



State Advisory Group on Youth Justice Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 17
11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Call to Order: Welcome; Agenda Overview and Roll Call

Chair Mendoza called the meeting to order and welcomed participants, thanking the host organization, Urban Peace Institute, for offering their space for the meeting. He then passed to member Tyrique Shipp to review the agenda. OYCR staff provided instructions for participation by committee members and members of the public. Member Tyrique Shipp then took roll.

The following members attended in person: Chair Kent Mendoza, Hon. Brian Back, Tyrique Shipp, Carly Dierkhising, Dr. Tecoy Porter (who arrived after the roll call but his attendance was captured later for the record)

The following members attended virtually: Supervisor Joe Baca Jr, Carol Biondi, Dr. BJ Davis, Michelle Guymon, Michael Duncan, Montay Magic McKay (who arrived after the roll call but was not able to unmute)

The following members were not present: Dante Williams, Dr Mimi Silbert, Susan Sands, Isaiah Barber, Vice Chair Franco

Chair Mendoza then introduced Josh Green from Urban Peace Institute (UPI). He welcomed SAG YJ committee members and members of the public to their space and shared a brief overview of the work UPI does, focused on keeping communities safe and transforming justice systems.

Action Item: Approval of March 2026 Minutes

Chair Mendoza called for the action item of approving the Minutes from the March 2026 meeting. Supervisor Joe Baca moved to approve the minutes. Tyrique Shipp seconded the motion. There were no other comments or questions. Hon. Brian Back abstained from voting since he was not in attendance at the March meeting. The minutes were approved.

Chair Updates

Chair Mendoza invited member Dr. Tecoy Porter share about his experience at the Coalition for Juvenile Justice conference in Washington DC in May, which invited State Advisory Groups and other Youth Justice Stakeholders from across the country. Dr. Porter reported that the conference was a great learning experience and highlighted specifically the impact of seeing young people involved in the work and championing solutions. He observed that the California Youth Advisory Board emerged as a great example of youth leadership at the conference. OYCR Title II Grants Manager

OYCR Informational Updates: OYCR Health Policy Division

OYCR Health Policy Division Chief Dr. Michael Massa reminded members of the five focus areas of his division: CBO capacity building, Less Restrictive Programs, Ending Girls' Incarceration (EGI), state behavior health initiatives, and educational health. He provided context that his team wanted to specifically provide an update for members around the EGI work OYCR is currently supporting in four counties: Sacramento, Los Angeles, Imperial and San Diego. He introduced Lindsay Rosenthal, a member of his team at OYCR who is also a national subject matter expert on EGI. She first shared some important updates from each of the four counties involved in the EGI initiative, all of whom have agreed to remain part of the work for a fourth year, during which they will be focused on locally driven priorities. In San Diego, the county met with a panel of young people in March 2026 and will be working to implement at least three of their recommendations for moving EGI work forward. Imperial County is in the process of serving as a rural demonstration pilot for EGI and developing solutions for how EGI can function in rural counties that may not have the same resources. Sacramento county is focused on enhancing collaboration with Sacramento State University and building new systems of diversion in that county that haven't existed up until now. She acknowledged the committee has previously expressed particular interest in the progress being made in Los Angeles county. While acknowledging some of the recent challenges, including substantial leadership changes in the past 3 years, she also noted significant progress in LA over the past 6 months, with respect to the EGI work. An EGI collaborative of over 40 stakeholders has been established, that includes multiple agencies and community-based organizations. Some of the focus areas of the collaborative's work have been reducing admission and strengthening the off-ramps by leveraging both diversion and alternative continuums of care.

In the last 6 months several key milestones with respect to the LA EGI work have included

- Strengthened collaboration between Probation, OYCR, and Beloved Village, improving communication and coordination regarding girls and gender-expansive youth.
- Probation approved an executive-level Technical Assistance Plan with OYCR, including dedicated staffing to support EGI implementation, committing to weekly interagency release planning and population review meetings informed by weekly data reports.
- Judicial officers have been trained on the Los Angeles Detention Screening Tool (LADS), with scores expected to be incorporated into detention decision-making imminently.
- In May, Los Angeles partners participated in a San Diego peer learning visit focused on alternatives to detention and community-based services.

