

California Juvenile Justice 2024 County Plan Summary Report



Prepared by the
Office of Youth and Community Restoration

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Executive Summary

The **2024 Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant (JJRBG)** report highlights the strides made by California counties in meeting statutory requirements and improving outcomes for justice-involved youth. The report reviews how counties have implemented rehabilitative services, enhanced facilities, and expanded programs aimed at keeping youth within the juvenile justice system and local community.

To date, **54 counties** had their plans accepted after reviews, while a few still await revisions. A key focus for many counties was on refining Secure Youth Treatment Facilities (SYTFs), with **36 counties** reporting operational SYTFs that provide specialized housing and services for realigned youth. Counties like **Sonoma, El Dorado, and Tehama** established regional agreements to house youth from other counties, addressing the needs of those without SYTFs. In parallel, **43 counties** utilize evidence-based, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive practices, particularly in the areas of behavioral and mental health services, signaling a broad adoption of therapeutic approaches across the state.

Counties also concentrated on strengthening mentorship and family engagement, **16 counties** indicated the importance of Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings to personalize rehabilitation plans, while **25 counties** organized family engagement events to foster positive connections. Partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs) such as the **Rising Scholars, Prison Education Project** and **Boys & Girls Club** were mentioned most in providing education, adolescent development, and reentry services for justice-involved youth, supporting their transition back into society.

Despite this progress, several challenges remain. Inconsistent data reporting across counties hindered the ability to provide a comprehensive statewide analysis. Additionally, a handful of counties struggled to fully assemble the required subcommittee members, mainly with having three community members. Lastly, counties are still working on finding access to programs for specific populations, such as female youth, youth who have committed a sex offense, and those with specific mental health challenges. Looking ahead, there are opportunities to improve data collection systems, enhance subcommittee formation, and expand regional agreements to address specialized needs.

Overall, the 2024 JJRBG updates reflect a strong commitment by California counties to align youth justice practices with legislative goals, focus on keeping youth within the juvenile system, foster their development, and create a continuum of care. Moving forward, counties will continue to refine efforts by upgrading facilities, expanding partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs), and deepening family engagement efforts.



Introduction

Purpose of the Report

This report summarizes the approaches and actions taken by California counties to comply with the Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant (JJRBG) statutory requirements. Welf. & Inst. Code § 1995 requires counties to submit annual plans to OYCR, approved by their local Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council, pursuant to statute, containing the county-level efforts in developing comprehensive plans to provide rehabilitative services for justice-involved youth, with a focus on safety, community reintegration, and preventing recidivism. OYCR is required to compile an annual report with the summary of these plans, make it available to the public, and the date of final acceptance of each plan. (Welf. & Inst. Code § 1995 (g)). To view the full text of Welf. & Inst. Code § 1995, please visit [Welf. & Inst. Code § 1995](#).

The report outlines how counties have implemented strategies that include mental health services, family engagement, mentorship, and trauma-informed care, while also addressing diverse needs through regional agreements and facility improvements. By emphasizing evidence-based and culturally responsive programs, counties aim to retain realigned youth within the juvenile system, promote healthy adolescent development, and ensure alignment with legislative requirements. JJRBG funding is designed to allow counties to care for youth in their own communities pursuant to realignment that led to the closure of Division of Juvenile Justice with the passage of SB 823. The county plans provide insight into the progress made by counties in meeting these objectives, alongside the challenges and opportunities identified for future improvements in juvenile justice practices.



Legal Framework

Under Welf. & Inst. Code § 1995, counties must establish a subcommittee within the multiagency juvenile justice coordinating council to develop a comprehensive plan to be eligible for funding. This plan outlines the facilities, programs, placements, services, supervision, and reentry strategies necessary to provide appropriate rehabilitation and supervision for the target population.

