

# ACHIEVING 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY TRANSFORMATION

Wendy Still, MAS
Chief Probation Officer

**Alameda County Probation Department** 

July 2016 - June 2021



### **FOREWORD**

hief Wendy Still has over 37  $\mathcal{I}$  years of experience working in California's prison and probation systems. For over 32 years, she served as an executive with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), the second largest and most populous state corrections system in the world. Within CDCR she held numerous leadership positions, in which she had the privilege of designing, implementing, and expanding many practices that were specifically tailored to meet the needs of female inmates. This work consisted of the development of the Gender-Responsive Master Plan which included correctional health care services. Chief Still co-authored legislation that led to gender-responsive programming within CDCR's female institutions. In 2005, Chief Still was appointed by the Federal Prison Receiver as the Director of Rehabilitation Programs for California's 33 state prisons.

In 2010, Chief Still was named Chief Probation Officer of the San Francisco Adult Probation Department, bringing her progressive and reform-minded practices to the field of community corrections. Under her leadership, the department shifted its focus from surveillance to rehabilitation, with an emphasis on effectively integrating clients into the community by providing services to facilitate their success. In 2016, Chief Still brought her expertise

in rehabilitation and compassionate supervision across the San Francisco Bay to the Alameda County Probation Department, where she currently serves as Chief Probation Officer.

Chief Still successfully transformed the philosophies and practices of both probation departments to ones that are more supportive of clients and focused on client strengths rather than deficits. She incorporated evidencebased principles into both departments' practices, including the use of technology to facilitate data-driven decision making. She also incorporated the use of risk and needs assessment tools, standardized supervision and service delivery practices, and an overall shift towards rehabilitation through the provision of prevention and intervention services, re-entry pre-planning, and a continuum of services. Chief Still led the effort to reorganize programs and systems within both departments, with a focus on leveraging community partnerships and creating effective alliances that are strength-based and not reliant on incarceration.

In 2018, Chief Still was instrumental in collaborating with Alameda County's justice partners to gain approval from the Board of Supervisors to eliminate \$41 million in outstanding fees for probation supervision and Public Defender fees for the justice-involved population, and the Sheriff's



Work Alternative Program. Chief Still supported this effort in recognition of the fact that criminal justice financial obligations can inhibit a probation client's efforts to become financially stable and provide for themselves and their families.

Chief Still currently serves as a Prison Rape Elimination Act national civil rights and correctional conditions of confinement expert for the federal Department of Homeland Security and Department of Justice. In this role, she provides corrections and criminology consulting services to federal agencies on civil rights complaints and litigation involving detainees and inmates, gender-responsive correctional policy and programming, and women's healthcare.

Chief Still earned a Master of Advanced Studies in criminology, law, and society, from the University of California, Irvine, and a Bachelor of Science in organizational behavior from the University of San Francisco.

In 2013, under Chief Still's leadership, the San Francisco's Adult Probation Department received the American Probation and Parole Association's President's Award for progressive and innovative reforms in community corrections. She was also awarded Governing Magazine's Public Official of the Year in 2014 for her leadership in the area of criminal justice reform.

Throughout her career she has received numerous county, state, and federal awards recognizing her innovative and progressive criminal justice collaborative reform efforts.

The opinions offered throughout this manual are based on Chief Still's many years of experience leading large correctional programs and departments through periods of transformation and expansion. The insight and recommendations she has chosen to share are intended to serve as a guide for future leaders who endeavor to create a more equitable and fair justice system.

BAMAM Now

Barbara Owen, PhD
Professor Emerita
Department of Criminology
California State University, Fresno



## **WENDY STILL, MAS**

#### **CURRICULUM VITAE**

### **QUALIFICATIONS SUMMARY Criminologist and Peace Officer Prison and Community Corrections Operations and Program Expert** Recognized for developing and implementing a program vision Readily establish positive and professional rapport among executive state and local criminal justice leadership, courts, Department of Finance, legislative officials, Attorney General's Office, control agencies, union representatives, coworkers, staff, the public, the media, statewide inmate family council and inmates Ability to make sound decisions independently and under pressure of deadlines **Highly self-directed EDUCATION** University of California, Irvine, Master of Advanced Studies, Criminology, Law & Society O University of San Francisco, Bachelor of Science in Organizational Behavior **EMPLOYMENT** Chief Probation Officer, Alameda County Probation Department

Special Consultant, California Federal Prison Health Care Services August 2015 — July 2016

Camp residents, and 675 employees and a \$135 million budget

 Develop and implement a statewide strategy to create gender-responsive correctional health care services for female inmates consistent with community standards of care

 Provide leadership and direction for Alameda County Probation Department, including supervision of 10,000 adult and juvenile probationers, Juvenile Hall and

Design and establish a Women's Correctional Health Care Services Advisory
 Committee comprised of internal and external national experts and stakeholders



August 2016 – Present

## Expert Consultant, Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division July 2015 – Present

 Conduct civil rights and condition of confinement investigations, and prepare expert reports of findings and recommendations. Review and prepare prison policy analysis with recommendations

## Chief Adult Probation Officer, San Francisco Adult Probation Department March 2010 – March 2015

 Provide leadership and direction for San Francisco County and City Adult Probation Department

## Certified Department of Justice Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Auditor July 2014 – Present

► Conduct PREA audits to determine adequacy of policies, procedures, and practices, and their compliance with established standards and guidelines

## Expert Consultant, Department of Homeland Security, Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

August 2011 – Present

 Conduct detainee civil rights and condition of confinement investigations, including sexual assaults in jails, and prepare reports of findings and recommendations

#### **Expert Corrections Consultant and Criminologist**

November 2010 – Present

 Provide corrections and criminology consulting in litigation cases and for various federal agencies

## Director, Activation Management and Rehabilitation Program Corrections Services, Sacramento

September 2008 – February 2010

▶ Responsible for the oversight of all prison activation activities involving new and renovated health care prison facilities

#### California State Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)

► Associate Director, Female Offender Programs & Services, Division of Adult Institutions

October 2005 – September 2008

- Develop a strategic master plan for 11,700 California female felon offenders.
- Associate Director, Reception Center Mission, Division of Adult Institutions November 2004 – September 2005
  - Provide administrative direction, oversight, and counsel to wardens on matters related to all facets of institutional operations for 10 male and female prisons, including approximately 40,000 inmates and 13,000 staff, with budgets exceeding \$1 billion
- Deputy Director/Chief Financial Officer, Financial Services Division
   December 1999 November 2004
  - Provide financial leadership, direction, and management of a \$5.7 billion budget and 50,000 authorized positions



- ► Special Assistant to the Chief Deputy Director September 1998 – December 1999
  - Participate in a \$140 million Budget Reduction Team focused on eliminating inefficiencies
- ► Correctional Administrator, Evaluation, Compliance and Info. Systems Division February 1997 August 1998
  - Organize and direct the transfer of the Three Strikes Planning Office to the Planning and Construction Division.
- Acting Chief Deputy Warden, Associate Warden, Business Services, California State Prisons – Solano, Folsom and Wasco

June 1990 – October 1996

 Held several high-level institution operations and business positions with a variety of duties, including Chief Institutional Operations Officer, responsible for overall institutional safety and security.

	overall institutional safety and security.		
CIV	VIC POSITIONS		
_	Vice Chairperson, Roseville Homeless Commission — 1998		
PR	ROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS		
0-0-0	American Probation and Parole Assn.  National Assn. of Probation Executives  American Correctional Assn.  O Assn. of Criminal Justice Researchers  American Society of Criminology		
НС	DNORS		
0	Wendy Still Day in San Francisco by Mayor Ed Lee for over 30 years of dedicated public service – March 23, 2015		
	Chief Probation Officers of California Commendation for Distinguished Community Corrections Service - March 2015		
þ	SF Woman of the Year 2015, SF District Attorney George Gascon – March 2015		
þ	SF Public Health Hero Award, SF Public Health Department - March 2015		
þ	SF District Attorney's Office Certificate of Honor for Dedicated Public Service – March 2015		
	SF Public Defender's Office Recognition Award for Improving the Quality of Justice in SF – March 2015		
	SF Police Department's Certificate of Appreciation for Dedicated Public Service – March 2015		
þ	SF Deputy Probation Officer's Association Service Award – March 2015		
9	SF Adult Probation Distinguished Service Award - March 2015		



	SF Juvenile Probation Department Certificate of Appreciation for Innovative and Cutting-Edge Community Corrections – March 23, 2015
	Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding SF Public Service Contributions, Senator Mark Leno – March 2015
	Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition, Women's History Month Honoree, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi – March 2015
	Certificate of Recognition for Dedicated Service to Community of SF, Assembly Member David Chiu – March 2015
	Commendation for SF Women's History Month Honoree, SF Commission on Status of Women – March 2015
$\phi$	Governing Magazine Public Official of the Year - December 2014
0	National Council on Crime and Delinquency Correctional Service Award – December 2014
	American Probation and Parole Association President's Award to SF Adult Probation – July 2013
þ	Healthright 360°, San Francisco Community Partner Award – September 2012
þ	Capstone Award, University of California Irvine – June 2008
$\phi$	Letter of Appreciation from CDCR Director, Division of Adult Institutions – June 2008
	Letter of Appreciation for participation in the Strategic Action Plan, Goal 5, "Crime Prevention and Safety" from CDCR Chief Deputy Director, Field Operations – June 2005
0	Certificate of Appreciation for participation in Executive Fiscal Workgroup from Agency Secretary – November 2004
þ	Letter of Commendation from Attorney General's Office – June 1998
	Letter of Commendation for outstanding performance from A. C. Newland, Warden – February 1997
$\phi$	Management Training Program Instructor Award – 1997
$\phi$	Leadership Institute Graduate – 1995
$\phi$	Management Training Instructor Appreciation Award – 1994
$\phi$	CDCR Departmental Women's Liaison Council Appreciation Award – 1993
$\phi$	Director's Appreciation Award – 1993
$\phi$	Employee of the Month - February 1991
þ	Supervisor of the Year Award – 1990
9	Governor's Merit Award – 1980



### **MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF**



### **WENDY STILL, MAS**

∼ Chief Probation Officer ∽

over the last 37 years, I have held a variety of leadership positions within California's state and community correctional systems, and have learned many lessons about how to achieve organizational transformation within the most challenging environments. In this manual, I share these lessons and my recommendations on how to achieve

21st century transformation within the field of community corrections. This transformation can mean many things, but it predominately centers around leadership and a culture that embraces and implements progressive and sustainable evidence-based practices. Transformational and organizational change must be based on a thorough



understanding of the research about what works to change client behavior.

Research on rehabilitative practices clearly indicates that best practices in effective supervision and treatment services can result in a significant reduction in recidivism if applied with fidelity. Therefore, to generate positive outcomes, probation departments must adopt strength-based, client-centered supervision practices that have been proven through research to change behavior.

Few correctional agencies have been able to successfully change the way they function to align with best practices in this field. This is not due to a lack of knowledge regarding how to change client behavior, but rather, a result of leadership and cultural challenges that oftentimes stifle the implementation of sustainable organizational change.

Department leaders must possess the knowledge and experience to enact sustainable change in order to promote the progressive culture that is needed to align practice with evidence. This type of organizational transformation can only be sustained so long as changes in leadership build upon that which has already been built.

With this philosophy in mind, it has been nearly five years since the Alameda County Probation Department re–evaluated its focus on implementing evidence–based practices that "work" in changing behavior. In collaboration with our partners, we have made significant changes in our practices, contracted treatment services, and in the incorporation of promising practices.

The manner in which we incorporated these changes, amidst many challenges, are covered in this manual, along with other topic areas that I am hopeful you will find interesting and useful. The recommendations I make are derived from my personal and professional experiences, education, and observations. I am hopeful that the lessons I learned, during my over 42 years of public service, will provide knowledge that other correctional agencies can use to initiate and sustain organizational transformation that will lead to positive outcomes for our clients, their families, and our communities.

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	Juvenile Operations Adult Operations Administrative Enhancements  SPOTLIGHTS  Promoting Racial Equality Creating Opportunities for Young People Restorative Justice Partnerships That Support Community-Based Alternatives for Youth Focus on Youth in Extended Foster Care WE RISE Project Combating Homelessness Through Collaboration Creating Employment Opportunities Investing in Female Client-Centered Practices Awards for Innovation & Community Service Employee Appreciation & Recognition Program Keeping Our Communities Safe Honoring the Fundamental Belief that People Can Change Promoting Community Engagement & Safe Alternatives for Families 3rd Annual Thanksgiving Outreach Bikes! Bikes! And More Bikes! Combined Charities Campaign  ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS  Alameda County Superior Court Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission Partnerships



## **OUR PLEDGE**

#### **OUR VISION**

The Alameda County Probation Department is committed to making our communities the safest in the nation.

#### **OUR MISSION**

To support and restore communities by providing compassionate supervision and accountability to justice-involved youth and adults, and provide preventive and rehabilitative services through evidence-based practices and collaborative partnerships.



#### **OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

We are committed to being an organization that:

- Empowers staff and promotes respectful, forthright communication
- ▶ Engages collaboratively with our stakeholders and the community
- Promotes diversity and cultural awareness
- ▶ Embodies integrity and ethical conduct
- Uses research and data to inform practice
- Provides gender-responsive and trauma-informed care
- Strives for continuous process improvements through innovation driven by performance-based operations
- Honors the belief that people can change





## **OVERVIEW**

Probation Department, we believe it is our responsibility to promote both accountability and redemption for our clients through second chances. Second chances provide our clients with dignity and the support they need to achieve their full potential as contributing members of our community. It further allows them to attain closure and avoid future criminal behavior. In the absence of this support, our clients face significant societal and legal barriers to becoming productive members of our communities.

