

Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant Annual Plan¹

Date: 4/8/24

County Name: Del Norte

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Background and Instructions:

Welfare & Institutions Code Section(s) 1990-1995 establish the Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant program for the purpose of providing county-based care, custody, and supervision of youth who are realigned from the state Division of Juvenile Justice or who would otherwise be eligible for commitment to the Division of Juvenile Justice prior to its closure.

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 are 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.

¹ Updated November 2023 to add elements required by AB 505 (Chapter 528, Statutes of 2023)

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

List the subcommittee members, agency affiliation where applicable, and contact information. If the subcommittee has opted to select a co-chair, identify the co-chair

Agency	Check box if Co-Chair	Name and Title	Email	Phone Number
Chief Probation Officer (Chair)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lonnie Reyman; Chief Probation Officer	lreyman@dnco.org	707-464-7215
District Attorney's Office Representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	Katherine Micks; District Attorney	kmicks@co.del-norte.ca.us	707-464-7210
Public Defender's Office Representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	Helen "Elly" Hoopes	ellyhoopes@yahoo.com	707-951-6901
Department of Social Services Representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ranell Brown, Director, Health & Human Services	ranell.brown@co.del.norte.ca.us	707-464-3191
Department of Mental Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ranell Brown, Director, Health & Human Services	ranell.brown@co.del.norte.ca.us	707-464-3191
Office of Education Representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jeff Harris; Superintendent	jharris@delnorte.k12.ca.us	707-464-6141
Court Representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	Darren McElfresh; Presiding Judge	darren.mcelfresh@delnorte.courts.ca.gov	707-464-8115
Community Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	Melodee Mitchell	melodee@dnccc.com	707-464-8311
Community Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	Christine Slette	cslette@casadn.org	707-464-3320

Community Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lloyd Thompson	lloydthompson1@charter.net	707-457-3782
Additional Subcommittee Participants				
Community Member		Jenna Donovan	jenna.rice52@gmail.com	916-293-2546
Community Member		Amira Long	along@frcwood.org	707-464-0955

Part 2. Subcommittee Process and Meetings

Define process utilized by subcommittee to determine whether or not a co-chair was desired (WIC 1995(b)):

The new requirement was agendized and discussed at the February 20, 2024 subcommittee meeting. By consensus of the subcommittee it was determined that no action would be taken at that time. This was recorded in minutes for that meeting.

Provide dates of subcommittee meetings held during the year (WIC 1995(e)):

February 20, 2024
April 8, 2024

Provide date plan was updated (WIC 1995(e)) and approved by the majority of the subcommittee (WIC 1995(c)):

April 8, 2024

Part 3: Target Population (WIC 1995 (d) (1))

- 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 historically had very few commitments to the former Department of Juvenile Justice. The last [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED] 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 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 2014-2023, generally categorized into crime categories. The total number is 35 individual cases. Subsequent discussion regarding percentages and which cases are considered regarding different aspects is based upon this total number.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Totals
Arson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Assault	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3
Burglary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manslaughter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Robbery/Carjacking	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Sex Crimes	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	19
Weapons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	3

As can be seen from this data, Del Norte County has approximately 3 cases per year with qualifying WIC 707(b) offenses. Almost 54% of these cases are sex offenses, with █% of cases related to some kind of assault, █% arson, █% related to robbery or carjacking, and █% related to “Other” categories of offenses. Notably, in the last several years we have seen █ referrals for attempted murder, which is unusual and equates to █% of all offenses over the last 10 years.

Further information gleaned from this high-level overview reveals that 91% of all qualifying referrals are committed by males with only █% committed by females. This is a slight increase in females in the last 3 years. █ of all referrals are for youth between the ages of 12-14, while 60% are for youth between the ages of 15-17. Numerically, 17-year-olds have the greatest number of offenders, █ of the 35. Additionally, the chart below compares the approximate racial demographic data of Del Norte County with that of these 35 youth.

	White	American Indian	Hispanic	Asian	African American	Unknown
Del Norte County	61.3%	9.9%	20.8%	3.5%	3.2%	
WIC 707(b) referrals	40%	█%	█%	█%	0%	█%

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 35 cases that are considered here, only 18 (51.4%) were adjudicated as 602 wards of the court. █ Due to the somewhat anomalous nature of that commitment it will not be included in the following demographic data. Additionally, █ of the 18 adjudicated cases are sealed and demographic information is limited; these also will not be included in the subsequent demographic detail. Of the 18 cases only █ were female.