The subcommittee, chaired or co-chaired by the chief probation officer, must include representatives from key county departments and at least three community members with relevant experience. The plan must be developed with input from these community members and approved by a majority of the subcommittee. Key elements of the plan include:

- A detailed description of the target population, including demographics and referral information.
- An overview of the facilities and services provided to the target population.
- Allocation of grant funds to address mental health, healthy adolescent development, family engagement, reentry support, and programs that are evidence-based, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive.
- A facility plan for housing realigned youth, ensuring safety and addressing diverse needs.
- Strategies to retain realigned youth within the juvenile justice system and prevent transfers to the adult system.
- Regional agreements or arrangements supported by the block grant.
- Data collection methods and outcome measures for evaluating program effectiveness.
- Progress updates on previous plans and objectives.

To receive funding, counties must submit their plans to the Office of Youth and Community Restoration (OYCR) by May 1st, with annual updates and two subcommittee meetings each year to consider the plan. OYCR will review, accept, and publicly post these plans to ensure compliance with legislative requirements.

Procedural Information and Limitations

In 2024, OYCR actively supported counties through the updated Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant (JJRBG) process. These updates followed the passage of Assembly Bill 505, which introduced changes to the grant's reporting requirements. Counties must annually update and approve their JJRBG plans through a majority of the subcommittee, which meets at least twice per year and may appoint a co-chair alongside the probation chief. The plans must involve community input, report progress on prior goals, and be reviewed by OYCR to ensure all required elements are met, with revision requests not affecting fund allocations. To view the text of AB 505, please visit [Assembly Bill 505](#).

To help counties understand these new requirements, OYCR hosted a webinar on January 19th to explain the changes and clarify expectations for the annual submissions. As the May 1st deadline approached, OYCR sent a reminder email on March 14th to county Chiefs, outlining the submission process and inviting them to attend office hours held on March 21st, March 27th, April 5th, and April 25th, offered counties direct access to OYCR staff for questions and assistance with submissions.

By May 1st, 56 counties had submitted their plans. One county submitted the following week, and one county submitted their plan in August. OYCR staff reviewed each plan, with subject matter experts evaluating specific elements. On July 12th, OYCR requested revisions from 48 counties, asking for



additional information or clarifications on topics mostly including disaggregated data, subcommittee involvement, and progress updates.

As of November 1, 2024, 56 county plans have been accepted, while the remaining two plans have revisions pending. OYCR remains committed to providing ongoing support to ensure all counties meet the updated requirements of the JJRBG as mandated by AB 505. To view all county plans as they are updated, please visit the OYCR website at [OYCR - Office of Youth and Community Restoration \(ca.gov\)](https://www.oycr.ca.gov).



Image Source A: Youth Alliance



Subcommittee Formation and Process

To be eligible for funding under Welf. & Inst. Code § 1991, counties must establish a subcommittee within their multiagency juvenile justice coordinating council, as per Section 749.22. This subcommittee, chaired by the chief probation officer, must include representatives from the district attorney's office, public defender's office, social services, mental health, education, and the court, along with at least three community members with experience in youth services or juvenile justice. The plan must be developed with community member participation and approved by the subcommittee majority.

Of the 58 plans received, five lacked complete subcommittees, primarily due to missing community members. Fourteen counties had a co-chair, and 11 counties shared their selection process, which mostly involved a unanimous vote. Fifty-six county plans reported the date their subcommittee approved the plan by majority vote.

Subcommittee community member involvement was identified in the statute, though only 18 counties explained how these members participated. This varied from counties sending plans to members prior to meetings for prepared input, to Alameda and Contra Costa counties holding workgroups and listening sessions to gather feedback for plan development.

Describing the Target Population

Definition and Criteria

Welf. & Inst. Code § 1990 (b) defines the realignment target population as youth eligible for commitment to the Division of Juvenile Justice prior to its closure. Each county, however, shares its own interpretation, expanding or narrowing the scope of services. For instance, 17 counties specify the age of the target population, with most stating a range of 14 to 25, while five counties specify only serving male youth within their plan. These differences impacted the facilities, programs, and services mentioned in the individual plans.