In collaboration with our many partners, we have helped our clients achieve success by providing the justice–involved population with opportunities to

overcome barriers through rehabilitative services, by creating supportive communities, alternatives to incarceration, and by reforming practices and policies that present barriers to second chances. This approach has produced many positive outcomes among our clients, which I will touch upon throughout the pages of this manual. By working together, as an Alameda County collaborative, we have strengthened families and improved the quality of life for those within our communities.

However, there is still much work to be done. In the years to come, we will stay the course and continue our focus on improved client outcomes through our partnerships and progressive reform.

## ABOUT THE ALAMEDA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

The Alameda County Probation
Department plays a vital role in
maintaining public safety and
strengthening youth and families in
the seventh most populous county in
California. Our mission is to support
and restore communities by providing
compassionate supervision and
accountability to justice-involved youth
and adults, while providing preventive and
rehabilitative services through evidencebased practices and collaborative
partnerships.

Our operations are overseen by three operational entities: (1) Administration, (2) Adult Operations, consisting of the Adult Field Services and Pretrial Services Divisions, and (3) Juvenile Operations, consisting of the Juvenile Field Services and Juvenile Facilities Divisions.

#### ADULTS UNDER OUR CARE

The department supervises and provides case management services to over 5,400 adults, including those:

O Released from state prison as a result of Realignment, i.e., Post-Release Community Supervision (PRCS)<sup>1</sup>

- O Placed on probation or mandatory supervision by the county court system
  - Transferred from out of the county or state

The passage of Proposition 47 in 2014 and Assembly Bill 1950 in 2020, changes in sentencing laws and practices, the increased use of diversionary programs for lower-level offenders, and the alignment of sentences to evidence-based practices, contributed to a decline in the population.<sup>2</sup> This decline, from 12,853 in 2013 to 5,448 in April 2021, represents a 58% reduction in the number of adults under the jurisdiction of the department.

As a consequence, today's adult clients are typically characterized as individuals who have been convicted of more serious offenses, and with a need for more services to enable them to lead crime-free and productive lives.

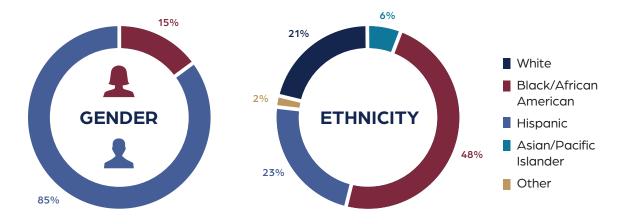


<sup>1</sup> Realignment refers to the transfer of the supervision of state parolees to the counties in response to the passage of the Public Safety Realignment Act of 2011, Assembly Bill 109 (AB 109).

<sup>2</sup> Proposition 47 implemented three changes to felony sentencing laws: (1) reclassified certain theft and drug possession offenses from felonies to misdemeanors; (2) authorized defendants serving sentences for felony offenses that would have qualified as misdemeanors under the proposition to petition the court for resentencing under the new misdemeanor provisions; and (3) authorized defendants who had completed their sentences, for felony convictions that would have qualified as misdemeanors, to apply for a reclassification of those convictions to misdemeanors. Assembly Bill 1950 shortened probation terms for most misdemeanors to one year and felonies.

## 

Graphic depicts population counts as of the last day of the calendar year. For 2021, data depicts population as of April 2021. Population numbers do not include clients without a grant of probation.



#### **5 YEARS OF INVESTMENT IN THE ADULT POPULATION**

In the past five years, the department encumbered a total of \$80,451,867 to enable community-based organizations to provide services to adults under its jurisdiction.

Fiscal Year 2016/17	\$7,126,743
Fiscal Year 2017/18	\$8,587,604
Fiscal Year 2018/19	\$5,981,034
Fiscal Year 2019/20	\$23,988,175
Fiscal Year 2020/21	\$34,768,311



#### YOUTH UNDER OUR CARE

By taking a more holistic approach in the provision of services, we have been successful in reducing the number of youth supervised in the community, Juvenile Hall and Camp Wilmont Sweeney significantly in all areas.





 $\odot$ 

2016

 $\odot$ 

2017

 $\odot$ 

2018

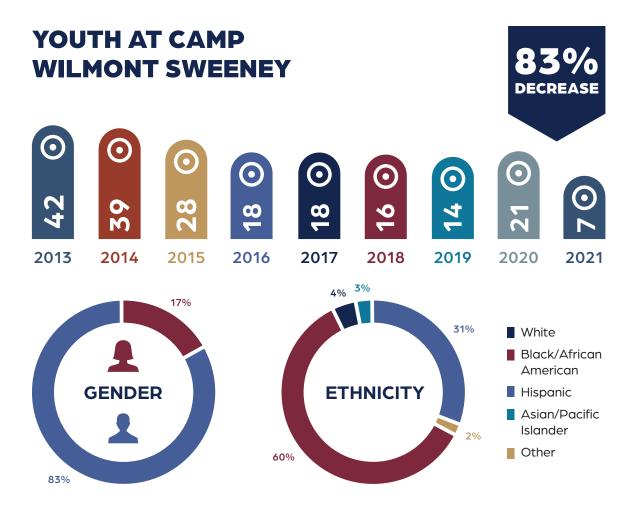




2015

2014

2013



Graphics depict population counts as of the last day of the calendar year. For 2021, data depicts population as of April 2021.

#### **5 YEARS OF INVESTMENT IN THE YOUTH POPULATION**

On average, the daily cost of incarceration for one individual is \$240, while the daily cost of delivering community programs is \$75. Within the past five years, the department invested \$35,157,773 in services provided by community-based organizations to juveniles. These organizations provided services in Juvenile Hall, Camp Wilmont Sweeney, and the community.

Fiscal Year 2016/17	\$4,965,571
Fiscal Year 2017/18	\$5,421,674
Fiscal Year 2018/19	\$8,990,337
Fiscal Year 2019/20	\$7,904,090
Fiscal Year 2020/21	\$7,876,101



## OPERATING BUDGET & STAFFING

The department's Fiscal Year 2020/21 adopted budget reflects revenue earned from state and federal reimbursements for the supervision and management of adults and youth under its jurisdiction. Net county cost reflects the portion of the department's budget funded through county monies.

**CUMULATIVE TOTAL: \$186,926,980** 

**NET COUNTY COST** 

\$134,602,203

**REVENUE** 

\$52,324,777



## 713 TOTAL AUTHORIZED STAFF FISCAL YEAR 2020/21

**NON-SWORN STAFF** 

**SWORN STAFF** 



**ADMINISTRATION** DIVISION

**ADULT FIELD** 

**PRETRIAL SERVICES DIVISION** 

**SERVICES DIVISION** 

**JUVENILE FIELD SERVICES DIVISION** 

**JUVENILE FACILITIES DIVISION** 



95

31

31

46



25

151

34

81



## MEET OUR SENIOR LEADERSHIP



## MARCUS DAWAL

Assistant Chief Probation Officer Adult Operations



## BRIAN FORD

Assistant Chief
Probation Officer

Juvenile Operations



## KAREN BAKER

Assistant Chief
Probation Officer

Administration Division



## IAN LONG

Deputy Chief Probation Officer

Juvenile Operations

Juvenile Facilities Division



## **KELLY MITCHELL**

Deputy Chief Probation Officer

Adult Operations



## **ADRIENNE CHAMBERS**

Deputy Chief Probation Officer

Juvenile Operations

Juvenile Field Services Division





## ADMINISTRATIVE & EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

#### **OFFICE OF THE CHIEF**



CHRIS PEDROTTI

Director

Professional Standards



FINA PEREZ

Executive Program

Coordinator



Administrative
Secretary

#### **JUVENILE OPERATIONS**



JESSICA FORT
Superintendent
Camp Wilmont Sweeney



JAMES RIVERS
Superintendent
Juvenile Hall



JULIE MARQUES
Assistant Superintendent
Juvenile Hall



Director
Juvenile Field
Services Division



Director
Juvenile Field
Services Division



Director
Juvenile Field
Services Division



#### **ADULT OPERATIONS**



DELEAN CARSON-WALKER

Director

Pretrial Division



Director
Adult Field
Services Division



Director
Adult Field
Services Division



ADRIANA
MANZANO-FARRELL

Director

Adult Field

Services Division

#### **ADMINISTRATION DIVISION**



Chief
Research & Evaluation



BINH CAO
Director
Finance and Contracts



Chief
Policy & Stds Compliance



SHAUNA CONNER

Director

Cmty Re-entry & Outreach



SYLVIA GIPSON
Supv. Admin. Spcl.
Admin. Support Services



SHEREEN KHAN
Director
Best Practices & Prof. Dev.



SHERRON LEE
Director
Quality Assurance



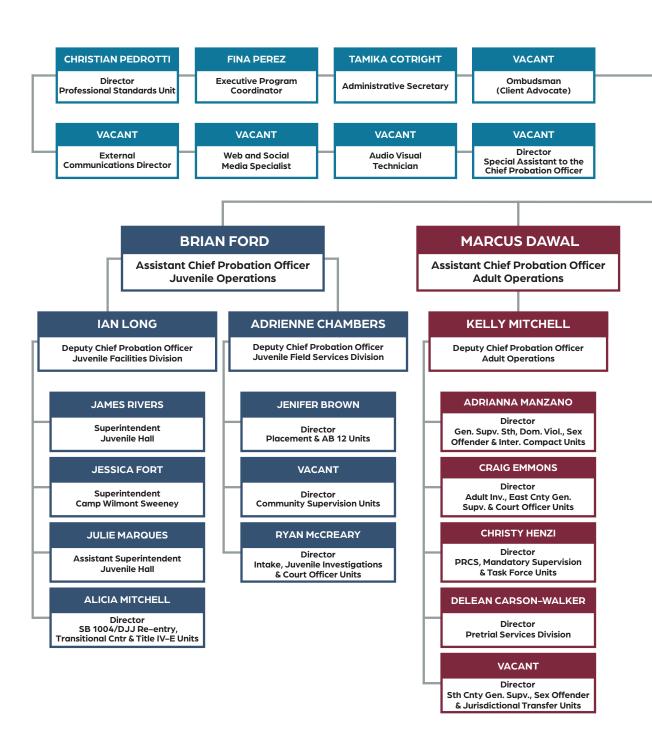
SHARLENE
SHIKHMURADOVA
Chief Administrator
Human Res. & Payroll



Manager
Information Technology



## EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





## **WENDY STILL, MAS Chief Probation Officer KAREN BAKER**

Chief Departmental Human **Resources Administrator Human Resources & Payroll Unit** 

SHARLENE SHIKHMURADOVA

#### HALEH SOLTANI

Manager Information Technology Unit

#### **SYLVIA GIPSON**

Supervising **Administrative Specialist** Admin. Support Services Unit

#### **SHEREEN KHAN**

Director Best Practices and Professional **Development Unit** 

#### **TANISHA YOUNG**

Manager Staff Development & Training Unit

#### **SHAUNA CONNER**

Director Community Re-entry & Outreach Unit

#### **VACANT**

**Assistant Chief Probation Officer Administration Division** 

> **VACANT Deputy Chief Probation Officer Community Programs**

> > Director Community Behavioral Health Liaison

#### **VACANT**

Director Program Design and **Development Unit** 

#### BINH CAO

Director Finance and Contracts

#### **DANTE CERCONE**

Policy & Standards Compliance Unit

#### **LAURA CHAVEZ**

Research & Evaluation Unit

#### **SHERRON LEE**

Director Quality Assurance Unit



### **DID YOU KNOW?**

#### THE ALAMEDA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT...

### **SUPERVISES**

**54** 

youth in Juvenile Hall

5,448

adults (includes felony and misdemeanant cases, and post-release community supervision and mandatory supervision cases)

**288** 

youth in the community

7

youth in Camp Wilmont Sweeney

Is an important element of California's criminal justice system, as the department works with virtually every adult convicted of a felony in the county, either through services to the courts or probation supervision after conviction.

### **WAS FORMED IN**

1909

as a direct result of the California Probation Law enacted in 1903, which required counties to establish separate courts for juveniles.



DECREASED THE NUMBER OF YOUTH COMMITTED TO CAMP WILMONT SWEENEY BY



Reduced the youth under our care in the community from 1,917 in 2013 to 288 by April 2021.

713 STAFF
SWORN
PEACE

1 of **59** 

COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENTS
THROUGHOUT THE STATE

Provides treatment to youth committed to Camp Wilmont Sweeney an average of

**4-9 MONTHS** 

#### IS THE 7<sup>TH</sup> MOST POPULOUS COUNTY IN THE STATE WITH OFFICES IN SEVEN LOCATIONS:



- ① Probation Center400 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94607
- ② Probation Headquarters1111 Jackson Street, Oakland, CA 94607
- 3 Camp Wilmont Sweeney 2600 Fairmont Drive, San Leandro, CA 94578
- Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center 2500 Fairmont Drive, San Leandro, CA 94578
- Las Vistas Training Center2300 Fairmont Drive, San Leandro, CA 94578
- © Hayward Probation Office 24085 Amador Street, Hayward CA, 94544
- East County Hall of Justice5149 Gleason Drive D115, Dublin, CA 94568



### FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

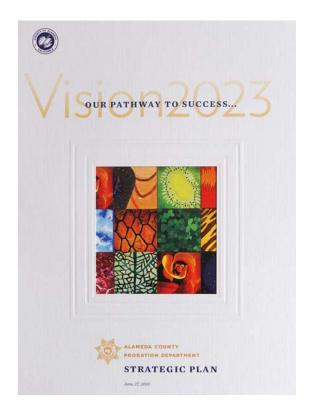
## **VISION 2023**

In late 2017, the department engaged in an intensive six-month journey towards the development of a five-year strategic plan, Vision 2023. The journey involved wisdom and collaboration that resulted in a carefully crafted plan, with 6 goals and 30 subordinate objectives.