Member Biondi asked how this work was being measured, noting her significant concerns about the population numbers of girls housed at the LA facility having increased significantly in recent years (from approximately 18 to over 50 recently) despite previous commitments to decarceration. Rosenthal noted it is currently 40 or 41 per the Board of Supervisors meeting that morning). Member Biondi further expressed concern about the access young people have to community programs and groups at the Kilpatrick facility. Rosenthal noted that decarceration is the ultimate goal and that there was significant progress in the last three months after significant stagnation and restructuring. She cited LA's commitment to a technical assistance plan and to a weekly release planning population review meeting with data reports produced every week on every young person housed at Camp Kilpatrick why they are there, how long they have been

there, what their charges are, whether they're in child welfare, and that data report should be shared transparently with DYD, the Public Defender's Office, District Attorney's Office. She noted that Probation has been working to create a team to support that effort, which has been a request in the community for years now that would help significantly increase transparency and information sharing. OYCR consultant and former Ventura Probation Chief Mark Varela noted that the probation leadership team in LA has been very receptive to the work that is currently happening.

Member Guymon asked about what percentage of time the Young Women's Freedom center was able to devote to working with parents and families to support them in preparing for their children to return home. Rosenthal noted that Beloved Village is in the process of working on an external version of their implementation report but could confirm that one of their key program components was a parent navigator to work specifically with parents and families.

Member Guymon also expressed concern about a recent Board report that indicated a high percentage of young people identified as trafficked who hadn't had a criminal arrest in over 18 months but remained in detention. She asked if the intake policy around this had changed. Rosenthal noted that the weekly population review was intended to address these exact situations and make them visible, so there was a clear shared understanding of the impact of technical violations, etc. on total population numbers.

OYCR Informational Updates: Youth Justice Committee

OYCR Title II Grants Manager Krystal Lewis gave a brief update on the work of the Youth Justice Committee and their focus areas, Diversion and Data with a focus on outcomes. More information can be found on the CWC website <https://www.chhs.ca.gov/home/committees/california-child-welfare-council/#youth-justice-committee>

OYCR Informational Updates: Title II FY2025 Application

OYCR Title II Grants Manager Krystal Lewis shared that OYCR submitted the Title II FY 2025 application on May 1, 2026, noting no significant changes (other than some minor language changes such as removing the term juvenile delinquency) to the 3-year plan that was reviewed last year and a budget of \$4.2 million, the majority of which (85%) is allocated for the 12 funded grantee programs, 10% for planning and admin and 5% for the State Advisory Group. Member Dirkhising asked if OYCR anticipated that the 2026 application would also need to be submitted this year. Lewis noted that while some preparation and preliminary thinking has been done in anticipation of the 2026 application, the date when applications will be due is not yet known. OYCR Chief Counsel Protima Pandey also noted that the SAG YJ can update the 3-year plan at any time, with a 90 day window between when the committee decides to amend it and when OYCR as the supporting agency would need to resubmit to OJJDP.

OYCR Informational Updates: Los Angeles Lawsuits

OYCR Chief Counsel Protima Pandey provided an update on three lawsuits she had previously shared information with the SAG YJ members about: the County of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County Department of Probation versus BSCC, relating to a 2024 finding of unsuitability which is moving forward with a trial setting conference in July, no further updates.. The second is a case where OYCR has been requested to submit a Friend of the Court report, relating to the Ending Girls Incarceration work in Los Angeles County, including how the depopulation plan includes diversion opportunities. The third case is the State of California

versus Los Angeles County, the in which the Attorney General filed a motion for receivership to take ownership of the juvenile halls in Los Angeles. While the court denied the motion for receivership, they did not dismiss the case and Chief Counsel Pandey provided an update on the ongoing hearings related to data collection, staffing and use of force.

Ombuds Presentations and Member Discussion

OYCR Ombudsperson Alisa Hartz shared a presentation on the ongoing work of her office, which is focused on receiving, investigating, and where possible, resolving complaints relating to incarcerated youth. The OYCR Ombuds office also conducts annual site visits to every facility in the state (required under AB 505), reports to the legislature and is rolling out trainings on the Youth Bill of Rights. Ombudsperson Hartz shared an overview of the timeline and steps involved in the process of receiving and investigating complaints, which involves an analysis of the allegation included in a complaint as it compares to relevant local and national regulations and guidelines, starting with local facility policies, Title 15 requirements and the Youth Bill of Rights, which outlines the rights of incarcerated youth in the state. In making recommendations as part of efforts to resolve cases, the Ombuds office also looks at national examples of best practice such as the Conditions of Confinement for Facilities created by Juvenile Justice Advocates International (Link shared in chat: https://www.jjadvocates.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/JJAI_2025_Detention_Standards.pdf)