Data Submission Outline

The data submitted by counties varies with some providing only point-in-time data and others submitting data spanning multiple years. This variation has been due to an absence of standardized submission guidelines in Welf. & Inst. Code § 1995(d)(1) which has made it difficult to present a comprehensive data summary. However, starting in 2025, improvements are anticipated as the OYCR plans to provide a template and detailed instructions to guide counties in their data submissions. The goal is for these tools to foster more standardized reporting, and future evaluations will help determine their overall success.

Facility Planning and Regional Agreements

Twenty-four counties mentioned regional agreements with other counties regarding housing youth or providing access to programs and services. Most agreements address housing youth from counties without a Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF). Sonoma County has the most regional agreements, cited by six counties, followed by El Dorado and Tehama, each cited by five counties.



Counties that do not have regional agreements either indicated no plans to seek them or are waiting until the need arises. Some counties expressed specific needs for regional agreements to address female youth, youth who have committed sex offenses, or those with serious mental health needs.



Image Source B Santa Barbara County Plan

Facility Details

Thirty-six counties reported operating SYTFs, with 44 facilities identified as placements for the target population. Counties reported various safety and protection measures, such as intake assessments, separation of youth by age, gender, or risk level, and intensive supervision. Additionally, many facilities implement behavioral incentive systems to promote positive behavior and track progress.

Twenty-seven counties reported improvements to their facilities, with 20 mentioning security upgrades such as new camera systems and perimeter fencing. Structural upgrades were also common, with counties building new units, programming spaces, and recreational areas. Fifteen counties express creating home-like environments within their facilities.

Programs and Services and Application of Block Grant Funds

Overview of Offerings

This section provides an overview of the programs and services designed to support youth in California's juvenile justice system, particularly those in Secure Youth Treatment Facilities (SYTF). The content focuses on how counties are using block grant funds to address critical needs, such as mental health, education, employment, and family engagement, while also incorporating trauma-informed and culturally responsive practices. By detailing these initiatives, the section highlights the county's commitment to rehabilitation and the successful reintegration of justice-involved youth into their communities.



Behavioral Health Programs

Counties in California have implemented a variety of programs to address mental health, sex offender treatment, and related behavioral or trauma-based needs. These programs range from general partnerships to detailed, specific offerings.

- **Behavioral Health Programs:** Twenty-one counties mentioned general behavioral health partnerships, while 24 counties offer targeted services such as embedded clinicians, counseling, and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT).
- **Substance Use Treatment:** Thirty-one counties provide substance use treatment, with services ranging from assessments to specific treatment programs.
- **Sex Offense Treatment Programs:** Twenty-seven counties provide specialized treatment for youth convicted of sex offenses, either through trained clinicians, contracted STRTPs, or facility-based programs.

Support Programs for Healthy Adolescent Development

Twenty counties have mentorship programs, connecting youth with adult role models who offer guidance and support. Nine counties extend this effort by incorporating credible messenger programs, where individuals with similar life experiences, whether that be previously system involved or impacted by the juvenile justice system, mentor youth.

In addition, 13 counties provide life skills services, offering financial literacy, nutrition education, career services, and behavioral health support. These services help youth develop essential tools for successful adulthood.



Family Engagement in Programs

Family engagement is key to rehabilitating youth in the juvenile justice system. Sixteen counties utilize Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings, which involve youth, their families, and vital stakeholders in personalized rehabilitation plans.

Twenty-five counties hold family engagement events such as holiday gatherings or special visits, while 14 counties report providing transportation assistance to help families stay connected. Wraparound services, mentioned by 18 counties, offer comprehensive support tailored to the youth and their families. Ten counties offer parenting classes to strengthen communication and discipline strategies within families.



Reentry Supports Including Education, Employment, and Housing

Education

Education and vocational training are key to helping youth successfully transition back into their communities. Nearly every county mentioned offering programs to help youth earn a high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) credential.