In May 2018, my executive team and I officially adopted the plan, the first of its kind in over 14 years. This plan represents a diverse set of voices and is grounded in an understanding of the interests, needs, and concerns of staff, stakeholders, and clients. It reflects the department's role in the context of the larger community we serve and the county's overarching Vision 2026 plan.

As we operationalize Vision 2023, the department will focus its energy on strengthening the plan's impact by aligning existing practices with those proven to reduce recidivism and improve

our clients' long-term success. This plan is the path by which the department will change lives in our communities.







ALIGNMENT WITH PROBATION'S VISION 2023 GOALS

SAFE & LIVABLE COMMUNITY	Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
THRIVING AND RESILIENT POPULATION	Goals 1, 4, 5, 6
HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT	Goals 1, 2, 4, 5, 6
PROSPEROUS & VIBRANT ECONOMY	Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5





### **GOAL 1**

A commitment to the success of every client and their family



#### **GOAL 2**

A robust system of wraparound client services and continuity of care



#### **GOAL 3**

A vibrant and exemplary workforce



#### **GOAL 4**

A high functioning, data-driven organization



#### **GOAL 5**

A network of partnerships fostering a safe community



### **GOAL 6**

A victim-centered approach supporting those impacted by crime



## PROBATION'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

On March 17, 2020, California Governor Gavin Newsom issued a shelter-in-place order that limited activities, travel, and business functions to only ones considered essential. In response, the department immediately implemented protocols and set up an emergency operations center to manage the impact of the pandemic and ensure probation operations continued functioning optimally. Additionally, telecommuting became the norm for most employees, in particular, for those with children and/or elderly parents requiring extra care.

To avoid compromising the health of those entering probation offices or facilities, the department instituted the following practices, which remain in effect today:

- O Physical distancing protocols were issued for each probation facility and office
- O COVID-19 specific signage was posted at all entrances to the department's facilities and offices
- Enhanced disinfecting procedures for breakrooms, bathrooms, and other common areas were instituted
- Masks and hand sanitizers were made readily available to all staff, clients, and visitors
- Telecommuting options were made available to most staff

- O Screening for COVID-19 symptoms, prior to entry into the Juvenile Justice Center, were implemented
- O Staff exhibiting potential symptoms of COVID-19 were screened following the county's established protocols
  - Temperature kiosks were installed at all probation locations
- Tempered glass partitions were installed in cubicles where a six foot distance between employees was not possible
- O A COVID-19 safety video was produced to educate staff about safety protocols and practices

Under these circumstances, maintaining our trajectory towards 21st century transformation tested our resolve like never before. In spite of these challenges, we persevered as we worked collaboratively to maintain our passion and commitment, and minimize the disruption of services to our clients and their families.

As the restrictions associated with this pandemic were lifted, the department modified its practices while ensuring continued compliance with standards set by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, the Alameda County Health Officer, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



















Probation staff at Camp Wilmont Sweeney, Juvenile Justice Center, and probation offices.







# FEATURE PRESENTATIONS

n this section I am proud to highlight three ways in which we transformed internal operations to improve outcomes.

- Administration Division
  - Leveraged fiscal resources to impact client outcomes
- Adult Operations
  - Facilitated positive re-entry & continuity of care for adults
- Juvenile Operations
  - Improved services & outcomes for youth

Although in the ensuing pages each area is highlighted on its own, the synergy created through our combined efforts contributed to improved outcomes. The efforts alluded to in this section took many months to achieve, extensive collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, and the dedication of significant resources. Equally important to our ability to achieve these objectives was the unwavering commitment to stay the course, despite the many challenges we encountered along the way.

## LEVERAGED FISCAL RESOURCES TO IMPACT CLIENT OUTCOMES

#### PUBLIC SAFETY REALIGNMENT ACT OF 2011, ASSEMBLY BILL 109

The department's fiscal reconciliation, involving Assembly Bill 109 (AB 109), is highlighted in this section as an example of the comprehensive three-year process the department undertook to facilitate transparency and the reconciliation of funds allocated through the Public Safety Realignment Act of 2011. It is included in this manual to serve as an example of how the department's tenacity, in its quest to maximize the use of its funding for the benefit of its clientele and the community, resulted in the department's ability to strengthen operations and ultimately, client outcomes.

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2015/16, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors made the decision to invest 50% of AB 109 funds received by Alameda County in community-based organizations. This decision ensured the department was able to maintain a catalog of re-entry services for clients returning to Alameda County from state prison or county jail.

However, with this investment came a great deal of administrative workload, including tracking and reporting available funds, and managing a 50% increase in contracts and procurements. In late 2016, I recognized that resources did not exist to

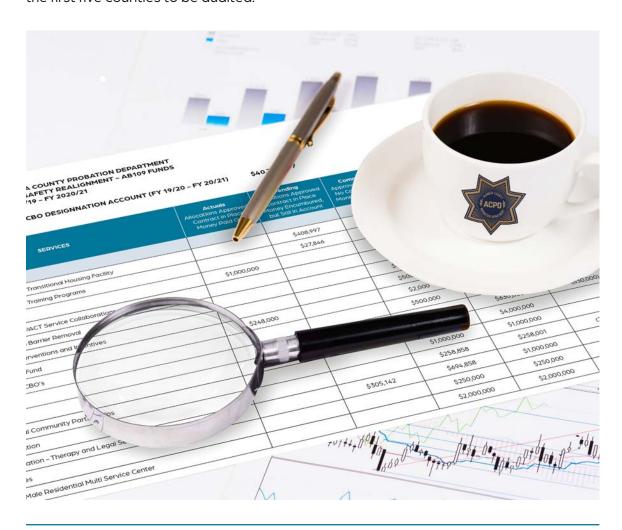
manage this workload, nor had a process been established to manage AB 109 growth funds. We also needed to ensure we had a system in place to report on the status of AB 109 funds to our stakeholders at any given time and to ensure funds were preserved for investment with our community-based organizations. Our ability to effectively accomplish this task was further exacerbated by the lack of resources to solicit bids and manage awards for over \$20 million in community-based organization contracts every year.

In Fiscal Year 2017/18, the department requested the assistance of the County Auditor-Controller and the County Administrator (CAO) to reconcile funds carried over from previous fiscal years and secure a dedicated accounting structure to account for these funds. This endeavor took three years to complete and resulted in the reconciliation of \$40.7 million in unspent community-based organization funds from Fiscal Year 2016/17 - 2018/19, as well as \$21 and \$20 million for Fiscal Years 2019/20 - 2020/21 respectively. With the CAO's assistance, a separate organization code was established specifically for AB 109 communitybased organization dollars within the department's budget to facilitate accurate accounting.



As of September 2020, the department has accurately reported the status of each prior fiscal year's community-based organization allocation to the Community Corrections Partnership Executive Committee, the Community Advisory Board, and the Fiscal and Procurement Subcommittee.<sup>3</sup> This has resulted in much needed transparency and accountability in the process, and alleviated concerns about funding from our stakeholders and providers. The reconciliation came at the most opportune time, as the state began its first audit of AB 109 allocations in 2021, with Alameda County selected as one of the first five counties to be audited.

In late 2020, the culmination of our efforts resulted in the department's authorization, through the CAO and Board of Supervisors, to activate 12 vacant unfunded positions to handle the workload associated with the management of AB 109 funds. This concession allowed us to establish dedicated AB 109 contracts administration, and research and program design resources to ensure the fidelity of programs and services earmarked for AB 109 eligible clients.



The CCPEC is established in statute and receives fiscal recommendations from the Fiscal and Procurement Subcommittee and in response to feedback from the Community Advisory Board. The CCPEC creates an annual implementation plan, with recommendations on the allocation of AB 109 funds, to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors.



# FACILITATED POSITIVE RE-ENTRY & CONTINUITY OF CARE FOR ADULTS

The ultimate goal was to create effective county and state re-entry processes and programs to help fill the gap that exists between recently released clients and sustainable success. For many incarcerated individuals, the first few hours and days after leaving prison or jail are critical. In California, inmates are often given a small amount of "gate money" and driven to the nearest bus or train station. Many are faced with the prospect of finding shelter with little or no resources. Furthermore, the structure and experience of being in prison or jail can exacerbate the lack of education, problemsolving skills, transportation, and resiliency that often led to their incarceration in the first place.

With these facts at the forefront, it is also important to recognize that the process of re-entry for clients is not a specific program or intervention, but rather, a journey that begins prior to an individual's release from incarceration and continues through their reintegration into their home community.

To that end, since 2017 the department has focused on building an adult re-entry system and supervision model where clients are provided a robust array of services and support before they leave prison or jail, while ensuring that this support system extends for the duration of their supervision period and beyond.

# PROBATION'S RE-ENTRY & COMMUNITY SUPERVISION PROGRAM

To support this objective, the department concurrently introduced the implementation of two large-scale complementary initiatives.

The first was an evidence-based services delivery model focused on strengthening the overall system through:

- O Positive client engagement and support
- Incorporation of evidence-based practices and automation
  - Tailored case plans and treatment based upon criminogenic factors
- A robust system of community resources and supports
- The establishment of collaborative partnerships

The second was made possible through a Second Chance Act Grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Redesigning the Pathways Home: A Pilot to Positive Re-entry (Pathways Home). This grant is an adult re-entry demonstration project that focuses on engaging clients in re-entry preparation and planning before they are released from custody.



# COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIPS

Prior to initiating this transformation, and to ensure all critical elements of a progressive evidence–based practice model were taken into consideration, the department identified and established ongoing collaborative workgroup meetings with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). These meetings involved subject matter experts across relevant areas impacting clients, e.g., evidence–based practices, mental and physical health, community resources, education, substance use treatment. Their purpose was to:

- Establish collaborative partnerships
- Identify and resolve barriers to client success
- Explore and implement strategies to enhance the existing service delivery model
- Leverage and integrate resources
- Implement innovative technological solutions
- Strengthen systems of care

# SERVICE DELIVERY ENHANCEMENTS

Through these collaborations, the department successfully strengthened the re-entry process and continuity of care for individuals returning to Alameda County from California state prisons and county jail. The items outlined in the foregoing section represent a culmination of the significant advancements that have resulted from this endeavor. A number of these accomplishments entailed the

execution of large–scale overarching initiatives and the dedication of extensive resources and time.

# TRAINING & EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

- Provided comprehensive evidencebased practices training. All staff were trained on progressive practices proven to reduce recidivism and their individual role in the department's ability to influence client outcomes.
  - Mandated BriefCASE training. This training enabled supervisors to coach, mentor, and reinforce evidence-based practices with their staff, and to demonstrate the proper way to apply risk reduction techniques with their clients.
  - **Established caseload management standards for adults.** Developed
    community supervision standards and
    a case management system to ensure
    our limited resources were dedicated
    to those requiring a more intensive
    level of care, support, and community
    services, e.g., medium to high-risk
    clients, sex offenders, domestic
    violence offenders, and clients with
    mental illness.
  - Deployed a customized electronic caseload management system,
    Tyler Supervision. To facilitate the department's ability to manage the case planning process, tracking of information, and delivery of services for clients, Tyler Supervision also includes automated supervisory and management reports.



- referral system. Partner Portal,
  hosted in Tyler Supervision, allows
  program referrals to be made
  electronically and facilitates two-way
  communication with service providers.
- Upgraded the department's automated case management system, Tyler Supervision, to allow probation to record information about a clients' participation in programs and services while in prison. This process allows probation to better determine the type of programs and services that should be made available to the client upon release to help them build upon gains made while in custody.
- Developed and deployed a mobile case management application,
  Probation Remote Information
  Management Environment (PRIME).
  Through PRIME, deputy probation officers can remotely access their client's information.

# COLLABORATIVE RE-ENTRY & TAILORED CASE PLANNING

Correctional Offender Management
Profiling for Alternative Sanctions
(COMPAS), a validated adult risk and needs assessment tool. Through the use of COMPAS, deputy probation officers are better equipped to tailor case plans to the risk and needs of the client. The department also utilizes the Static-99R assessment tool to guide supervision standards for sex offenders.

- Internally mandated the use of prerelease video conferences for PRCS
  clients, via Skype, or in-person or
  telephone meetings, to facilitate
  re-entry planning. These meetings
  begin within 120 days prior to a client's
  release and ensure that tailored
  case plans are developed and service
  referrals made in advance of release
  from custody.
  - Established an agreement with the CDCR to allow partner agencies and community providers to participate in video conference pre-release planning calls with probation and the client. This allows for a more comprehensive case planning process to occur through a multidisciplinary team process and for services, specific to the client, to be scheduled prior to their release.
- to transfer clients to a prison closer to their home prior to release. Shortly before release from custody, clients in alternative in-custody locations within CDCR (fire camps, protective custody yards, private prisons, state hospitals, etc.) are moved to a prison closer to Alameda County to facilitate inperson re-entry meetings with deputy probation officers, partner agencies, and community providers.

