



Del Norte County Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant Annual Plan

April 2023

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Executive Summary

Senate Bill 823, passed in 2020, established a Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant program to provide county-based custody, care, and supervision of youth who were realigned from the Division of Juvenile Justice or who would have otherwise been eligible for commitment to the division. The bill appropriated moneys from the General Fund for these purposes.

Welfare & Institutions Code Section(s) (WIC) 1990-1995 established this program and stipulated that to be eligible for funding allocations associated with this grant program, counties shall create a subcommittee of the multiagency juvenile justice coordinating council to develop a plan describing the facilities, programs, placements, services, supervision and reentry strategies that would be needed to provide appropriate rehabilitative services for realigned youth.

County plans are to be submitted and revised in accordance with WIC 1995, and may be posted, as submitted, to the Office of Youth and Community Restoration website.

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

Agency	Name and Title	Email	Phone Number
Chief Probation Officer (Chair)	Lonnie Reyman; Chief Probation Officer	lreyman@dnco.org	707-464-7215
District Attorney's Office Representative	Katherine Micks; District Attorney	kmicks@co.del-norte.ca.us	707-464-7210
Public Defender's Office Representative	Helen "Elly" Hoopes	ellyhoopes@yahoo.com	707-951-6901
Department of Social Services Representative	Ranell Brown; Director, Health & Human Services	ranell.brown@co.del-norte.ca.us	707-464-3191
Department of Mental Health	Ranell Brown; Director, Health & Human Services	ranell.brown@co.del-norte.ca.us	707-464-3191
Office of Education Representative	Jeff Harris; Superintendent	jharris@delnorte.k12.ca.us	707-464-6141
Court Representative	Darren McElfresh; Judge	darren.mcelfresh@delnorte.courts.ca.gov	707-464-8115
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Community Member	Christine Slette	cslette@casadn.org	707-464-3320
Community Member	Lloyd Thompson	lloydthompson1@charter.net	707-457-3782
Alternate Subcommittee Members			
Community Member	Jenna Donovan	jenna.rice52@gmail.com	916-293-2546
Community Member	Amira Long	along@frcdwoods.org	707-464-0955
Community Member	Michelle Zenk	mzenk@co.del-norte.ca.us	707-464-7215

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

Part 2 of this plan addresses the following statutory requirements:

- Briefly describe the County’s realignment target population supported by the block grant,
- Demographics of identified target population, including anticipated numbers of youth served, disaggregated by factors including age, gender, race or ethnicity, and offense/offense history,
- Describe any additional relevant information pertaining to identified target population, including programs, placements and/or facilities to which they have been referred.

Del Norte County has historically had very few commitments to the Department of Juvenile Justice. The last two commitments occurred in 2007 (the same year as juvenile realignment) and 2020 (a result of a Proposition 57 appeal). Though commitments are low, it is imperative for the community to consider the number of youth that commit eligible offenses which could land them in secure custody commitment. This relatively small number of especially egregious offenses can have disproportionate impacts on a small community like Del Norte County with offenders and victims potentially attending the same schools, shopping at the same store, and seeking services in the same places from the same providers.

Those youth that are not committed to custody commitments are granted probation by the Court and supervised by the Probation Department with the goal of addressing the underlying causes of their criminal behavior. In our case, all but one youth in the last thirteen years has been supervised in the community, indicating that our primary priority should be to ensure that we provide every service possible, given our resources, to help reform these youth so that they can be successful members of our community in the future. Following are some of the statistics that we have considered in identifying this population of youth.

When considering the number of youth that might fall into this category we have considered not only those youth who were adjudicated as wards of the court, but also those youth who were referred for prosecution whether or not their cases continued to adjudication. We have done so with the recognition that given slightly different circumstances some of these cases might have proceeded through the juvenile criminal system and resulted in different outcomes than actually occurred.

The data included herein is somewhat limited in scope due to the fact that the Probation Department only implemented an electronic case management system in 2011. Although it is possible that further detail might be revealed if a deeper dive were to occur, it is unlikely due to the fact that earlier cases, if not purged, are sealed and little would likely be gleaned from them.

The information below provides both a high-level overview of demographic information for all WIC 707(b) qualifying referrals that have been made in the last ten years and a more specific look at those cases that are adjudicated as wards of the court, which is the primary target population.