- **Career Technical Education (CTE):** Thirty-four counties provide CTE, offering practical, hands-on training in various trades. This helps youth gain valuable job skills and increase their employability.
- **Post-Secondary Education:** Forty-two counties have partnered with local colleges and universities to offer college courses to youth while in custody, enabling them to earn credits toward a degree. Special education services, including Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), are reported to be available in about 30 counties to ensure youth with learning differences receive appropriate support.
- **Programs like Rising Scholars and Project Rebound:** Twelve counties utilize the educational support programs for justice-involved youth through Rising Scholars, which aids participants in pursuing college education. Another eight counties utilize Project Rebound, designed to provide academic pathways for those transitioning out of the justice system. Additionally, about 13 counties mentioned offering college transition programs, ensuring youth are supported as they move from high school to college.
- **Tutoring and Homework Assistance:** Twelve counties provide these services to help youth stay on track academically.

Employment

In addition to education, counties are focusing on employment opportunities as a critical component of successful reintegration.

- **Workforce Development Programs:** Twenty counties offer workforce development programs, including job readiness training, resume writing, and interview preparation.
- **Certifications:** Nine counties offer certifications such as CPR, forklift operation, and food handler permits.
- **Paid Work Experience and Internships:** Sixteen counties provide real-world work experiences and internships, allowing youth to gain valuable skills and earn income while they learn.

Housing

Stable housing is essential for successful reintegration.

- **Transitional Housing Programs:** Seventeen counties offer transitional housing to support youth as they move from institutional settings to independent living.
- **STRTPs and Specialized Foster Homes:** Twelve counties utilize short-term residential therapeutic programs (STRTPs) and foster homes for youth with higher needs.
- **Independent Living Programs:** Thirteen counties use supportive housing and independent living programs, helping youth develop skills for self-sufficiency.



Evidence-based, Promising, Trauma-informed, and Culturally Responsive Practices

Counties have demonstrated a commitment to evidence-based and promising practices, with forty-three counties highlighting such programs in their JJRBG plans.

- **Trauma-informed Training:** Trauma-informed care was mostly referenced when it came to programs and services mentioned with behavioral health. Thirty-five counties train facility staff in trauma-informed care to address the underlying trauma often experienced by justice-involved youth.
- **Evidence-based Programs:** Programs such as Boys' Council, Girls' Circle, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), and Aggression Replacement Training (ART) were referenced as evidence-based programs by 27 counties. These programs are designed to address therapeutic and behavioral needs.
- **Culturally Responsive Care:** Thirty counties emphasize culturally responsive practices, tailoring programs to reflect the unique backgrounds and experiences of youth. Twenty counties train staff in culturally responsive practices.

Partnerships with Nongovernmental and Community-based Providers

Counties partner with a range of organizations to support justice-involved youth, offering services that span education, mental health, reentry, and developmental programs. The top five most frequently mentioned organizations include:

- **Rising Scholars Program:** Nine counties report that this program extends educational support through community colleges, offering both post-secondary, and vocational training.
- **Prison Education Project (PEP):** Eight counties cite PEP, which provides academic, life skills, and career development opportunities, helping incarcerated individuals transition back into society.
- **Boys and Girls Club:** Eight counties indicate this organization, which provides mentoring, youth development, and life skills programs that foster personal growth and community engagement.
- **Wellpath:** Six counties state that Wellpath focuses on mental and physical health services, offering comprehensive assessments, psychiatric care, and substance use treatment.
- **GEO Reentry Services:** Six counties note GEO, which provides evidence-based cognitive-behavioral therapy and reentry services, helping youth manage anger and develop essential life skills.



Image Source C: Project Rebound



Retention Strategies

Counties described strategies to retain realigned youth within the juvenile justice system, rather than transferring them to the adult criminal justice system. While most counties have strategies in place, 10 counties report no recent youth transfers to adult court to express their efforts in retaining youth.