# BENEFIT ENROLLMENT IDENTIFICATION

 Established release-of-information sharing agreement to facilitate the benefit enrollment process for clients.
 This agreement allows the department to follow up with the appropriate



agency in circumstances where the benefit enrollment process was initiated for clients while in custody.

Established a process to ensure that California identification cards, which arrive at a state prison facility after a client has been released, are mailed to a designated probation supervisor for dissemination to the client(s).

This facilitates a client's ability to apply for services and supports in the community, and avoids a delay in the application for benefits.

- representative within probation to assist clients in completing and submitting or following up on benefit applications. As a result of logistical limitations, processes of this nature are not always initiated within CDCR. In such circumstances, the social services representative initiates these processes with the Social Security and Veteran's Administrations, and the county's Social Services Agency.
- Gained access to CDCR's online portal which includes information about an in-custody client's enrollment in various benefit programs prior to release. This information enables deputy probation officers and a representative from the Alameda County Social Services Agency to follow up on enrollment upon the client's release.

# MEDICAL/MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE USE

 Created a multidisciplinary team to address the medical needs of clients participating in medical treatment in prison. County clinicians receive

- information directly from CDCR to facilitate the pre-release planning process.
- Established a memorandum of understanding with CDCR to allow access to electronic medical, mental health, and substance use disorder information about clients. This ensures county agencies who provide these services within Alameda County have access to complete treatment information to avoid a delay in the provision of services to the client upon release.

# EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & RESOURCES

- forums. This enables clients to receive information and referrals from community-based organizations to programs and services based on their assessed needs, as well as care packages and gift cards. Service referrals include education, employment, mentoring, mental health services and more.
- Created a digital resource directory specific to the re-entry population through Eden I&R 2-1-1. This information is available online for clients in the community. It is also accessible to clients in custody through CDCR's automated resource directory.
- contracts. Contracts with communitybased organizations include areas such as education, family reunification, career technical education, supportive services, employment, housing, etc.



Through the integration of these systems, the department's re-entry pre-release, community supervision, and discharge planning components have been strengthened significantly. In the ensuing months, the department will continue to refine processes and build upon the existing model to ensure our practices remain current and to identify additional improvements that can be made to impact client outcomes.

# USING INNOVATION TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES

Moving forward, pioneering components of this endeavor will include three reentry and automated, ground-breaking innovations currently in process; (1) virtual reality programming, (2) Vergil, a science-based, client-centered mobile application, and (3) re-entry workbooks and a resource directory.

### **VIRTUAL REALITY PROGRAMMING**

The department partnered with Institute for the Future, one of the world's leading futures organizations, to develop virtual reality (VR) experiences for probation clients. VR offers unique opportunities for clients to experience situations or contexts that could not otherwise be easily created, but may positively impact their thoughts and behaviors. Several categories of potential VR experiences and their theories of change are described below.

often experience situations that might serve as triggers for unwanted behaviors. VR can help clients slow down and practice triggering situations in a low-risk environment so

they are better prepared to avoid a violent or illegal response when they encounter a similar situation in real life.

- Anxiety-provoking contexts: Upon re-entry, clients may experience situations that elicit extreme anxiety and prevent them from engaging in healthy behaviors. By practicing their responses in a safe environment, clients will be better prepared to manage anxiety and persist in more healthy behaviors in real life.
- Reaction to probation office and deputy probation officer: Clients do not necessarily think of visiting the probation office or their deputy probation officer as enjoyable. Clients also often lack access to environments that reduce anxiety. Participating in a creative, calming, or mindful activity through VR can: (1) create a positive association for clients with the probation office and their deputy probation officer, and (2) help clients develop familiarity with a positive environment that they can mentally access in times of stress.
- Alternate view of self: Clients may need assistance seeing what could be possible for them in the domains of career, family, or financial success. VR can allow clients to see themselves in environments or attaining goals that they previously did not consider possible. By visualizing themselves in these roles, clients may develop greater self-efficacy for and commitment to obtaining their desired outcomes.
- Future visioning: It is difficult for many people to envision the future



and make decisions that have delayed gratification. By allowing clients to embody an aged version of themselves, VR can help clients develop a connection to their future selves. In doing so, VR can help clients to think more clearly about what they want their lives to look like in the future and develop greater self-efficacy for and commitment to obtaining their desired outcomes. In doing so, clients may also increase their ability to prioritize long-term rewards over immediate gratification.

Institute for the Future will create an assortment of VR experiences for the department to use with clients based on their unique needs.

# MOBILE APPLICATION TO SUPPORT GOAL-BASED SUPERVISION

The department has partnered with ideas42, based in New York City, a behavioral science design firm, to develop a mobile application that supports clients in achieving their case plan goals during community supervision. The mobile application, known as Vergil, uses insights from behavioral science to help individuals under supervision develop goals and plans, identify related tasks, and engage with community-based organizations and government programs to complete their individualized conditions of supervision and other court-ordered responsibilities. Pathways and tasks for engaging with all of the department's contracted service providers will be included in the Vergil application. By helping clients make plans, reminding clients of appointments or next steps, and allowing members of a client-identified support group to provide

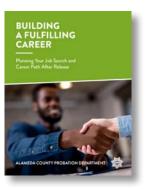
encouragement, Vergil helps clients turn their intentions (e.g., to get a job, find stable housing, etc.) into concrete actions that lead to goal attainment.

# RE-ENTRY WORKBOOKS & RESOURCE DIRECTORY

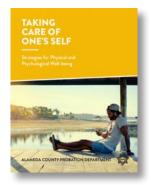
The department partnered with CDCR to create a resource directory and four self-guided workbooks (pictured below). Their purpose is to assist clients to mentally prepare for re-entry and to provide concrete information about services.













# **ADULT PRETRIAL, RE-ENTRY & CONTINUITY OF CARE MODEL**

### **ENTRY POINT:**

- 1 Jail (Pretrial, Probation, or Mandatory Supervision)
- (2) Court (Probation)
- 3 Prison (Post-Release Community Supervision, Parolees)



# PRETRIAL STRATEGIES

## IN-CUSTODY REHABILITATIVE PROGRAMMING

# RE-ENTRY PLANNING PROCESSES

Risk assessment tools are utilized to ensure individuals, who pose little to low risk to public safety, are released from custody. Clients are provided evidence-based programming within a secure environment.

Re-entry processes are implemented for clients in county jail and state prison, utilizing pre-release planning via Skype and risk and needs assessment tools.





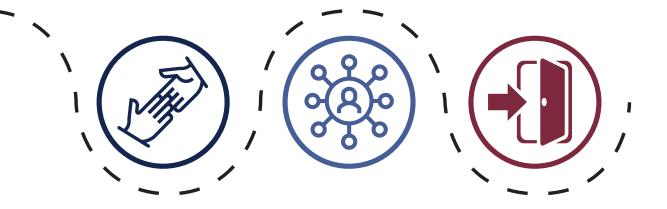
**TECHNOLOGY:** Innovative technological solutions are utilized to promote the attainment of rehabilitation goals: Vergil mobile application, virtual reality application, and 2–1–1 digital resource directory.



**RESOURCES:** Services are further enhanced through community resource forums and services through the department's Center for Re-entry Excellence.



**TRANSITION HOME:** Clients with special needs are picked up from county jail or state prison to facilitate their transition home.



### WARM HANDOFF

# COMMUNITY TRANSITION & ENGAGEMENT

### **DISCHARGE**

A "warm handoff" is initiated while clients are in custody to ensure seamless continuity of services upon release.

Clients are supervised and connected to services in the community through a state-of-the-art automated case management and its provider portal system.

Clients are connected to services available to all county residents to promote continuity of care after discharge from probation.



# IMPROVED SERVICES & OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH

Over the past decade, this country has seen a significant reduction in juvenile crime and the number of youth committed to correctional institutions or other residential programs. In previous decades, we may have assumed that juvenile crime rates could only decline as a result of increases in the number of youth detained. Fortunately, research and data now clearly indicates that limited incarceration, and matching supervision and services to an individual's level of risk and needs, helps achieve better outcomes.

Furthermore, many years of research demonstrate a link between interventions specific to youth and improved public safety. In 2019, the department began an arduous process of self-reflection, with a focus on how to incorporate best practices into our facilities. The primary objective was to create a therapeutic in-custody model that holistically considered the "whole person," within the context of a structure of integrated services encompassing a robust continuity of care system. The integration of these systems would begin the moment the youth enters Juvenile Hall and extend to their release into the community and eventual discharge from probation.

# YOUTH IN CUSTODY PRACTICE MODEL

To achieve a holistic service delivery approach, the department solicited assistance from Georgetown University's

Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR) and the Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators (CJCA) in the implementation of the Youth in Custody Practice Model (YICPM). By participating in the YICPM cohort, the department received 18 months of training and technical assistance to ensure practices in Juvenile Hall and Camp Wilmont Sweeney were research-based, developmentally appropriate, family-centered, culturally appropriate, predicated on valid assessments, and outcome driven.

The YICPM places emphasis on practice and policy related to:

Utilizing a developmental approach

Prioritizing family engagement

Focusing attention on issues surrounding racial and ethnic disparities

Addressing the trauma that youth in custodial situations have experienced

Emphasizing youth permanency as a part of case planning

Supporting the needs and wellbeing of staff

The YICPM devoted significant coverage to these issues and how to operationalize them in a custodial setting. To ensure we were incorporating the tenets of the YICPM with fidelity to the model, we created a therapeutic environment that permeates the entire facility and one which promotes



a culture of respect, trust, and care among all individuals within these settings. A special emphasis was placed on youth empowerment by giving youth a voice and the autonomy by which to encourage their independence through the reinforcement of positive skill sets.

The YICPM offered guidance on practices in four key service areas:

- O Developing the youth's case plan
- Providing the youth with services and supports during placement in the facility
  - Transitioning the youth from the facility to the community
- Supporting the youth in the community

The primary goals of the initiative focused on:

- Promoting a safe, fair, and healthy environment for youth, staff, and families
  - Preparing, equipping, empowering, and supporting staff to provide effective services
  - Increasing positive youth and family experiences and outcomes
- Enhancing community safety

# TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

CJJR and CJCA consultants held their first site visit in Alameda County in June 2019. Prior to this site visit, the department provided the consultants with extensive background information on current practices and completed a thorough self-assessment. Over the course of 18 months, the department received quarterly training on the components of the YICPM in an effort to:

O Identify gaps between current practices and best practices

- Develop and implement action plans designed to address gaps
  - Collect data to support an evaluation of the YICPM
  - Identify improvements in youth outcomes

To further strengthen our ability to carry out the tenets of the YICPM, comprehensive training was provided to staff in the areas of family engagement, reducing racial and ethnic disparities, case planning, building healthy facility environments, supporting staff, elevating youth input, academic and career technical education, physical health, programming, crisis management, gang management, and transition to re-entry planning.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Through initial cross–training, ongoing reinforcement, modeling, retraining, relevant data collection, tracking, accountability measures, as well as guidance provided by the CJJR and CJCA consultants, the department made significant improvements in its operations within Juvenile Hall and Camp Wilmont Sweeney.

### **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

In recognition of the significance of family engagement, particularly for youth in custody, the department implemented the following:

- Family engagement events are conducted at Camp Wilmont Sweeney on a regular basis to promote the value of healthy family activities, and promote the bond between the youth and family/caregivers
- To expand the pool of individuals who visit youth at the Juvenile Hall, the



definition of "family" was expanded to include non-traditional forms of family

Transportation assistance options were expanded for family members who wish to visit a youth in custody

Video conferencing was implemented as an additional option for families and/ or caregivers to visit with youth and to supplement in-person visits

Surveys are regularly administered to families to solicit concerns, recommendations for improvement, and feedback about their overall experience in their interactions with the department

Family orientation sessions were developed to enable families to understand their role and the role of the department in the juvenile justice system

Family visitation spaces were repainted and refurnished to make the overall experience more comfortable

### **RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES**

To address the potential for racial and ethnic disparities, the department provided cultural and sensitivity training for staff and youth. To further enhance this knowledge and root out the cause of racial and ethnic disparities, the department incorporated processes into its day-to-day operations that allow for a regular review of the following:

- Detention screening practices for signs of disparity
- Existing and new policies and procedures
- Facility-based decision points to assess and correct equity issues

### **CASE PLANNING**

To deliver tailored programming specific to the needs of each youth, case planning is coordinated, collaborative, and driven by evidence–based assessments. It is an approach that requires input from youth, probation staff, behavioral health and education partners, and community service providers. In partnership with these stakeholders, the department enhanced case planning practices by:

- Providing training on how to utilize validated risk and needs assessment tools to facilitate the development of tailored case plans unique to each youth
- Ensuring behavioral health screenings occur at intake for all youth by qualified personnel. A Patient Health Questionnaire is administered within four hours of entry by a youth into Juvenile Hall. Crisis referrals are addressed within 30 minutes, urgent referrals within 24 hours, and remaining intake referrals within 72 hours
- Weekly meetings occur between behavioral health and probation staff to facilitate a multidisciplinary approach to promote wellbeing among youth by exploring meaningful and engaging solutions to issues specific to youth
- Consolidating existing plans into a single point of reference, while maintaining specialized plans for certain disciplines, such as mental health and education
- Including short-term and long-term goals in case plans
  - Incorporating regular multidisciplinary team case reviews and modifying case plans based on the youth's gains and/or exploring methods to address challenges