Below is illustrated the total number of referrals that were made for WIC 707(b) offenses during the years of 2011-2020, generally categorized into crime categories.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals
Arson											
Assault											
Burglary											
Manslaughter											
Murder											
Robbery/Carjacking											
Sex Crimes											
Weapons											

As can be seen from this data, Del Norte County has approximately █ cases per year with qualifying WIC 707(b) offenses. Almost 57% of these cases are sex offenses, with █ of cases related to some kind of assault, and the remaining █ related to robbery or carjacking.

Further information gleaned from this high-level overview reveals that 90% of all qualifying referrals are committed by males with only █ committed by females. █ of all referrals are for youth between the ages of 12-14, while 66% are for youth between the ages of 15-17.

Additionally the chart below compares the approximate racial demographic data of Del Norte County with that of these 30 youth.

	White	American Indian	Hispanic	Asian	African American	Unknown
Del Norte County						
WIC 707(b) referrals						

While this data provides an overarching picture of all qualifying referrals, many of these cases are either not filed on by the District Attorney or dismissed for a variety of reasons after filing. Of the 30 cases that are considered here, only 16 (53.3%) were adjudicated as 602 wards of the court. One of the 30 cases was the 2020 DJJ commitment mentioned previously. Due to the somewhat anomalous nature of that commitment it will not be included in the following demographic data. Additionally, █ of the 16 adjudicated cases are sealed and demographic information is limited; these also will not be included in the subsequent demographic detail. The one common factor that can be identified across these 17 cases is that all of these youth are male.

There is no indication that there have been significant shifts within the juvenile criminal cases that we have seen between 2011-2020, and it is estimated this number will remain at the average of █ eligible cases per year. It is also logical to conclude we will continue to see an average of 1.5 of these adjudicated with some kind of disposition, whether as 602 wards of the court or to custody commitments.

Of the 12 youth that were adjudicated as 602 court wards and for which we have detailed case information, █ received placement orders which resulted in placements out of county, while █ received services locally while on supervision.

All youth in need of out-of-home placement had their needs and risks assessed which were the primary factors on where youth were placed. As Del Norte County is remote and the closest largest metropolitan area is in Shasta County, proximity to their home was given great weight. The Probation Department has always encouraged and supported youth and their families to remain in contact and involved in the youth’s program as much as the placement allows. Youth and families need to be within a reasonable distance to ensure visitation was more easily feasible.

Until its closure in 2017 Bar-O Boys Ranch, located east of Gasquet in Del Norte County, was utilized as one alternative custody placement of male youth needing more structure and guidance. Youth in custody at Bar-O came from all over Northern California and had a broader range of criminal histories, but were all in need of individualized case management which

included life skills, drug and alcohol services, on-site jobs, community work service, and evidence based cognitive behavioral therapy groups.

The majority of out-of-home placements for eligible youth were within the greater Sacramento area. Sonoma County, Lassen County, Shasta County and Siskiyou County also had group home placements routinely utilized by Del Norte County. As is reflected in the previous demographic statistics, the majority of youth in out-of-county placement were youth who committed sex offenses and were often placed in Sacramento County at group homes which specifically focused on and provided sex offender treatment as well as life skills, employment opportunities, community work service, and evidence based cognitive behavioral therapy groups. Other youth placed in out-of-county placement were youth who needed more intensive drug and alcohol treatment, as well as mental health treatment, neither of which could be provided in Del Norte County. All group home placements offered life skills, employment opportunities, community work service and evidence-based cognitive behavioral therapy groups, targeted to the specified needs of the youth.

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

Part 3 of this plan addresses the following statutory requirements:

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

For those youth that are committed by the Court to custody commitments, Del Norte County will utilize partnerships with other counties to securely house youth. Prior to any youth requiring a custody commitment we will make every effort to identify and establish agreements with willing counties and/or county-based entities that have the available capacity and appropriate services to meet the needs of our youth. Given the dearth of juvenile custody facilities in Northern California which have these capacities, it is possible, if not likely, that we will be forced to solicit partnerships in Central and Southern California in order to meet the needs of this population. Nevertheless we will make every effort to find facilities that are as geographically close as possible in order to facilitate family visitation throughout the custody commitment and to facilitate successful reentry services.

