant funds to address evidence-based, promising, trauma-informed and culturally responsive services for the target population: (WIC 1995 (3) (E))

The San Diego County Probation Department plans to offer evidence-informed, rehabilitative, and developmentally appropriate programming to youth in custody that supports their long-term success. Successful and effective programming helps youth acquire the skills needed to exit the juvenile justice system more quickly and thrive in the community. The services provided in this program will be based on a positive youth development model and support youth's pro-social development by including their voices in programming decisions and working collaboratively to meet their needs. In this program a contracted provider, supported by grant funds, will work closely with County of San Diego (County) Behavioral Health Services (BHS) and Probation Staff to assist youth in a successful transition from custodial treatment to the community.

The grant supported service provider will operate an evidence-based comprehensive program to address mental health, trauma, substance use disorder, and pro-social needs of youth in custody. The service provider will offer individual, group, and family services. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) will be utilized as one of the primary evidence-based practices. and These services will be provided while youth are in the Probation Department's custody with approximately six-month aftercare period during which appropriate clinical services will continue to support youth in the community.

Services will include:

Institutional Services: Screening and assessment for Trauma, Substance Use Disorder, Commercial Sexual Exploitation, and Criminogenic needs. Providing Groups utilizing curricula that emphasize skill-based interventions that employ role-playing and are evidence based or evidence informed. Examples of such interventions include but are not limited to: mentorships utilizing lived experience and gang intervention, Aggression Replacement Therapy, multi-Dimensional Family Therapy, Substance Use Disorder (SUD) education My Life My Choice, Safe Dates, Seeking Safety, Thinking for a Change, Seven Challenges, Interactive Journaling, Aggression Replacement Training, and Character Counts.

Community Reentry Services: During the community reentry phase projected to span 6 months, the youth will obtain supportive and transitional services from the clinical team that provided services while in custody. In addition, service providers will ensure appropriate connections to community-based

services prior to release including school, CTE, and other supports and services identified in their Individualized Rehabilitation Plan.

Describe whether and how the County plans to apply grant funds to include services or programs for the target population that are provided by nongovernmental or community-based providers: (WIC 1995 (3) (F))

The County plans to procure a variety of services for this population through contract or agreement with nongovernmental or community-based providers. Services supported by grant funds will include leadership development, financial literacy, job training and furlough opportunities, enrichment activities, transportation to college and or jobs, family transportation, and mentoring.

Additionally, the County will encourage the development of relationships between the primary service provider and organizations such as community agencies, schools, faith-based organizations, and public services to leverage community resources to serve youth and caregivers and ensure continuity and collaboration during re-entry. Probation will also support the leveraging of lived experience within the juvenile justice system, to provide education, advocacy/community engagement, training, and support for youth and families (including direct services).

Probation will continue to utilize established protocols and processes for linkage and collaboration between community-based providers and entities such as School Districts, Public Health, Behavioral Health Services, Child Welfare Services, Juvenile Court, and other agencies to meet the needs of the youth and caregivers.

Part 5: Facility Plan

Describe in detail each of the facilities that the County plans to use to house or confine the target population at varying levels of offense severity and treatment need, and improvements to accommodate long-term commitments. Facility information shall also include information on how the facilities will ensure the safety and protection of youth having different ages, genders, special needs, and other relevant characteristics. (WIC 1995 (4))

The Youth Development Academy (YDA) will be located at East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility (EMJDF). EMJDF is a secure juvenile facility in the Otay Mesa area of San Diego. The facility opened in June of 2004 and has been the home of the Youthful Offender Unit (YOU), a DJJ alternative serving youth who before the passage of SB 81 in 2007, would have been sent to the DJJ.

EMJDF consists of 10 separate housing units. Youth are assigned to a housing unit based on classification criteria such as age, the youth's physical size, level of delinquency/sophistication, and gender, with the aim of providing for the safety of all youth. Absent other overriding considerations, youth committed to secure youth treatment will be housed in units which are specially dedicated to delivering this treatment program.

Housing and program assignments for transgender or intersex youth are based on the youth's health and safety and related supervisory, management, or facility security concerns. When assigning youth to a housing unit, Probation staff are required to give serious consideration to transgender or intersex

youth's views regarding their own safety. Facility staff must also allow youth to dress and present themselves in a manner consistent with their gender identity and provide youth with clothing and undergarments consistent with their gender identity.

The Probation Department is obtaining youth input and assessing options to make the setting of these units more homelike, trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate, and comfortable for longer commitments. Potential grant-supported improvements include resurfacing or replacing sleeping room doors, painting walls, resurfacing concrete floors in sleeping rooms, purchasing homelike (but heavy duty) furniture, area rugs for two living spaces in each day room, large photo murals of local outdoor scenes, removal of upper bunks in rooms that have them, and extending utilities to the quad area for a new CTE portable building.

Youth committed to the YDA will also benefit from a variety of recent improvements to the living environment. These include an improved food service which prepares fresh meals on-site, a menu designed to be appealing and appetizing to youth, a regular youth survey to ensure meal quality, fresh fruit bowls in each unit to ensure access to healthy snacks between meals, mattresses which are twice the thickness of typical correctional facility bedding, art and murals throughout the facility, and a new athletic field.