- **Program Offerings:** Counties such as Alameda, Fresno, Kings, and Santa Clara state that their wide variety of programs and services incentivize retaining youth within the juvenile system.
- **Individualized Treatment Plans:** Counties like Glenn, Kern, Merced, Mono, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Tulare emphasize individualized assessments and treatment plans as key to retaining youth.
- **Multi-agency Collaboration:** Alpine, Butte, Colusa, Los Angeles, Napa, San Bernardino, and Yolo counties highlight community-based services and support systems as a vital part of their retention strategy.

Data Collection and Outcome Measures

Data Collection and Reporting Systems

Forty-nine counties have developed data collection systems, often in collaboration with educational institutions or using specialized software. These systems track a variety of data, including age, gender, race/ethnicity, adjudications, program participation, and recidivism rates.

- **Advanced Case Management Systems:** Systems like Enterprise Supervision, Youth Level of Service Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI), and Corrections Software Solutions are used by several counties to record and analyze data comprehensively.
- **Collaborative Data Collection:** Twenty-seven counties collaborate between departments and external partners, often working with universities to enhance their data collection and analysis.

Use of Risk and Needs Assessments

Counties employ various assessment tools to evaluate the risks and needs of youth entering the juvenile justice system.

- **Most Utilized Tool:** The Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT) is the most frequently used, cited by 22 counties. It helps guide rehabilitation plans and monitor progress.
- **Mental and Physical Health Assessments:** Forty-three counties conduct mental and physical health assessments, using tools like the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI-2), the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment, and the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) score to develop personalized treatment plans.



Youth Feedback and Participation

Twenty-one counties report incorporating youth feedback into their program evaluations using surveys and interviews. This feedback helps improve the effectiveness of services and ensures a youth-centered approach in juvenile justice interventions.



Image Source D: Youth Alliance

Outcome Measures

Counties employ diverse outcome measures, encompassing traditional law enforcement metrics and more holistic indicators like personal development and educational success.

- **Recidivism Tracking:** Thirty-seven counties have comprehensive approaches for tracking juvenile justice recidivism, focusing on outcomes over one, two-, and three-years post-release.
- **Educational and Vocational Outcomes:** High school graduation rates, college enrollment, and completion of educational qualifications are key indicators used by several counties.
- **Holistic and Behavioral Health Measures:** Thirty-nine counties assess mental health, substance use treatment, and physical health as part of their outcome measures, with 18 counties also evaluating social and emotional growth.



Summary of Annual Updates

The 2024 updates show notable advancements in juvenile justice plans, particularly in three areas:

- **Expanded Programs and Services:** Twenty-five counties introduced or expanded evidence-based programs focused on trauma-informed care, mental health support, and vocational training.
- **Facility and Infrastructure Enhancements:** Twenty-four counties made facility upgrades to create more therapeutic, homelike environments.
- **Data Collection Improvements:** Twenty-two counties updated their data collection systems to better track youth outcomes for program effectiveness.

Conclusion

Challenges and Opportunities

Despite the advancements noted above, several challenges emerged during the review and summarization of the JJRBG county plans. Inconsistent data submission across counties—due to a lack of standardized reporting guidelines—limited the ability to generate comprehensive summaries on the target population. Additionally, some counties struggled to fully assemble subcommittees with all required community members or county representatives and to convene prior to the deadline to approve the plan by a majority. Lastly, counties are still working on finding access to programs for specific populations, such as female youth, youth who have committed a sex offense, and those with specific mental health challenges.

However, these challenges also present opportunities for growth and innovation. Counties are already exploring ways to enhance data collection systems to track outcomes more accurately, ensure more consistent subcommittee formation, and expand regional agreements for specialized populations such as female youth, youth who have committed a sex offense, and those with specific mental health needs. By addressing these issues, counties can refine their processes and develop stronger partnerships that further support reentry, family engagement, and long-term youth success.

Future Directions

As we look toward 2025, these opportunities set the stage for continued improvement. Counties mentioned expectations for progress, with a focus on upgrading facilities, expanding partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs), and deepening family engagement efforts. With each step, counties are positioning themselves to not only overcome the current challenges but to create a more equitable, effective, and youth-centered juvenile justice system.