Ombudsperson Hartz then shared a summary of recent data, highlighting that since 2022 the office has received 1,197 complaints as of June 15, 2026. She shared that in 2026 so far they have received 271 and project that they will receive over 600 this year. The Ombuds Office is currently finalizing the data for their 2025 Legislative report which will be available soon. She explained some of the nuances of the different findings, especially those without a decisive endpoint, including no findings, inconclusive and decline to investigate. She also shared some encouraging examples of specific complaints that were resolved, as well as the initiation of a fruitful technical assistance partnership with LA county that resulted from a complaint about family visitation. She then highlighted some of the top issues they had complaints about in 2025, including staffing, excessive force, access to medical care, safety/security issues and family engagement (visiting and phone calls).

Member Davis noted that in the data Ombudsperson Hartz shared there was at least one comparatively smaller county with a high number of complaints and asked about why this smaller county might be an outlier in relation to the higher number of complaints for its population size. Hartz explained that they want counties to make youth aware of their rights and to have access to both the local grievance process as well as the OYCR Ombuds office to share their concerns. When they see a large number of complaints received, they know that the youth do have access to those channels, which is an important outlet for making sure their concerns are heard and addressed. She also noted that it is important to look not just at number of complaints received, but how the complaints were resolved, if they were substantiated or not (in the example Member Davis noted, the majority of the complaints were not substantiated). Member Davis also asked if there was a process in place to ensure that the findings were addressed by counties in an appropriate way. Hartz note that in the case of a Title 15 Violation, the Ombuds Office will make a referral to BSCC, which is a regulatory body and has the authority to require and enforce action plans. Outside of this, the Ombuds Office does not have the power to force counties to implement their recommendations but they can and do work with departments to support them and ensure they understand the rationale behind the

recommendations. She noted that increasing their bandwidth to be able to provide technical assistance, when counties are open to it.

Member Biondi asked a clarifying question about how the OYCR Ombuds Office receives most of their complaints and Hartz explained that it is a combination of the Ombuds help line (where they get the majority of their complaints) plus some letters from youth and in some cases emails or calls from other people (not the youth). Biondi noted a comparatively small the number of complaints from LA and noted some concern about whether youth have access to the process and/or trust that the process will result in action. Hartz explained that this is due in at least in part to the fact that the LA County Probation Department has its own Ombuds Office (led by the next presenter).

Next LA County Probation Ombudsperson Taneka Shehee began her presentation by sharing some background about her office, which was established in 2004 but became significantly more robust in 2018, thanks in part to support from the Probation Oversight Commission, as well as access to new technology that facilitated better processing and transferring of incoming calls. The office went from 200 calls in 2018 to over 1,000 calls last year in 2025. She noted that the office fields calls from parents, youth, credible messengers as well as other agencies. She further clarified that their office is not part of the facility-level grievance process, they are a separate, additional resource for incarcerated youth in LA county. While their office is part of LA County Probation, they are not part of the juvenile facility or area office, the Ombuds Office is located in Internal Affairs and able to refer relevant substantiated complaints for internal investigations as needed relating to staff, including use of force complaints. They do not share information about youth on probation externally.

Ombudsperson Shehee also provided insight into the most common types of complaints her office gets (those involving visitation) and how her office works in partnership with the OYCR Ombuds office to better support youth in LA county.

Member Davis asked Ombudsperson Shehee is she had any insight into how SB 1157 might impact youth in LA with regard to their ability to access educational programming (including college pathways such as UCLA). Shehee first of all encouraged all participants with an interest to go to the monthly LACO meetings where parents and other education stakeholders have an opportunity to task about high school credit, college credits, IEPs and other important educational access issues. She also noted that she did not have an official projection about how SB 1157 might impact access to college programing for SYTF youth but encouraged member Davis (or others) to reach out to Jesus Corral, who was leading efforts to connect LA youth with college opportunities.

Chair Mendoza then announced a break from 1:12pm PT to approximately 1:45 pm PT.