For those youth that do not receive a custody commitment but rather are placed on probation, a variety of services and supports will be offered through normal case management. A high percentage will likely need placement of some kind, particularly placements that address the high frequency of sex offenses by this population in Del Norte County. Typically the least restrictive

placement is sought which still meets the needs of the youth. This has become increasingly challenging in recent years due to the ongoing restrictions on these types of placement through the Continuum of Care Reform. Though foster homes and therapeutic foster homes are ideal, they either do not exist in the county or are not appropriate placements due to the lack of needed services in Del Norte County. Therefore it is likely that STRTPs will continue to be utilized to provide the required services for these youth. A general description of where the Department has been able to secure placements for eligible youth is included in the previous section.

Typical services provided locally to this population include counseling through Remi Vista, Inc., a local partner CBO, mental health services also provided by Remi Vista or through the Behavioral Health Branch, and substance abuse services through county Behavioral Health. Additionally, educational services are closely monitored by the Probation Department as part of case management and a close partnership with the County Office of Education results in steady, if not always successful, educational progress by most youth. Continuing adult education is also sourced through the school district.

One identified need is for more substantial cognitive behavioral programming for local youth, which encompasses this target population as well. The Probation Department has established more robust programming facilitated by staff in recent years, however partnerships with other entities, whether they be the traditional county partners or scarce CBOs, will be needed to expand these opportunities for CBT, basic living skills, and other prosocial programming.

With a Juvenile Services Unit staffed at 1 supervisor, 3 officers, and 1 truancy officer, Probation Department resources are never voluminous but have proved effective. Traditionally the bulk of the target population has been supervised by Probation for the past 10 years with some measure of success. The high needs of this population are identified and often, though more difficult with the recent Continuum of Care Reform, appropriate placements are secured with a fairly high successful completion rate for this demographic. Those youth that remain local receive regular supervision by the JSU commensurate with the needs of the youth and their families.

A likely scenario for qualifying youth will be not only receiving case management and programmatic services out of custody on probation, but also being incarcerated for periods of time in Juvenile Hall. Many of these services and programs already mentioned are also offered for the local in-custody population as well. Remi Vista services for individual counseling, Alcohol and other Drugs (AOD) programs, and crisis response by Behavioral Health are some of those in-common services. Additionally Juvenile Hall staff facilitate other evidence-based programming for in-custody youth such as Moral Recognition Therapy (MRT) for social skill competence and moral reasoning, Aggression Replacement Training (ART) for better managing anger and reducing aggressive behavior, ARISE, an interactive life skills program, and others. Other programs are also available for qualifying youth both in and out of custody such as Seeking Safety (a trauma

focused program for females) and Love and Logic (a parenting program). Semi-structured programming is also a regular component of the Juvenile Hall; art and crafts, color therapy, Ted Talks, yoga, gardening, team building exercises and team sports are some of these.

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

Part 4 of this plan addresses the following statutory requirements:

- 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,
- 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(c)(3)(B)),
- Describe how the County plans to apply grant funds to address family engagement in programs for the target population (WIC 1995(c)(3)(C)),
- 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(c)(3)(D)),
- 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(c)(3)(E)),
- 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(c)(3)(F)).

For those youth in this target population that are granted 602 wardship and probation, the vast majority already qualify for funding which pays for needed services and programs. It is a rare occurrence that a youth or family does not qualify for funding that can be drawn down to pay for services or appropriate placements, such as Title IV-E funding. As a result it is forecast that there will be limited demand on the block grant funding to provide for services for these youth that are on probation supervision.

One area in which the application of block grant funding may be most useful is to pay for local services during a young adult's reentry after a custody commitment. These young adults, likely on parole, will typically be coming back to the community with limited resources and limited funding available to pay for services for them. Though service providers and treatment resources

will remain scarce in the county, the ability to utilize this funding stream may provide opportunity to meet the needs of this population upon reentry into the community.

The County intends to earmark a portion of the funding received annually to assist in reentry of our young adults after a custody commitment and other locally-based services. This amount may need to be flexible depending on the number of youth currently in custody and available resources and will be evaluated on a year by year basis.

Additionally, funds utilized to pay for custody commitments will support appropriate mental health, sex offender, or related behavioral or trauma-based programs as needed by the youth.

It is clear given the nature of the offenses which place a youth into this category that foundational social, emotional, and moral development is lacking in this population. Setting aside the programs available while in a custody commitment which will be provided by the hosting county, those youth on probation supervision will continue to need and receive all available support and direction that can be provided at the local level. Partnerships between agencies and entities have formed the backbone of providing such services in Del Norte County. Entities such as the Yurok Tribal Court which operates both Adult and Youth Wellness courts concurrently alongside the Superior Court have proven to be invaluable in engaging youthful offenders with culturally relevant structures.