Part 6: Retaining the Target Population in the Juvenile Justice System

Describe how the plan will incentivize or facilitate the retention of the target population within the jurisdiction and rehabilitative foundation of the juvenile justice system, in lieu of transfer to the adult criminal justice system: (WIC 1995 (5))

Research has shown that juveniles tried in adult criminal court reoffend at a higher rate than youth who remain in the juvenile system (OJJDP Bulletin, Redding, 2010) and the San Diego County Juvenile Justice System's Core Beliefs highlight the importance of rehabilitation, support, and accountability, versus punishment and punitive sanctions. The San Diego County Probation Department enacts these beliefs through the use of a structured decision-making tool which guides Probation Officers to recommend the lowest level of intervention available under statutory guidelines which will provide for the rehabilitation of the youth and safety of the community. The local Juvenile Court has a variety of disposition options for youth including:

- Probation to the Court (WIC 725(a))
- Community Supervision (WIC 790)
- Probation Supervision on a low, medium, or high-risk caseload with services in the community
- Commitment to Urban Camp for 85, 130, or 250 days
- Commitment to the HOPE program

The YDA will add another layer of rehabilitative services and re-entry support for youth who have received true findings for the most serious charges (WIC 707(b) offenses). By developing a robust program, to replace DJJ, that meets needs and reduces risk in this population, the County creates another option and level of support to reduce the likelihood of youth entering the adult system. To the extent that the YDA is implemented with fidelity, achieves its goals, and meets or exceeds outcome measures, it will effectively reduce transfers to adult court.

Part 7: Regional Effort

Describe any regional agreements or arrangements supported by the County's block grant allocation: (WIC 1995 (6))

The County has held discussions with neighboring counties, but regional agreements or arrangements are not planned or anticipated at this time.

Part 8: Data

Describe how data will be collected on youth served by the block grant: (WIC 1995 (7))

The San Diego County Probation Department will add data elements to the Probation Case Management System (PCMS), in order to clearly identify the realigned youth in the system. Each youth will have the San Diego County Risk and Resiliency (SDRRC-II) risk and needs assessment completed prior to sentencing. This risk and needs assessment will directly inform the youth's case plan for both in-custody and out of custody. The youth will be re-assessed at a regular interval to track improvement in both risks to recidivate and improvement in protective factors gained through programming. San Diego County is also a participant in the PbS program which will collect data on the realigned youth which help inform facility improvement plans. PbS includes data from Staff Surveys, Youth Surveys, Youth Records and Youth Incident Reports.

The Probation Department also monitors racial and ethnic disparities by utilizing standardized protocols based on the US DOJ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to examine disparities in the use of detention, true findings, and custodial commitments. The juvenile justice partners, through the RRED committee, identifies changes to policies and practices to address disparities. In addition, the Probation Department is developing diversity and inclusion measures to monitor disparities more specifically for a variety of justice system decision points.

Describe outcome measures that will be utilized to determine the results of the programs and interventions supported by block grant funds: (WIC 1995 (7))

The Probation Department, in collaboration with SANDAG, will measure outcomes in the following areas:

1. Improvement in assessed risk to recidivate
2. Improvement in assessed needs over time
3. Adherence to therapeutic model including fidelity of programs, participation, relationship with staff
 - a. Probation will utilize the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) to assess fidelity of programs
 - b. Probation is using staff and youth climate surveys to measure relationships between staff and participants

- c. Probation supervisors and facility managers will need to actively observe program implementation
 - d. Match individualized treatment plans with services received (as measured through a regular review of treatment plans)
- 4. Success of reentry
 - a. Document the creation of transition plans and core components
 - b. Monitor linkages to services in the community (including furlough and transitional living programs)
- 5. Track recidivism
 - a. Track while in custody and then 3 years post-release
 - b. Track violations of juvenile probation resulting in reincarceration
- 6. Reporting of Program Outcomes will include race and ethnicity of program participants
 - a. All outcome measures including length of stay in the program will be measured and disaggregated by race and ethnicity

Works Cited

Keaton, Sandy; Correia, Debbie; Jimenez, Jessica; Burke, Cindy. (2015) Seeking Alternatives: Understanding the Pathways to Incarceration of High-Risk Juvenile Offenders, *San Diego Association of Governments Criminal Justice Bulletin*

Preparation for the Realignment of Department of Juvenile Justice Youth: A Study of the Population, Best Practices for Rehabilitation, and Evidence-Based Recommendations (2021), *San Diego Association of Governments Criminal Justice Bulletin*

Gesch, Bernard. (2013) Adolescence: Does good nutrition = good behaviour?. *Nutrition and health* vol. 22,1: 55-65.

National Research Council. (2013). Reforming Juvenile Justice: A Developmental Approach. Committee on Assessing Juvenile Justice Reform, Richard J. Bonnie, Robert L. Johnson, Betty M. Chemers, and Julie A. Schuck, Eds. Committee on Law and Justice, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

Fagan, J.A., and Tyler, T. (2005). Legal socialization of children and adolescents. *Social Justice Research*, 18(3), 217–41.

Monahan, K., Goldweber, A., and Cauffman, E. (2011). The effects of visitation on incarcerated juvenile offenders: How contact with the outside impacts adjustment on the inside. *Law and Human Behavior*, 35(2), 143–51.

Shanahan, R., and Villalobos Agudelo, S. (2012). Families as Partners: Supporting Incarcerated Youth in Ohio. New York: Vera Institute of Justice.

Winokur-Early, K., Chapman, S., and Hand, G. (2013). Family-focused juvenile reentry services: A quasi-experimental design evaluation of recidivism outcomes. *Journal of Juvenile Justice*, 2(2), 1–22.

Redding, R. (2010) Juvenile Transfer Laws: An Effective Deterrent to Delinquency?. *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. June 2010