Break

Community Presentation: National Compadres Network

Maestro Jerry Tello, Founder and Director of Training with the National Compadres Network shared some of his own history and the foundation of the National Compadres Network approach to working with young people, centered in healing and culturally-relevant practice. He shared what his organization knows about working with young people and in communities that

have experienced deep trauma. NCN also works to build capacity in community-based organizations to enable them to provide consistent, culturally-rooted supports for young people and families and the kind of multi-faceted support that really enables healing: addressing physical, mental, cognitive, behavioral and emotional needs. He shared that the NCN model for guiding youth toward healing is a four-stage process and shared some examples that illustrate the approach. Finally Maestro Jerry shared several ways for interested parties can find more information about getting involved with NCN's work, including via the website, <https://nationalcompadresnetwork.org/>.

Subcommittee Updates and Discussion

Community Investment and System Accountability (CISA) Subcommittee

Dr Carly Dierkhising, subcommittee chair, shared on behalf of the CISA subcommittee that they are focused on strengthening relationships and building capacity among current and former Title II grantees and promoting transparency and accountability around funding. The subcommittee has been working to learn more directly from Title II grantees via a needs assessment, though they have had some challenges getting grantees to engage (to date they have collected 4 surveys and 2 interviews, there are 12 current grantees total). They plan to continue to gather data and share a report-out at the SAG YJ meeting in September. Member Dierkhising also shared that the CISA subcommittee gets regular updates at their monthly meetings from current grantees about their work and encouraged SAG YJ members and members of the public to attend if they see an organization they are interested in on the CISA agenda.

Policy and Legislative Advocacy Subcommittee

Dr. Tecoy Porter, Policy and Legislative Advocacy subcommittee chair, reported on behalf of the committee. The subcommittee has been focused on how Differed Entry of Judgement (DEJ) is being utilized in California. As part of that effort OYCR has submitted a data request application to the Department of Justice, requesting DEJ data including county-level trends over time by year, analysis by race, ethnicity, and gender, representation by private versus public counsel, and predisposition detention status. The requests stems from the subcommittee's intent to understand whether opportunities for diversion are being provided equitably across California. The subcommittee also continues to monitor key legislation affecting, youth justice in California, and during their recent meetings, OYCR provided briefings on several measures that address visitation, education, probation and treatment. The measures they are monitoring include AB1646 (the HUG Act), which will strengthen family engagement by ensuring youth in juvenile facilities have access to contact visitation, with restrictions permitted only when significant safety concerns exist; AB1659 which would improve reentry planning by requiring school districts to designate transition liaisons responsible for coordinating records, enrollment, and course placement for youth returning from detention facilities; AB1886, which would generally limit probation terms to 12 months for certain youth populations, while allowing courts to extend supervision when doing so is determined to be in the best interest of both the youth and public safety; AB1902 which would expand the authority of secure youth treatment facilities by extending commitment periods for individuals determined to pose significant risk and authorizing referrals to the Department of State Hospitals when appropriate; AB2178, which will create new opportunities for community colleges to partner with county probation departments to provide academic and career technical education within juvenile justice facilities; SB1009, which would require courts to consider less restrictive alternatives before detaining youth in juvenile halls or

removing youth from parental custody; and finally SB1157, which would direct the Judicial Council to establish guidelines for determining when less restrictive programs are appropriate, placements for union, noting that the subcommittee members have some serious concerns about the potential impacts of that measure. He recognized the work of the subcommittee members and congratulated member Charlie Nguyen for his recent graduation and noted that his pending departure would open a spot for another young person on the committee. He also thanked OYCR staff member Darius Parakh who would be leaving to pursue a master's outside the US.

Racial and Ethnic Disparities

Committee Chair Judge Back reported on behalf of the RED committee, reporting that the membership continues to grow and includes key subject matter expertise from California as well as national experts. He noted that the subcommittee is watching to see what happens with the Title II funding but is particularly interested in analyzing what happens at various decision points in the youth justice system. They are also hoping to be able to visit local Juvenile Justice Coordinated Councils to understand what they are working on and what data they are collecting. The subcommittee is also interested in learning from the data OYCR has collected from the Juvenile Justice Commissions (OYCR Staff member Darius Parakh reported that they have survey information from 22 JJs and are working to review the results and create a technical assistance work plan).