Although healthy adolescent development may be out of reach for these particular youth, depending on their circumstances, the mission of the juvenile justice system is to attempt to provide opportunities for developing basic moral and social understanding of the youth's place in the community and how their decisions and actions affect those around them. As stated in a previous section, this work is ongoing and often supported by existing funding streams that will continue to be utilized. It is believed that the demand on block grant funding will be minimal in most cases and, outside of custody commitments, will be utilized to provide services and resources for those that are reentering the community after a custody commitment.

Despite the bulk of funding for such services coming from other funding streams, the County intends to earmark a portion of the funding received annually for locally-based services and to assist in reentry of our young adults after a custody commitment. This amount may need to be flexible depending on the number of youth currently in custody and available resources and will be evaluated on a year by year basis.

In line with the conception of how funding will be utilized for our youth, it is believed that supporting the family's engagement with the youth whether in custody or reentry will be a primary demand on funding. As housing for the custody commitment will likely be out of the region, regular financial support for the family to maintain contact with the youth would be a reasonable usage of this funding. This might take the form of providing for fuel, lodging, or other travel expenses. Funding also might support the ability of the family to maintain electronic or phone contact with the youth by paying for phone or internet connections.

As the County intends to annually earmark a portion of the funds received for reentry assistance, this funding will also be utilized to facilitate family engagement during both the custody commitment and reentry period.

Reentry after a custody commitment or an out-of-county placement will likely require funding for supervision and services provided through standard case management. For those that are on probation and reentering the community after placement other funding streams may be used to pay for needed services, though there may be specific circumstances which would require financial support from the block grant.

These young adults, likely on parole, will typically be coming back to the community with limited resources and limited funding available to pay for services for them. Though service providers and treatment resources will remain scarce in the county, the ability to utilize this funding stream may provide opportunity to meet the needs of this population upon reentry into the community. This could include housing support, connection with local employment resources and job-finding, as well as the possibility for engagement with adult education services.

For those youth that receive custody commitments, careful coordination with the housing county to ensure that available programming will match the needs of the youth will be a priority. This will include the availability of evidence-based programming and culturally responsive services. As juvenile halls across the state are mandated to provide such services along with utilizing trauma-informed practices in day to day operations, any custody commitment will offer an adequate baseline provision of all of these services. If we have a choice of possible housing counties then refinement of commitment choice will be guided by what specific needs the youth has and if one county has any particular program or service that more closely matches that need than another.

Grant funds will be utilized to pay for the custody commitment.

As Del Norte County will be utilizing partnerships with housing counties for custody commitments, the availability of local CBOs which provide services will be outside of our local control. However, funding may be used to provide services for eligible youth on probation through the minimally available community-based service providers locally present. As stated previously, the need for such financial support will be heavily influenced by the availability of other funding streams that are typically used for youth on probation. Grant funding would be utilized to fill gaps in services when a CBO can be identified which would provide an appropriate program or service.

Of primary importance given the crime demographics of our youth will be establishing consistent sex offender treatment, likely outpatient and likely provided by an out-of-county provider. Though such a program would not sufficiently fill the need of our community, given that close to [REDACTED] eligible cases is sex offense related, any progress in this arena will have positive impacts for our community.

Part 5: Facility Plan

Part 5 of this plan addresses the following statutory requirements:

- 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)).

As discussed in Parts 3 & 4, in assessing local resources it has been determined that Del Norte County cannot adequately provide an appropriate custody setting and programming for our eligible youth in our local Juvenile Hall due to the lack of community-based organizations and other local providers that can provide these higher-level services. As a result of this and our as yet unestablished partnerships, it is impossible to describe specific housing facilities outside of stating the obvious fact that all juvenile facilities in the State of California are required to meet state standards and regulations in order to continue to serve juvenile populations. For any custody commitment, the considerations of how to ensure the safety and protection of our youth given their ages, genders, special needs, and other relevant characteristics will be of paramount importance for the Probation Department in choosing an appropriate partner county for the commitment.

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

Part 6 of this plan addresses the following statutory requirements:

- 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)).