- Ensuring case plans address needs related to education, employment/job skills, housing, family and relationships, physical health, mental health, substance use, life skills and community re-entry
- Elevating the voice of families in case planning meetings by inviting them to participate

### **HEALTHY FACILITY ENVIRONMENTS**

Within Juvenile Hall and Camp Wilmont Sweeney, the following adjustments were made:

- O Clothing alternatives are provided to youth housed in the facility to help them feel more comfortable and promote their mental wellbeing
- A positive reinforcement system was implemented whereby youth receive verbal praise and incentives (e.g., snacks and hygiene items not normally available, access to special activities in the community, access to a game room) for exhibiting positive behavior
- Facility spaces where youth reside were enhanced to promote vibrancy and comfort, to include new paint and furniture
- Chalk walls were installed to provide youth with avenues for creativity and self-expression
- in effective communication and motivational interviewing, trained staff on methods to enhance positive and productive interactions with youth
- Emergency drills are conducted on a regular basis to ensure facility staff are thoroughly prepared to respond effectively to any type of emergency

#### **STAFF SUPPORT**

To promote staff wellness and reduce stressors, the department:

- Oreated a staff wellness center at the Juvenile Justice Center in 2019 with a variety of gym and fitness equipment
- Provided training on vicarious trauma and other training intended to support staff's wellbeing
  - Required managers to check in and debrief with staff after critical incidents to help staff process the events and identify needed supports
- Increased facility managers' presence in the living units to maintain a check and balance

### **YOUTH VOICE**

The existing youth grievance system uses data and regular feedback to help staff understand the youth's perspective. To further strengthen this area, the department:

- O Updated the Youth Orientation
  Handbook to inform youth of their rights,
  the grievance process, the behavior
  support system, and available programs
  - Created a youth council to involve youth in decision-making processes with management pertaining to conditions and programs within the facility
  - Revised the department's disciplinary policy to provide youth with the ability to provide input in the disciplinary process
- Trained staff to engage youth in constructive discussion to explore, identify, and address behavioral triggers, and effective engagement strategies



### **EDUCATION & PROGRAMMING**

Education and facility programming includes a daily schedule that incorporates cognitive behavioral interventions driven by the youth's case plan, structured skill-based activities, large muscle activities, and productive educational and recreational options that youth can utilize during their free time. Additionally, the department implemented the following:

- Each unit has a published daily schedule to limit idle time
  - Staff received training to facilitate their ability to implement evidence-based interventions for youth, to include Aggression Replacement Therapy
- Parenting groups are provided for youth who are parents
- Incorporated a variety of recreational activities that are skill based and appeal to a variety of youth interests
  - Expanded programming options for youth, to include Boy's Council, Girl's Circle, substance abuse treatment. individual therapy, family therapy, religious services, Today's Future Sound (music therapy), yoga, Arms of Care (art, recreation, movement), La Familia (recovery and wellness), Beat Within (writing program), Marin Shakespeare Company (creative drama program), Write to Read, culinary science/cooking club, Disney animation program, community garden, audio engineering, music production and podcast, personal reflection/journaling, Rhythmic Minds, Girls Scouts, Boy Scouts, and **Progressive Transitions (trauma** informed care)
- O Programming for high school graduates includes options for enrollment in college courses

### MANAGING THE INFLUENCE OF GANGS

To impact the negative influence of gangs upon youth, strategies were incorporated to provide youth with a sense of belonging and cohesiveness. These strategies were also intended to promote internal confidence and give youth a stronger voice in choices that impact their future. These efforts include:

- of the Great Warrior that provide community building, leadership, and unity at Camp. The groups create connections and help build a community that provides safety, respect, nonjudgment, and a listening environment.
- Small group activities that provide youth with a sense of belonging, harmony, and unity at the Juvenile Hall
- Opportunities for mediation and conflict resolution in order to redirect aggressive, hostile, or gang-related behavior

### TRANSITION TO RE-ENTRY

Individualized support and preparation for a youth's re-entry into the community is fostered by creating a tailored case plan and by identifying potential challenges (e.g., relapse prevention and safety planning). This individualized approach maximizes autonomy and choice, and meets the youth where they are in terms of development, risk level, and readiness to change. Prior to release, a youth's case plan is updated to reflect his or her progress, and the services they (and their family) will need for a successful transition home. The activities and processes outlined on the following page were refined and strengthened in collaboration with our many partners:



- Planning for community re-entry, focused on strength-based approaches that include a multitude of partners, begins shortly after the youth is admitted into custody
  - Engagement with youth, families, and their caregivers is solicited, encouraged, and incorporated into the decision making and case planning process to facilitate thoughtful, culturally responsive, and coordinated connections to community supports that will aid in sustaining health, safety, and success
- Administrative staff monitor programs to determine whether the programs and services youth receive in the community maintain fidelity to the YICPM

## **BUILDING UPON OUR SUCCESS**

Supported by the YICPM initiative, the department also focused its efforts on ensuring that systems are in place to build upon our success through a strategy that includes:

- A clear vision, mission, and principles statement
- A strategic action plan to implement the YICPM
- A coalition of support for system improvements among staff, youth, and family members
- An ongoing implementation plan that includes measurable steps toward ensuring long-term sustainability of reform efforts, including policy and practice development, training, staff performance evaluations, quality assurance, and outcome measurement

- A mechanism to measure the effectiveness of staff training and the identification of additional strategies to improve outcomes
  - Equipping and empowering staff to succeed through the support systems and avenues established internally
- Utilizing the department's continuous process improvement system to refine processes and improve outcomes
  - Engaging partners and stakeholders through a variety of forums

The implementation of this model facilitated opportunities for growth and thus, improved outcomes. It reflects the complexity of the tasks associated with providing youth in custody with a full range of services grounded in current research, professional standards, and best practices. Moving forward, the department is poised to continue enhancing these outcomes through the continual examination of systems and practices, in collaboration with its many partners, and through a deliberate effort to maintain fidelity to the YICPM.



Juvenile Institutional Officer Berniece Garcia



# ALTERNATIVES TO DETENTION, RE-ENTRY & CONTINUITY OF CARE MODEL



## INTAKE ASSESSMENT

## IN-CUSTODY REHABILITATIVE PROGRAMMING

EDUCATIONAL & VOCATIONAL SERVICES

An intake risk assessment tool is utilized at the Juvenile Hall to identify youth who would be better served in the community rather than in custody.

Youth are provided evidence-based programming within a secure environment, to include substance use, medical, and mental health services.

In-custody academic instruction, access to college courses, tablets with educational resources, and vocational training are provided to enhance a youth's success upon release.





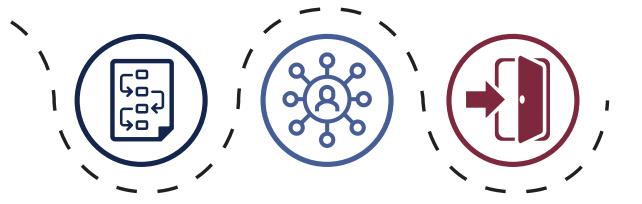
**DIVERSION:** This category entails the diversion of youth, when appropriate, to resources and services in the community to address underlying behavioral issues. The goal is to successfully disrupt further entry into the criminal justice system.



**RE-ENTRY PROCESSES:** These processes are implemented utilizing pre-discharge planning involving the youth, parent(s)/caregiver(s), service providers, city and county agencies, and the initiation of a "warm handoff" to ensure continuity of services.



**TRANSITION CENTER:** Youth and family advocacy programs, with wraparound services and mentoring, and connections to financial resources.



# PRE-DISCHARGE SERVICES

# COMMUNITY SUPERVISION & ENGAGEMENT

### **DISCHARGE**

Transition and re-entry processes are initiated prior to release that ensure youth are connected to services in the community and to enable them to build upon the gains they achieved while in custody.

Youth are supervised and connected to services in the community through a state-of-the-art automated case management and provider portal system.

Youth and their families are connected to services available to all county residents to promote continuity of care after discharge from probation.



# OUTCOME DATA - ADULT



CATEGORY		OUTCOMES		
		2019	2020	2021
Felony Probationers With New Felony Convictions	That Did Not Result in a Jail or Prison Term	719	269	13
Calendar Year 2019 Population: <b>8,163</b>	Resulting in a  Commitment to Jail	80	19	4
Calendar Year 2020 Population: <b>7,201</b> Jan' – Mar' 2021 Population: <b>4,490</b>	Resulting in a New Prison Conviction	224	58	2
Post–Release Community Supervision Cases With New Felony Convictions  Calendar Year 2019 Population: 353 Calendar Year 2020 Population: 387 Jan' – Mar' 2021 Population: 419	That Did Not Result in a Jail or Prison Term	8	54	0
	Resulting in a Commitment to Jail	105	60	24
	Resulting in a Commitment to Prison	28	25	7
Mandatory Supervision Cases With New Felony Convictions	That Did Not Result in a Jail or Prison Term	0	0	0
	Resulting in a Commitment to Jail	0	0	0
Calendar Year 2019 Population: <b>29</b> Calendar Year 2020 Population: <b>28</b> Jan' - Mar' 2021 Population: <b>28</b>	Resulting in a Commitment to Prison	0	0	0
Completion of Probation Terms (all categories)	Successful	82%	91%	92%
	Unsuccessful	18%	9%	8%
* Proposition 47 Terminations		110	22	1
** Service Referrals for Clients, i.e., ho mental health treatment, substance us		3,453	5,227	1,390

Population numbers do not include misdemeanor or pretrial cases.



<sup>\*</sup> Refers to the 2014 initiative passed by California voters which reduced the penalty for specific theft and drug related crimes from felonies to misdemeanors. P47 allows individuals to petition the superior court for a reduction of a qualifying conviction, and for termination of probation if placement on probation was a consequence of the qualifying conviction.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Referrals include multiple referrals for the same client.



CATEGORY		OUTCOMES					
		2020	2021				
Service Referrals		961	674				
Successful Camp Completions		82%	44%				
Satisfactory Adjustments		244	78				
Referrals to Probation from Law Enforcement, School Attendance Review Boards & Other External Sources							
Referred to the District Attorney's Office							
► Out-of-Custody Cases (citations issued)	489	227	61				
▶ In-Custody Cases	573	328	80				
NOT Referred to the District Attorney's Office							
▶ Out-of-Custody Cases	143	73	11				
▶ In–Custody Cases	165	60	26				
Petitions Filed	608	358	123				
Sustained Petitions	517	293	37				
* Total Violations		232	43				
** Violations Not Dismissed (subset of total violations)		117	36				

# \*\*\* SHORT-TERM RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENTS



- \* Depicts violations incurred while a youth is in the community under supervision.
- \*\* Depicts violations resulting in a sanction through the Juvenile Court.
- \*\*\* Refers to youth placed with a public or private organization, licensed by the California Department of Social Services, that provides youth with therapeutic services.





Juvenile Justice Center, San Leandro



# ACHIEVING TRANSFORMATION

hen I joined the Alameda County Probation Department as Chief Probation Officer in August 2016, the department had a staff of 657 employees, an annual budget of \$128.9 million, and a supervised population of 9,979 justice-involved adults and juveniles. Although staff, clients, and community partners had long desired a probation system that delivered successful rehabilitation programs and compassionate supervision to all clients, a number of organizational factors prevented the department from fully realizing that goal.

For years, the department experienced leadership instability and an ambiguous organizational direction that made it challenging for staff to understand their role within the context of the department. Furthermore, the department lacked consistent performance standards, modern data collection systems, an adequate organizational structure, and clear decision–making processes related to the management of clients and departmental operations. I quickly realized that a radical overhaul of practices and systems was needed in that incremental change would not suffice.

# To affect transformational change, I focused on:

- O Recruiting leaders who possessed the attributes, skill sets, tenacity, and wherewithal to manage large-scale change effectively
- O Updating the department's outdated hierarchical structure with a more lateral structure that empowered staff at lower levels to identify and implement changes in favor of positive client outcomes
- Promoting a culture that embraced new ways of thinking and remained open to ongoing change based on the latest evidence
- Building an infrastructure that relied on quality control measures, performance standards, and continuous data collection to ensure the reliable delivery of quality services to clients

# The overarching goals that guided my pursuit of radical organizational and cultural change included the:

- O Development of a strategic execution plan to clarify and operationalize the department's mission, values, and priorities
- Incorporation of progressive,
  evidence-based practices into all
  levels of departmental functions that
  could be sustained despite leadership
  and political changes
- Formation of a collaborative organizational culture focused on positive behavioral change among its clients through the use of progressive evidence-based practices

I am proud to say that over the past five years, with incredible support from the Alameda County Board of Supervisors and many internal and external partners, we have succeeded in laying the foundation for permanent and sustainable organizational change within the Alameda County Probation Department. This has enabled us to:

- O Focus our resources on moderate and high-risk clients
- Incorporate effective genderresponsive services and traumainformed practices
- Empower probation clients in decisions impacting their own rehabilitation
- Utilize technology and data to drive decision making

The next two sections in this manual expand on these themes and reflect the most valuable lessons I learned on how to effectively lead a community corrections agency towards the pinnacle of success. Each section includes background on challenges the department faced, changes we made, and my personal recommendations for other probation departments looking to effect similar change.

Before I delve into these areas, I would like to discuss two overarching topics that played a key role in our transformation — culture and leadership.