There is no indication that there have been significant shifts within the juvenile criminal cases that we have seen between 2014-2023, and it is estimated this number will remain at the average of 3 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 14 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 with viable placement options 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 Short-Term Residential Treatment Placements (STRTPs) 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 STRTPs 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 STRTPs offered life skills, employment opportunities, community work service and evidence-based cognitive behavioral therapy groups, targeted to the specified needs of the youth.

Part 4: Programs and Services (WIC 1995 (d)(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:

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 and some programs of the Probation Department. 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 detained for periods of time in Juvenile Hall. Youth are detained in neighboring counties as the Del Norte County Juvenile Hall was closed in 2023, but there are many services and programs offered while a youth is detained as well. Some of those offered at other contracted counties are: Aggression Replacement Therapy, Interactive Journalling, Mindfulness Mediation, AA/NA groups, Art Education and Independent Living Skills.

Part 5: Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant Funds (WIC 1995(d)(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:

Of primary importance given the crime demographics of our youth will be finding a SYTF that provides sex offender treatment. In the intervening years since the last JJRBG plan was prepared, it was learned that Shasta County has work with a local CBO to establish a sex offender treatment program in their juvenile hall, both for 602 youth as well as SYTF youth. Although other such programs exist in the state, this would be the first program we would attempt to utilize given in relative closeness and existing relationships with Shasta County Probation. Establishing consistent sex offender treatment locally, likely outpatient and likely provided by an out-of-county provider, would be a boon to our community, although highly unlikely. Though such a program would not sufficiently fill the need of our community, given that over half of eligible cases is sex offense related, any progress in this arena will have positive impacts for our community.

Funds utilized to pay for SYTF commitments will support appropriate mental health, sex offender, or related behavioral or trauma-based programs, based upon the identified needs of the youth.

Despite the possibility that the bulk of funding for such services would come from other funding streams, the County has, and will continue to earmark a portion of the funding received annually for locally-based services to youth in this population on probation 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.

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(d)(3)(B)):

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 SYTF 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. This work is ongoing and often supported by existing funding streams that will continue to be utilized. It is believed that though SYTF commitments will be the bulk of the demand on block grant funding, some funds will be set aside to be utilized to provide services and resources for those that are reentering the community after a custody commitment.

The County has, and will continue to earmark a portion of the funding received annually for locally-based services to youth in this population on probation 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.

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

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 SYTF 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.

The young adults released from SYTF, 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.

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(d)(3)(D)):

Reentry after a SYTF 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.

The young adults released from SYTF, 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.

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

For those youth that receive SYTF 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 and SYTFs 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.

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(d)(3)(F)):

As Del Norte County will be utilizing partnerships with housing counties for SYTF 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 that is set aside for this purpose on an annual basis would be utilized to fill gaps in services when a CBO can be identified which would provide an appropriate program or service.

Part 6: 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(d)(4))

As discussed previously in this plan, Del Norte County cannot adequately provide an appropriate custody setting and programming for our eligible youth as we both lack community-based organizations and other local providers that can provide these higher-level services and, as of 2023, also lack a custodial facility. As a result of this, 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 SYTF 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 7: 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(d)(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 8: Regional Effort

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

For those youth that are committed by the Court to SYTF commitments, Del Norte County will utilize partnerships with other counties to securely house youth. Since realignment, we have continued to work to identify and establish agreements with willing counties 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 continue make every effort to find facilities that are as geographically close as possible, and have the services needed for each individual youth in order to facilitate family visitation throughout the custody commitment and to facilitate successful reentry services.

Part 9: Data

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

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

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.

Part 10: Progress Report

Provide a description of the progress made regarding any elements described in Parts 2-9 and any objectives and outcomes in the plan that was submitted to the Office of Youth and Community Supervision in the previous calendar year. (WIC 1995(d)(8)).

Since realignment Del Norte County has had 0 youth adjudicated to Secure Track commitments. We continue to provide supervision to all youth who have been adjudicated as WIC 602 youth who fall in this target population.