Restorative Justice Subcommittee

Committee co-chair Jessica Ellis presented on behalf of the Restorative Justice subcommittee. First she offered a definition for restorative justice: it is a community-based, non-punitive approach to harm that encourages accountability, healing, and repair. Restorative justice is about how you create, maintain, and mend relationships. Restorative justice processes allow the person harmed to share the impacts and what they need in order to heal and they allow the person who caused harm to articulate the reasons behind their actions, to take accountability, and invite the community to support participants through the process. She highlighted that the process is community-based because situating the process in the community allows for a more neutral facilitation around repair where control is given to parties closest to the issue. She noted that this avoids a forced binary where there is only the victim side and the offender side, it allows for the reality that often there is harm in multiple directions, and this nuance allows for a more complete place of healing. Ellis noted that restorative justice is an essential tool on the pathway to depopulation of our youth justice system and it is key at all of the decision points that can lead to racial and ethnic disparities. She provided examples of how restorative justice can provide a path for resolution before the system is involved, but also an off-ramp that relieves pressure on the system by working in collaboration with law enforcement. She emphasized that accountability does not have to be synonymous only with punishment and discomfort, with restorative justice it can center on learning and taking actions to repair harm.

Ellis shared that the Restorative Justice subcommittee is currently looking at the state's Title II plan, and making suggestions for ways in which we can bring a more holistic approach that includes repair, accountability, and healing into that plan through restorative justice. She also cited a piece of 2023 legislation (which passed in 2024), AB 60, which requires that victims and

survivors have the right to be notified about the availability of community-based restorative justice programs, and that they be notified early and as often as possible in their touch to the system. The subcommittee will also be recommending updates to the state plan to make sure that that AB 60 is reflected throughout. She finally recommended a report from March 2026 released by the Sentencing Project which provides data on how youth development-focused diversion that incorporates restorative justice component can supercharge reductions in recidivism and facilitates healing for both the young person and the individual(s) impacted by their actions.

Youth and Emerging Leaders Subcommittee

Tyrique Shipp, subcommittee chair, shared that the YEL subcommittee has done some additional recruitment of new members and is continuing to focus on LRPs and ensuring that they reflect youth input and a youth-centered approach. He also shared that they will be doing some promotion including social media and a flyer promoting the committee and their upcoming meetings.

Public Comment

Member Tyrique Shipp opened the floor for public comment.

Priscilla Stevenson, a former commissioner with the Mendocino County JJDPC and JJDPC representative to the local JJCC, shared the first public comment. She noted that on June 2nd, 2026, the court issued a notice stating that it would dissolve the Mendocino County JJDPC, effective immediately, that the JJDPC will not be performing the annual inspection for 2026, and that BSCC would be notified.

In Mendocino County, Stevenson had initially raised concerns when SB 823 funding was approved for staff time tied to follow-up on OYCR complaints. She was not aware of any other counties using SB 823 funds that way. After that, Stevenson requested agenda items on basic governance and transparency, what governs the JJCC without bylaws, how the SB823 subcommittee is structured, who controls agenda access, and whether the public has meaningful opportunities to observe and participate. The Mendocino JJDPC was then shut down at the very moment it became active again. At a time when California is publicly emphasizing proximate leadership, community engagement, and healing-centered youth justice, Mendocino County's response to an active community oversight body was disillusion. She expressed concern that if a local JJDPC can be dissolved during active reinvigoration and core oversight duties can be suspended at any time, then institutions are signaling that meaningful community power is acceptable only until it becomes active and effective. She noted this is especially serious in Mendocino County, home to 11 federally recognized tribes, and long-standing disparities affecting Native youth.

Natasha Zastko from Youth Leadership Institute, a statewide nonprofit centering youth voices and leadership shared a public comment via the zoom chat function that was read aloud but OYCR support staff. Her comment explained that her organization has youth-led juvenile justice

programs in San Francisco and Merced, supporting data research in SF Juvenile Justice Center (Juvenile Hall) with youth in custody. Regarding grievances and the ombudsperson processes, she raised two questions:

- 1) Metrics shown on grievance reports may not be reflective of complaints and issues happening in the hall because of facility staff retaliation, lack of anonymity granted to youth filing grievances, and youth sharing ineffectiveness of resolving complaints in a timely manner or at all. How is OYCR addressing these barriers to improve the grievance process to ensure safety and effectiveness?
- 2) Some serious grievances such as use of excessive force are filed and there may not be substantial “evidence” especially since some facility units do not have cameras inside the units. When it comes down to the young person’s word against the facility how is this addressed?

Announcements, Call for Agenda Items & Adjourn

Chair Mendoza called for any final announcements, thanked members and reminded them of the next meeting on September 16, 2026 in Sacramento. He then adjourned the meeting at 3:14 pm.