"Leadership is not a popularity contest. True leadership entails a willingness to face the consequences of unpopular and sometimes controversial decisions in order to produce long-term positive change. In my career, I have made many unpopular decisions, learned some tough lessons and made some mistakes. Even in the most challenging times, I continued moving forward guided by a commitment to the intrinsic worth of every human being and the conviction that people can change."

"That is what leadership is about."





# **CULTURE & LEADERSHIP -**

# The Keys to Organizational Transformation

ulture and leadership play an equally critical role in transforming any organization. Employees play a part in the process of changing organizational culture to one that supports a transformation. Leaders play an equally significant role in initiating and sustaining this process, through their communication with staff and modeling of desired behaviors. Within probation, effective organizational transformation that focuses on culture and effective leadership, translates into a team of professionals with deliberate intent on incorporating systems and practices that maximize positive outcomes for clients. There is clear evidence that leadership must create an organizational culture that facilitates and reinforces recidivism reduction activities and encourages and supports evidence-based practices. What that looks like is unique to each organization.

Within the Alameda County
Probation Department, I focused on a
transformational approach to leadership
that relied on changing the culture by
encouraging and motivating employees
and external stakeholders to participate
in molding a successful future for the
department. This entailed a multifaceted
strategy that delicately balanced the
need to incorporate leaders who were
visionary, and who actively promoted
an environment where staff were free
to express their thoughts and opinions,
and share creative ideas to benefit the
organization.

## **CULTURE**

Culture refers to norms of behavior and shared values among a group of individuals. Within a probation department, organizational culture is the sum of the department's values, attitudes, and behaviors related to its clients and staff. In my experience, organizational culture is more powerful in shaping staff behavior than any training, policy, or procedure, and thus, requires careful attention and intentionality from executive leadership.

Because culture is often invisible, it can be difficult to identify and change. There are several ways in which a department's culture is created and reinforced, including statements or documents concerning its vision, mission, and principles; established policy, procedures, and systems of operation; criteria used to select, reward, and promote staff; operational activities that are measured and monitored; and perhaps most importantly, the actions and behavior of its leaders.

Culture must be considered at every step of the organizational transformation process, and deliberate efforts must be made by leadership to change the aspects of the organizational culture that may be stifling progress. How staff act largely depends on the messages — both direct and indirect — that leaders and others in the organization send. To that end, to change an organization's culture, leadership must first identify attributes of the culture it seeks to create or change and



then incorporate strategies to consistently reinforce these attributes. This includes systems and practices that promote traits like collaboration, honesty, transparency, and hard work.

### **LEADERSHIP**

The leadership of an organization is equally integral to the process of organizational transformation. As leaders, we must train, practice, and reward what we want from our staff, rather than mandating or forcing compliance. Staff must have buy-in and feel invested in the department's mission and outcomes. Our creed must match our deeds.

As leaders we change behavior by what we model and reinforce. Staff cannot be expected to use new skills in interacting with their clients if, as the leadership, we do not mimic the same skills and behaviors when interacting with them.

The ultimate goal is to create a working environment where there are many overlapping and cohesive interactions among staff, all working towards the same organizational goals, and all geared

towards achieving positive client outcomes through the use of progressive evidence-based practices.

# SUSTAINABLE CULTURE & LEADERSHIP

Throughout the pages of this manual, I speak to the tools that I used to begin the process of creating a sustainable culture change through the leadership of this department. I was only able to begin the process because a large-scale and complete sustainable organizational transformation takes many years to achieve.

As criminal justice practitioners, we must understand that this process takes patience and is the result of continued deliberate steps. What those steps look like for you will largely depend on your existing practices, culture, and leadership.

"Incongruence between what we say and what we do will not only condemn us for our hypocrisy, but will derail our efforts to promote the change we profess to believe in."



Japanese Garden, Hayward





# **KEY POINTS**

### On The key to sustainable organizational change and transformation is effective leadership

An effective leader promotes a futuristic vision and knows how to turn initiatives and ideas into realities that support organizational change focused on the mission of the department. It is the key to creating and sustaining transformation. Leaders with the fortitude and personal qualities needed to create this type of change must step out of their comfort zones, honestly assess their successes and failures, aggressively pursue information and ideas from others, be flexible and maintain an open mind, and carefully and actively listen. They must also be willing to take risks and make decisions that are unpopular. Without these qualities among its leaders, organizational change efforts are likely to fail.

# Leaders must prioritize the incorporation of evidence–based practices into the fabric of the organization

Leadership involves managing the allocation of finite financial and human resources to accomplish an organization's mission as outlined within its organizational strategy. To maximize impact, leaders must be willing to allocate resources to programs and practices based on their demonstrated ability to affect positive change among the target population. In certain circumstances, this may involve rejecting practices that are comfortable or politically safe because they are not supported by the evidence. Leadership must also avoid spinning the evidence to support preconceived notions.

### O- Effective leaders must have unprecedented focus and patience

Leadership should have no illusions about what it is undertaking when it commits to incorporating and sustaining evidence-based practices and a cultural transformation within the context of its vision, mission, and guiding principles. Achieving this level of organizational change takes significant time and patience. It cannot be viewed as a momentary diversion from the organization's routine or from its response to outside pressure to change with the times.<sup>5</sup> Rather, leadership must recognize that to see a reduction in recidivism through favorable client outcomes, it must be committed to fundamental change that is often achieved over many years.<sup>6</sup> The benefits associated



<sup>4</sup> Battilana, Julie, et al. "Leadership competencies for implementing planned organizational change." *The Leadership Quarterly* 21 (2010): 422–438.

<sup>5</sup> Boonstra, Jaap J. Cultural change and leadership in organizations: A practical guide to successful organizational change. John Wiley & Sons, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Stetler, Cheryl B., et al. "Leadership for evidence-based practice: strategic and functional behaviors for institutionalizing EBP." Worldviews on Evidence-Based Nursing 11.4 (2014): 219–226.

with these changes will not be realized immediately. Funders, advocacy groups, and staff may become impatient when positive results are not produced immediately. Leaders must have the courage to stay the course despite internal or external pressure to change course when outcomes are not immediately realized.

## O--- Leaders must search for opportunities to challenge the status quo

This is especially critical in the field of community corrections, where we are always learning about and experimenting with innovative ways to improve client outcomes. Leadership must be open to piloting cutting-edge programs and ideas in its quest to improve outcomes. This is especially true in an era where technology is constantly changing how we work and communicate, and where over 40 years of research exists on "what works" in changing behavior. When staff eventually see the benefits associated with changes for themselves, they often transform into agents of change with the ability to influence peers, external stakeholders, and others who may have initially doubted the changes the organization is seeking to incorporate into the fabric of the department.

# **ORGANIZATIONAL GAPS**

During the two years prior to my appointment as Chief Probation Officer, 75% of the department's executive leadership had left the organization to accept positions elsewhere. To fill these vacancies, the former Chief promoted individuals from within the organization into some of these leadership positions, thereby creating additional vacancies within the mid-management ranks. Some of the mid-management vacancies were then filled with internal promotions, thereby creating even more vacancies within the supervisory ranks, and so forth.

A lack of succession planning and mentoring adversely impacted the department's ability to facilitate the smooth transition of newly promoted leaders. Additionally, some lacked the requisite experience, technical knowledge, and/or skills to effectively lead within their respective areas. Rather, they relied upon their instincts, experience, and wit, and carried out their duties based upon their individual perspectives about their role or as modeled by peers in similar roles. Aggravating the issue was the perception among staff that some of these promotions had been made in response to favoritism.

The cumulative effect of these issues resulted in a litany of ineffective leadership decisions or decisions made in a vacuum that negatively impacted the department as a whole. This created a lack of faith throughout the organization and external stakeholders, and made it difficult for the department's leadership to carry out their duties to the best of their abilities because of a lack of structure, role clarification, and overall strategic direction.





## WHAT WE DID ABOUT IT -

Given that successful organizations start and end with effective leadership, my priorities were to create an organizational structure designed to support the complex juvenile and adult missions of the department, establish an effective succession plan, and build trust among staff throughout all areas of the organization. In doing so, my leadership team and I engaged in several efforts to affect long-term organizational change.



# Promoted leadership competence and creativity through a combination of internal and external hires

During my first two years in Alameda County, I oversaw an organizational restructure that resulted in the creation of a number of new leadership positions within administration, adult field services, and juvenile operations. In filling these positions, I focused on recruiting leaders with diverse backgrounds from within and outside the organization. Recruiting individuals from outside the organization was not a popular decision among some internal staff who felt they should have priority for promotional opportunities. I recognized, however, that we could benefit from the perspectives and experiences of individuals from outside of the department. My goal, however, was to attract the best talent, regardless of whether the individual originated from within the department. I also recognized the importance of establishing a system for promotion that was based on merit.



### Created opportunities to identify and groom future leaders

Within any organization, opportunities for professional development are essential to producing a highly skilled and productive workforce. Developing knowledgeable, self-assured, and compassionate leaders is an investment in the department's long-term succession planning. To identify and groom staff for future leadership positions, we created the Professional Development Academy (PDA). The academy offers six sessions, over a six-month period that prepare participants for managing change and impacting organizational culture. The PDA emphasizes the importance of presenting a professional image, maintaining integrity, and taking pride in positively impacting operational outcomes. In addition, participants receive instruction about the department's organizational structure, its administrative functions, and how each unit interacts and influences the other to create a highly efficient organization. The PDA is currently available to all staff, regardless of their role in the department, to ensure they have the opportunity to develop their skill sets and to help prepare them for future opportunities. The PDA also allows existing leaders to identify staff with the potential to fill future leadership vacancies.





# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY



**August 2018 Graduating Class** 



**March 2019 Graduating Class** 



October 2019 Graduating Class pictured with Assistant Chief Brian Ford (center)







### Selected leaders with the courage to let me know when I was making a mistake

Internal leaders know to support their boss, but they also have the courage to let them know when they are making a mistake. As the Chief Probation Officer, I regularly make decisions that have wide operational impact upon the organization, and that have the potential for political ramifications beyond the scope of my area of responsibility. I cannot know and see all ramifications, and as such, I rely upon my executive team to tell me when they think I am wrong to speak up! And although I may not agree, the point is that good leaders do not sit idly by when I make decisions, but rather, they know when to chime in for the good of the cause. It took me several years, after entering the management/executive level ranks, to fully appreciate the importance of leaders with this very important attribute. Within this department, I made it a point of selecting leaders with the courage to speak up based upon my personal knowledge of their leadership attributes, their reputation, and/or in response to information I gleaned through the interview process. Additionally, to support this level of frankness among my leaders, I created, emphasized, and supported a participatory environment where giving and receiving constructive feedback is expected.



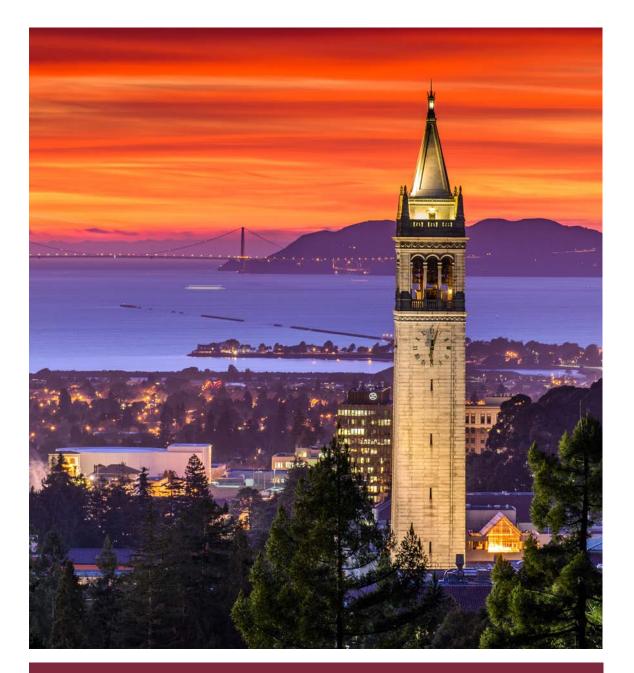
### Chose leaders who know when to lead and when to follow

During the hiring and promotional process, I made it a point of choosing leaders with the foresight to know when to lead and when to follow. I often do this through the incorporation of questions during the interview process that speak to a candidate's ability to know when to lead and when to follow. A leader who is a good follower allows teams to function more effectively because they will know when to stand down and follow, and when to lead. This attribute also enhances collaboration because leaders will be more flexible within their role, while allowing others to shine. Taking advantage of the full potential of employees is best accomplished when leaders set a tone that allow others to rise, while the leader takes a backseat. This trait became even more critical as we worked through the many challenges associated with transforming the culture to one that embraces new ways of doing business. Additionally, leaders who are great followers are often also good listeners who create an environment where their employees are not afraid to share their ideas and concerns. This sparks creativity, increases morale, and creates an environment where staff respect and support their leaders.



# **MOVING FORWARD**

As an organization, we will continue to recruit leaders who will build upon our accomplishments, and whose thinking is aligned and who are open to continue incorporating criminal justice reform practices that are progressive in nature. This includes continuing to fill our vacancies with individuals who have demonstrated the fundamental attributes of leadership that I discussed previously and who possess the experience and characteristics that are critical for long-term sustainability and success.