Given the fact that youth in this target population have committed some of the most violent, severe, and egregious offenses possible which directly victimize and harm other persons, the existence of this local plan which provides the Court with an alternative to retain the youth in the juvenile justice system is, in itself, such an incentive. The practices of California Probation Departments since juvenile realignment in 2007 to provide youth with the very best services and rehabilitation possible has resulted in a precipitous decline in juvenile incarceration and crime. Now the realignment of this most serious population of juvenile offenders to county responsibility, while posing many challenges, provides justice partners like the District Attorney, Public Defender, and most importantly the Court the option of adjudicating these youth to a system with a proven track record of rehabilitation.

This plan which emphasizes local control and solutions provides the best incentive possible in these difficult cases. Outside of the mere existence of this plan there remains little to incentivize other independent entities within the juvenile justice system who have their own roles and mandates to consider in their determinations. Each of these extremely difficult cases must be judged upon its own merits given the impacts to the victims, the community, and the offender at the time.

Part 7: Regional Effort

Part 7 of this plan addresses the following statutory requirements:

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

For those youth that are committed by the Court to custody commitments Del Norte County will utilize partnerships with other counties to securely house youth. Prior to any youth requiring a custody commitment we will make every effort to identify and establish agreements with willing counties and/or county-based entities that have the available capacity and appropriate services to meet the needs of our youth. Given the dearth of juvenile custody facilities in Northern California which have these capacities, it is possible, if not likely, that we will be forced to solicit

partnerships in Central and Southern California in order to meet the needs of this population. Nevertheless we will make every effort to find facilities that are as geographically close as possible in order to facilitate family visitation throughout the custody commitment and to facilitate successful reentry services.

Perhaps more preferable would be a statewide county consortium which would provide a stable and unified system which would provide secure housing options for custody commitments without the need for multiple individual, county-to-county agreements. The goal of such an entity would be to ensure there is a high-quality secure treatment program available for any youth in the state who, absent SB 823, would have been committed to DJJ. A statewide consortium would offer the opportunity to

- Remove or mitigate barriers presented by county borders for the deepest end of the juvenile justice continuum,
- Ensure program capacity is available to replace the loss of the state level of the continuum
- Increase predictability in planning for population and staffing needs,
- Leverage joint resources to provide similar level of service delivery backed by research and technical assistance, and
- Enhance the benefits of the economies of scale planning.

It is envisioned that a statewide consortium could possibly fill the following functions:

- Track and manage available capacity across the state
- Coordinate information regarding secure placement options based on region, gender, program needs, and other agreed-upon criteria
- Coordinate the delivery of pooled, specialized programs to youth in their home communities when possible
- Develop common use of legal instruments to facilitate collaboration across counties
- Provide training and technical assistance to ensure high quality, consistent programming
- Consider the establishment of fiscal mechanisms to support efficiencies and robust service
- Consider the establishment of shared or additional liability options

A combination of responses which include county-to-county agreements and participation in a statewide consortium will be utilized in order to provide the best possible custody commitment options to the county in order to meet the needs of each individual youth.

Part 8: Data

Part 8 of this plan addresses the following statutory requirements:

- Describe how data will be collected on youth served by the block grant: (WIC 1995 (7)).
- Describe outcome measures that will be utilized to determine the results of the programs and interventions supported by block grant funds: (WIC 1995 (7)).

As it is standard practice to gather a plethora of data for juvenile criminal cases for a variety of different reports and purposes, data regarding this population of youth will be collected from Probation records as well as from the counties where youth are committed for custody commitments. Generally data will be quantified by a monthly or quarterly time period.

Some of the categories of data that will be collected will be standard demographic data which will include information related to family history, child welfare history, criminal history, health and mental health information, educational history and information, program history and information related to both pre- and in-custody commitment, and information gathered from risk/need assessments conducted by various agencies. The data gathered will additionally include information related to these categories after the youth has been released from the custody commitment. Recidivism will be tracked in accordance with standard processes to quantify recidivism.

Generally data collected will be provided in aggregated formats when possible. Due to the population of youth affected by realignment being so small in Del Norte County, disaggregated data could very well endanger the privacy that these youth are entitled to by law. There may be occasions when disaggregation which may be appropriate and in those circumstances that data may be provided.

Outcome measures that will be utilized will consider length of stay in any secure-track facility, frequency of program activity, program effectiveness categories, success/unsuccessful rates, evidence based practices by program, and recidivism. Data regarding recidivism will be collected based upon 3-year recidivism outcomes (arrests, convictions, returns to custody) based on cumulative annual reports.