

SAG YJ: Community Investment and System Accountability (CISA) Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes
Friday, March 20, 2026
12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. | Zoom (virtual)

Call to Order

Chair Carly Dierkhising called the meeting to order.

Present

Carly Dierkhising (Chair), Andrew Garcia (Co-Chair), Krystal Lewis (OYCR), Carol Biondi, Lucero Noyola, Anthony Ortiz Jr., Christian Lucchesi, Jacqueline Skapik, Lazandra Dial, Michael Duncan, Protima Pandey, Ramon Ramos

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- **Motion:** Andrew Garcia
- **Second:** Carly Dierkhising
- **Outcome:** Motion passed unanimously; January and February minutes were approved.

(Re)Introductions

Members reintroduced themselves.

Presentation: Ramon Ramos, The Exception Organization

Purpose:

To share lived experience and community-based approaches to supporting system-impacted youth and improving funding accountability.

Background and Approach

- Presenter shared lived experience growing up in San Bernardino and emphasized how trauma and systemic barriers impact youth.
- Highlighted the importance of shifting from punitive responses to supportive, trauma-informed approaches.

The Exception Organization

- Community-based organization focused on holistic wellness, mentorship, and personal development.
- Provides programming for youth impacted by the justice system across Inland Empire counties.

JJCPA Funding and Ad Hoc Committee Work

- Riverside County utilizes an Ad Hoc Committee to provide recommendations to the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC).
- Funding distribution has shifted from approximately 90% county / 10% community to roughly 60% county / 40%+ community.
- Approximately \$20 million has been released for community-based services, with additional funding pending through an RFP process.
- Discussion noted that funds may remain unspent or delayed in distribution due to system processes.

RFP Process and Challenges

- Ad Hoc Committee develops funding priorities, while probation develops and administers RFPs.

Key challenges discussed:

- Delays in county procurement and approval processes
- Extended timelines for funding distribution
- Barriers for community-based organizations due to reimbursement structures and compliance requirements
- Difficulty evaluating proposals without clear funding tiers

System Challenges and Opportunities

Ongoing challenges:

- Funds not consistently reaching community-based organizations
- Limited transparency and accountability in funding processes
- Capacity and compliance barriers for smaller organizations
- Competition for limited funding and shrinking philanthropic resources

Capacity challenges for CBOs include:

- Limited ability to front costs for reimbursement-based funding
- Administrative and compliance requirements
- Need for support in program development, budgeting, and evaluation

Emerging strategies:

- Increased transparency and engagement opportunities for CBOs
- Strengthened collaboration between probation and community organizations
- Expanded community input in funding recommendations
- Increased focus on capacity-building support and training
- Encouragement of diversified funding strategies

Program Innovation

- A pilot initiative was discussed in which community-based mentors are paired with probation officers to support youth reentry.
- Outcomes will be tracked over a six-month period to assess effectiveness and potential for scaling.

Member Discussion

- Clarification that the Ad Hoc Committee provides funding recommendations, while the JJCC retains final decision-making authority.
- Emphasis on reviewing county funding plans and expenditure reports to ensure accountability.
- Discussion highlighted the importance of early engagement in decision-making processes and improving collaboration among community-based organizations.

Needs Assessment Update (Andrew Garcia)

Purpose:

To provide an update on the CISA Subcommittee's needs assessment for Title II grantees.

Update:

- The State Advisory Group approved moving forward with the needs assessment.
- Outreach to Title II grantees will begin in the coming weeks.
- Updates and initial findings are expected at the next meeting.
- A future presentation on capacity-building efforts is planned.

Next Steps

- Continue development of the needs assessment and begin outreach
- Review county funding plans and expenditure reports
- Explore strategies to improve transparency and funding distribution

Adjournment

Chair Carly Dierkhising thanked members for their participation. The meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting

Friday, April 17, 2026, 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Resources Shared

[SACJJDP CISA Agenda 3-20-26](#)

[Home | CBO Alliance](#)

[Fiscal year 2024-2025](#)

[Citizens' Option for Public Safety \(COPS\) Program and Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Funds](#)

[Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act and the Youthful Offender Block Grant Program - OYCR](#)

[The Exception Organization CISA Subcommittee Presentation](#)