Sather Tower, Berkeley



# **KEY POINTS -**

# On Probation departments must be guided by a clear strategy that is outlined within their strategic plan and guided by their vision, mission, and principles

Vision, mission, and principles statements form the strategic foundation of an organization. They establish the values that govern the activities of the organization and help to communicate a department's purpose internally and externally. Successful organizations ensure their strategic direction is always in synergy with their vision, mission, and principles, given that they form the basis for all strategic planning and decision making. By developing clear and meaningful vision, mission, and principles statements, you powerfully communicate your intentions, inspire those inside and outside of the organization, and facilitate a common sense of purpose. To guide your department towards the accomplishment of its primary mission, you must also develop a living, breathing strategic plan, with clearly articulated goals and objectives. This plan should focus the department's energy and resources towards the common goal at a more granular level.

# On Probation departments must prioritize staff buy-in as a part of the development, adoption, and execution of a strategic plan

Most staff show up to work for more than just a paycheck — they want to make a difference. For this to occur, staff must understand the purpose of the organization's strategic plan, how it affects them, and expectations of them related to the plan's success. Executive management must assist staff in understanding how advancing the organization's strategic plan can support their personal goals. If staff buy—in is not prioritized as a part of the development, adoption, and execution of a strategic plan, staff may not feel invested, exhibit resistance, and lack the initiative to support its ongoing success. Equally important, the department's strategic direction and its finite components must be clearly and regularly communicated to staff. This



Unit Supervisor Shane Thomas

will facilitate buy-in and personal investment in its success through the establishment of a cultural synergy geared toward a common goal.



<sup>7</sup> Smith, R. D. (2013). Strategic planning for public relations. Routledge.

<sup>8</sup> Jung, C. S., & Lee, G. (2013). Goals, strategic planning, and performance in government agencies. *Public Management Review*, 15(6), 787–815.

<sup>9</sup> Cochran, D. S., & David, F. R. (1986). Communication effectiveness of organizational mission statements. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 14(2), 108–118.

# Probation departments must have an execution plan, divided into achievable tasks and actions, that operationalizes their strategic plan

Despite the time involved in creating a strategic plan, most strategic plans fail to become more than just a written document and a nice bookend. One of the primary reasons for this is the lack of an execution plan that is regularly tracked, measured, and evaluated for performance and outcomes. Often, very little planning goes into the implementation process of strategic plans developed by organizations. Most stop at the conceptual stage rather than spelling out specific tasks and initiatives that will be required to fulfill strategic goals and objectives.

To ensure your strategic plan guides staff's actions within your department, each goal and objective must be divided into achievable tasks and actions that are assigned to staff members and regularly tracked by executive management. If this sounds like a lot of work, it is! But it goes without saying that it is much easier to discuss, talk, and philosophize about grand conceptual plans and ideas than to enact them.

# **ORGANIZATIONAL GAPS**

Although the Alameda County Probation Department had a vision, mission, and principles statement when I joined the department in 2016, it lacked a strategic plan and a clear execution strategy. The department had previously initiated a strategic plan under the leadership of two prior chief probation officers. However, the plan had never been formally adopted, communicated or executed. As a result, the department struggled with organizational instability, confusion about the department's strategic direction, and a lack of unity among staff. The lack of stable leadership during this time period also created morale issues and a widely held perception of uncertainty and unpredictability at all levels of the department. Lastly, the vision, mission, and principles statement were outdated and did not reflect the changing times associated with criminal justice system reform within this country.

# WHAT WE DID ABOUT IT



### Modified our existing vision, mission, and guiding principles statement

A mission statement is usually an enduring message that remains constant throughout an organization's existence. When I became Chief Probation Officer, the existing mission statement had remained unchanged for 14 years. However, trends in criminal justice system reform and a shift in an understanding about what works in preventing and reducing recidivism, compelled us to revisit our vision, mission, and guiding principles. As such, I determined that prior to the development, adoption, and execution of an updated strategic plan, it was an opportune time to reflect on whether our existing vision, mission, and principles statement should be revised to reflect the values of the organization and the current criminal reform climate.



<sup>10</sup> Petersilia, J. (2012). Reforming probation and parole in the 21st century. Lanham, MD: American Correctional Association.

I engaged The Carey Group (TCG), a national consulting group that assists justice system agencies with identifying and operationalizing evidence–based solutions. Through our work with TCG, we determined that the existing vision, mission, and principles statement needed to reflect the latest criminal justice research and incorporate a holistic approach to treating the entire person. After significant thought, exploration, and analysis, our vision, mission, and principles statement was modified to reflect our belief that people can change and thrive when provided the opportunity. Our revised statement is reflected on pages 12 and 13.



### Developed and adopted a strategic plan in collaboration with a cross-section of staff

In early 2018, with a new vision, mission, and guiding principles statement, the Alameda County Probation Department engaged in an intensive six-month journey to develop a five-year strategic plan, Vision 2023. The journey resulted in a carefully crafted plan with goals and objectives that will enable the organization to enhance its service delivery model and ultimately, impact the safety of our communities through improved outcomes for probation clients. In May 2018, my executive team and I officially adopted the plan, the first of its kind in the department in over 14 years. The plan represents a diverse set of voices and is grounded in an understanding of the interests, needs, and concerns of our staff, stakeholders, and clients. To strengthen the sustainability of our strategic plan, I ensured our goals were aligned with Alameda County's Vision 2026 strategic plan.



### Developed and adopted a comprehensive five-year execution plan

Recognizing that most strategic plans fail because organizations fail to identify and execute tasks to meet strategic goals and objectives, we developed a robust execution plan. The execution plan includes specific tasks, benchmarks, and deliverables that span five years. To ensure the plan stays on track, executive management reports their progress on each initiative to me and my assistant chiefs on a quarterly basis. These meetings are an opportunity to confirm or amend priorities, modify deliverables, and reinforce accountability at all levels of the department.



11 acgov.org/probation/documents/Strategic\_Plan\_Vision.pdf

## **MOVING FORWARD**

To sustain our strategic direction, I incorporated accountability and transparency components through two primary mechanisms. First, every quarter we report our progress on each task associated with our strategic plan on our external webpage. Through this process, our staff and external stakeholders are able to track our progress, see the benefits associated with our collective efforts, and its impact on client outcomes. Secondly, our strategic plan is aligned with the county's strategic plan, Vision 2026, which ensures that we are supporting ongoing efforts led by other county departments and agencies. By doing so, we facilitated our ability to move forward, in collaboration with our justice partners, as one cohesive entity. These actions will further support our ability to obtain and maximize the use of federal, state, and local resources.



A Commitment to the Success of Every Client and Their Family



#### **Objectives**

1A. Provide clients the tools for success through the use of evidence-based case management practices, including accountability measures designed to support positive behavioral change.

Division	Task	Start Date	End Date	Completion Status	Overall Status
AFS	Implement case management standards.	Jan 2018	Dec 2021	75%	On Target
AFS	Meet and confer with labor union on the potential impacts of the case management standards.	Jan 2019	Dec 2021	75%	On Target
AFS	Ensure case plan templates are in compliance with state and federal guidelines, while also using the risk-need-responsivity (RNR) model for medium and high-risk clients.	May 2020	Dec 2021	75%	On Target ●
AFS	Revise and implement an evidence-based rewards and sanctions matrix for adult clients.	Jan 2018	Dec 2021	50%	At Risk O
JFS	Conduct quarterly reviews/audits of case plans.	Jan 2019	0.6	100%	Complete •
JFac	Conduct inter-rater reliability assessments on all validated risk/needs assessment tools at least bi-annually.	Jul 2020	O.G	25%	On Target

Image of external webpage containing the status of strategic execution tasks.



# **KEY POINTS**

### On Probation departments must collect relevant data to improve outcomes

For a probation department to assess the effect of the services it provides, it must regularly collect and analyze data on the client population it serves. Data can help an organization understand client needs and outcomes, identify gaps in services, and assess the impact of new initiatives or reform efforts. Furthermore, data can help address bias in supervision and detention practices by identifying the disproportionate impact to minorities. Data collection systems should also be integrated into the department's automated case management system.<sup>12</sup>

## On Data collected must be geared towards supporting data-driven decision making

Data systems should facilitate automated case management and data-driven decision making, rather than to solely comply with local, county, and state reporting requirements. The goal is to build data systems that support data-informed practice, transparency, and accountability, and that include the ability to collect, at a minimum, the following types of data:

- Client demographics, including age, race and ethnicity, gender, and criminogenic risks and needs
- Service and program referrals
- Criminal behavior, including new arrests, probation violations, revocations, and new criminal charges

# Automated case management systems should be piloted prior to expansion to refine and correct deficiencies on a smaller and more manageable scale

When undertaking projects of this magnitude and cost, it is always more desirable to pilot your automated case management system on a smaller scale before expanding it throughout the entire department. This approach will allow you to identify and correct deficiencies and shortfalls, before investing in a department-wide deployment. It also allows the department-wide solution to be implemented more quickly because many of the bugs will have already been identified and resolved. Furthermore, by implementing this technology within one area of the department, you create the opportunity to engage users of the system more closely prior to expansion.



<sup>12</sup> Przybylski, Roger K., and Kim English. "Richard P. Kern's Vision and Advocacy for Data-Driven Decision Making in the Criminal Justice System: The Foundation for Building an Interface between Social Science and the Law." Federal Sentencing Reporter, vol. 25, no. 3, February 2013, p. 159–160. HeinOnline, https://heinonline.org/HOL/P?h=hein journals fedsen25&i=171.

## On Data collection systems should be automated within the department's electronic case management system and include auto–generated reports that summarize data for executive management to review

Case management systems should be designed to auto-generate reports that summarize data, staff workload and client outcomes. This information enables line staff, supervisors, and managers to measure and manage workload and outcomes. Data in these reports should include:

Q	Caseload size
$\Diamond$	Service referrals
¢.	Probation revocations
¢.	Successful completions
$\Diamond$	Warrants
9	Out of county/state transfers

## Stakeholder input must be incorporated into the creation of your automated data collection system

It is important that the voices of those who will impact or be impacted by your systems are taken into consideration. This includes community-based organizations who utilize your system to receive program referrals, and labor unions whose members are impacted through the use of the system. Those with the potential to impact or be impacted by your data collection processes are also those most likely to impact your success in implementing it. If they are not on board, your system is already compromised. I cannot overstate the importance of this piece, as it not only enables you to create the best technological solution possible, but demonstrates transparency and effective collaboration with your stakeholders.

## On To maximize a department's ability to improve outcomes and make the most of its limited resources, a research and evaluation component must be incorporated into your organizational structure to maintain the integrity and fidelity of your systems

Probation departments should hire and train researchers to summarize and analyze departmental data necessary for informed decision making. This will enable you to redeploy resources from ineffective practices to ones that have demonstrated positive outcomes. An investment in a research and evaluation component reduces the potential allocation of finite resources towards ineffective practices. Additionally, a research and evaluation team can identify and rectify inaccuracies or deficiencies in data collected through your automated case management system.





#### ORGANIZATIONAL GAPS

Prior to 2017, the department utilized a paper-based system of recordkeeping for all client data. Data on client demographics, risks and needs, service referrals, and outcomes could not be easily summarized and reviewed by executive management to make informed decisions about caseloads or funding allocations to services and programs. Case files and critical case management information could not always be located or had to be manually located and transferred to spreadsheets. Additionally, service referrals by deputy probation officers could not be audited. This cumbersome process caused delays, errors, and inconsistencies in data used for budgeting purposes or reported to state agencies. Furthermore, the department was unable to report accurate recidivism rates due to the inadequate collection and storage of client data.

In 2017, the Alameda County Grand Jury published a report documenting inefficiencies within the department as a result of its inability to maintain case records digitally.<sup>13</sup> The report mandated that the department move from a paper-based case records system to an electronic system to increase accountability and improve workload management and evaluation.

#### WHAT WE DID ABOUT IT



#### Adopted a cloud-based case management system tailored to our needs

In January 2019, the department adopted the cloud-based case management system, Tyler Supervision, for use in the Adult Field Services Division. Tyler Supervision allows deputy probation officers to input and track information on client demographics, dates of contact, progress on case plan goals, and other descriptive data. As result of its integration with data systems from the Alameda County Sheriff's Office and Alameda County Superior Court, Tyler Supervision provides up-to-date information regarding court dates, conviction and sentencing decisions, arrests, warrants, and other critical information.

Staff can also utilize the features within Tyler Supervision to refer clients to community-based programs and services. This system also allows communication with service providers via a secure messaging system that records all conversations for future reference. Program and service providers can use Tyler Supervision to accept or decline service referrals, add clients to a waitlist, provide information regarding client enrollment, progress status and completion of services. This automated case management system can be accessed via a desktop, laptop, or mobile application, and generates automated reports



<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that although the report focused on the Adult Services Division, the same issues applied to all aspects of the department.

that allow supervisors to effectively manage units and caseloads, respond to stakeholders, and comply with critical reporting requirements. This system supports the department in making data-driven decisions about programs and policies while continuing to improve efficiency and reduce costs.



Chief Wendy Still and her executive management team are presented with the 2019 Public Sector Excellence Award for Innovation & Technology from Tyler Supervision. Left to right: Consultant Robert Ambroselli, Director Craig Emmons, Director Christy Henzi, Director Anthony Villegas, Chief Wendy Still, Director Dennis Bradshaw, Assistant Chief Marcus Dawal, Assistant Chief Karen Baker.



## Piloted our case management system extensively before expanding it departmentwide

The department elected to implement Tyler Supervision within the Adult Field Services Division before expanding it departmentwide. Implementing the system in the Adult Field Services Division led to system refinements that made the current system more responsive to the department's needs. After 12 months of development and testing, Tyler Supervision was expanded to include the Pretrial Division and Juvenile Operations in 2020. To accommodate data for Juvenile Operations, the department added fields in Tyler Supervision to capture in–custody and in–community population counts, school attendance, grades, family visitation dates, and other critical data pertaining to case management for juvenile clients.



#### Incorporated line-level, supervisory & management automated reports

With the implementation of Tyler Supervision, staff have immediate access to information for almost every aspect of adult, juvenile, and pretrial operations. Reports for internal or external stakeholders, that previously took days or weeks to generate, are now available instantly and are customizable. Real-time data can be displayed in graphs and charts using Microsoft PowerBI for easy interpretation by executives. Deputy probation officers can receive up-to-date information about client court cases, arrests, and warrants from their

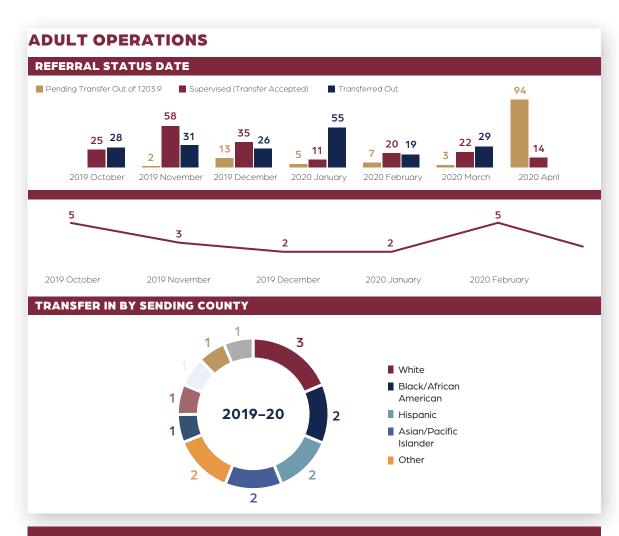


<sup>14</sup> Power BI is a collection of software services, applications, and connectors that work together to turn unrelated sources of data into coherent, visually immersive, and interactive insights.



# DATA COLLECTION, MEASUREMENT & ANALYSIS

mobile device using the PRIME application.<sup>15</sup> Staff can also generate documents using prepopulated templates and upload paper documents digitally. A user-friendly dashboard can also be customized by each user based upon their preference and data needs.



Sample of automated case management report from Tyler Supervision



## Created a Probation Statistics (ProbStat) process to promote accountability, transparency, and quality control

As the Chief Probation Officer, one of my primary objectives was the establishment of processes to measure the quality of services provided to our clients and the incorporation



<sup>15</sup> PRIME is a mobile case management application and an acronym for Probation Remote Information Management Environment.

of data-driven decision making. We achieved this objective in different areas of the department through the execution of our strategic plan, Vision 2023, the creation and execution of Tyler Supervision, the establishment of support elements to strengthen operations, and through the implementation of many other systems and programs.

However, to measure the cumulative effect of all these efforts and their impact on operations and client outcomes, we established an internal ProbStat process. ProbStat stands for Probation Statistics and is a tool that utilizes data to improve outcomes through the identification of: (1) successes that can be duplicated, (2) deficiencies that should be strategically addressed, and (3) anomalies that should be explored further. The ProbStat process includes a quarterly meeting where staff present and discuss corrective action plans intended to address and resolve outstanding issues. Through this collective process, my executive management team is well positioned to better allocate resources, measure the effectiveness of our service delivery model in all areas of the department, and improve client outcomes.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
FIELD SERVICES TOTALS						
ACTIVE CLIENTS	8161	8297	8383	8422	8426	8438
# Clients Housed (Not transient, transitionally housed, etc.)	3791	3986	4154	4300	4443	4582
# Clients Housed	46.5%	48.0%	49.6%	51.1%	52.7%	54.3%
# Clients with no Physical Default Address or CRIMS as Default Physical	2187	2214	2212	2210	2201	2223
% Clients with no Physical Default Address or CRIMS as Default Physical	26.8%	26.7%	26.4%	26.2%	26.1%	26.3%
# Clients Employed	2833	2869	2898	2908	2907	2913
% Clients Employed	34.7%	34.6%	34.6%	34.5%	34.5%	34.5%
# 1203.9s Pending Transfer Out	34	34	34	37	39	42
% COMPAS Assessments	24.5%	28.0%	30.8%	32.6%	34.2%	38.1%
% Female Clients with WRNA Assessments	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.5%	1.4%
# Clients with ITRPs	57	67	71	78	84	89
% Clients with ITRPs	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	1.0%	1.1%
# Clients Grievances	0	0	0	0	1	0

#### Sample of quarterly ProbStat reporting spreadsheet



#### Created a system by which our data is regularly shared with the public

In 2018, the department began posting individual– and aggregate–level demographic data for probation clients on its website. These public datasets are updated quarterly and contain de-identified information on probation clients' cities of residence, types of supervision, races and ethnicities, ages, and genders. The decision to share this data publicly was made to increase transparency, improve citizen knowledge of government services, and enhance collaboration between government and community partners.

The current datasets and dashboards are some of the first interactive sources of information released publicly by a probation department that provide demographic information on probation clients while protecting client confidentiality. The public, community organizations, and government agencies can now interact with and analyze





# DATA COLLECTION, MEASUREMENT & ANALYSIS

the data to better understand the characteristics of the probation population. In releasing the public datasets and dashboards, the department entered the modern era of data transparency and integrity.

Feedback from community partners and county agencies indicates that the public datasets and dashboards are well received and being used to help service providers better target their services and inform funding applications.





Example of public data available on the department's external webpage.

#### **MOVING FORWARD**

During the past five years, the department built the foundation to support effective case management and data-driven decision making. However, there is always room for improvement through the collaborative process. In the ensuing months and years, we will focus our efforts on refining Tyler Supervision and our quality control systems even further. This will include:

- Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard at every step of the development or refinement of any system with the potential to impact client outcomes
- Incorporating additional technological innovations and refinements into Tyler
  Supervision to promote accountability and transparency, and to make the system more effective, efficient, and data-driven
- Providing ongoing training to staff to maintain the integrity of the data, reinforce expectations regarding the use of the system, and obtain feedback that will allow for continuous process improvements to occur indefinitely

By staying the course indefinitely within these areas, the department is poised to continue to improve client outcomes through careful and regular reviews of client data.



Del Valle Regional Park, Livermore





# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS & SERVICE CONNECTIONS

#### **KEY POINTS**

## Establish and/or participate in community stakeholder groups or advisory panels to strengthen partnerships with local service providers

Probation departments should create community stakeholder groups or advisory panels to inform community members of its work and to solicit information about challenges and opportunities that exist in their home communities. By doing so, you engage with indigenous support groups, local businesses, neighborhood organizations, faith leaders, and local service providers. This enables your department to become more familiar with the types of services, supports, and opportunities that are available within each community. This will facilitate probation's ability to better link clients to opportunities that address their unique needs, while creating partnerships with local stakeholders for the purpose of advocating and/or establishing needed client services and supports. These relationships should be formalized and collaborative in nature, rather than haphazard referrals by deputy probation officers.

## O-r Establish service connections for clients with public agencies and community-based organizations to leverage scarce resources

Most adult and youth clients enter the probation system with many criminogenic needs that, if not addressed appropriately, contribute to continued criminality. Probation departments are often viewed as the primary agencies responsible for resolving these issues. However, probation departments cannot address all these risk factors alone. Instead, they rely on collaboration with other county departments and community–based organizations, whose staff have expertise in physical health, mental health, life skills, coaching and training, parenting skills, anger management, substance use, and other service areas critical to the success of our clients. Successful case planning, diversion, and re-entry planning require collaboration and coordination among multiple public agencies and community-based organizations. To that end, probation should deliberately and intentionally foster structured partnerships with multiple public agencies and community-based organizations to meet the treatment, housing, educational, employment, and health-related needs of clients, achieve improved outcomes, and reduce costs associated with these services.



<sup>16</sup> Petersilia, J. (2011). Community corrections: Probation, parole, and prisoner re-entry. Crime and public policy, 499-531.

<sup>17</sup> Haqanee, Z., Peterson–Badali, M., & Skilling, T. (2015). Making "what works" work: Examining probation officers' experiences addressing the criminogenic needs of juvenile offenders. Journal of Offender Rehabilitation, 54(1), 37–59.

## Host regular community resource fairs to connect clients to services provided by local city, county, state, and non-profit entities

It is important to create "one-stop resource forums" in communities where clients reside, to facilitate their enrollment in services that meet their needs and the needs of their families. Connecting clients to services, supports, and opportunities that exist in their home communities increases the likelihood that they will take advantage of those services long after they have been discharged from probation.<sup>18</sup>



#### Beyond the Barriers: Career & Resource Expo 2017

## O— Co–locate probation staff within the communities it serves to facilitate collaboration with community partners and the provision of services to clients

Probation should collaborate with community partners to establish offices within local non-profits or community-based providers to host probation staff in environments that are conducive to client engagement and/or embed deputy probation officers within the communities where the largest number of clients reside. By doing so, probation can have an "ear to the ground" in high-impact communities, garner support from key community stakeholders in helping clients turn their lives around, discern what services and supports are lacking, provide a community-based space for clients to meet with deputy probation officers, promote staff/client relationships, and allow deputy probation officers to connect clients more easily with local resources within their home community.



<sup>18</sup> Harding, J. (2000). A community justice dimension to effective probation practice. The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice, 39(2), 132–149.



#### ORGANIZATIONAL GAPS

Prior to 2017, the department had formal and informal agreements with government agencies, and contracted and non-contracted community-based organizations that were mostly inadequate given the scope of the needs of our adult and youth client populations. Additionally, community outreach efforts were insufficient, the use of community service providers required better coordination, our website did not adequately inform the community and our clients of the services available, and overall, we lacked a coordinated effort. On the whole, our service delivery model was disjointed, uncoordinated, and failed to leverage available resources at our disposal.

Furthermore, technological automated connections across related county agencies were (and are not) integrated. Compounding the issue are confidentiality protections that limit the exchange of information which often results in duplication of effort. This lack of interagency coordination and sharing of information causes a knowledge gap which often results in clients and families not receiving needed services or inappropriate services.

#### WHAT WE DID ABOUT IT

In collaboration with our county partners and community-based organizations, we provide a variety of indirect and direct services intended to support our clients and their families. We also have data sharing agreements with local and state agencies to streamline the provision of services and help us make data-driven decisions to improve outcomes. We have formal and informal partnerships with the Community Advisory Board, Community Corrections Partnership, Community Corrections Partnership Executive Committee, and the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission. Additionally, we regularly collaborate closely with Alameda County entities, including the Board of Supervisors, County Administrator's Office, District Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, Behavioral Health Care Services, Office of Education, Public Health Department, Social Services Agency, and the Superior Court.

In the past five years, we have made a deliberate effort to strengthen these partnerships and enhance our service delivery model by contracting for services in the community and participating in efforts to better leverage resources. These include the initiatives outlined in the following pages.





## Established a one–stop service center for services for adults through the Center for Re–entry Excellence

In January 2020, the department established a partnership with the Center for Reentry Excellence, a one-stop hub for adults on probation that provides a wide variety of services, including education, job placement, restorative justice, and clinical and behavioral health support services. Within the first six weeks, the Center received over 100 referrals and in accordance with COVID-19 practices, served 98% via online virtual appointments. As of April 2021, they have provided 323 probation clients with the following:

244 linkages to delivery of groceries and hygiene items

60 assessments for shelter/housing options

180 linkages to resources within the community, including education, job placement, clinical and behavioral health support



Assistant Chief Marcus Dawal, Probation Specialist Lisa Abernathy, Lao Family Community Development CEO Kathy Chao–Rothberg, and Deputy Probation Officers Ashley Caldwell and Michelle Figueroa pictured with (center) program graduate.



## Created Contracts and Re–entry Program Units to establish and oversee the provision of services

Prior to 2017, the department invested \$1,285,531 in service contracts for adults and \$3,954,260 for youth. These contracts lacked adequate performance standards, sufficient continuity of care provisions for clients to continue to receive services upon discharge, and were not aligned with the needs of our population. Furthermore, no entity existed within the department to monitor contracted service providers and ensure that our client population was receiving quality services.

In response, the department established a dedicated Contracts Unit to establish performance standards unique to each type of service contract and in collaboration with the Re-entry Program Unit, to monitor the provision of services to our adult and youth





clients. The culmination of these efforts resulted in multi-year, multi-service contracts for adults and youth. In addition, we focused our efforts on strengthening programs and linkages in the community through our coordinated efforts to expand the availability of services for our justice-involved population. This includes processes that inform our clients of services available to them and their families upon discharge from probation.



## Strengthened and implemented the re-entry process for adults, to include integrated services, data-sharing agreements across agencies, and a warm handoff

The impetus for this project was a Second Chance Act federal grant, awarded to the department in 2018. The initiative, known as Pathways Home, was expanded beyond its original scope, as outlined in our feature presentation on page 38. It focused on reducing recidivism among medium to high-risk clients released to Alameda County and includes four primary components: (1) case-planning meeting conducted by deputy probation officers with inmates via video conference before they are released from state prison; (2) virtual reality videos that allow clients to experience challenging situations in a virtual world to allow them to practice a productive resolution before encountering them in the real world; (3) a client-centered mobile application that allows clients to track tasks and appointments related to accomplishing their case plan goals; and (4) workbooks that are distributed to clients and include helpful information about the re-entry process.

In terms of the video conferencing component, in 2020, the department contracted with Drs. Amy Lerman and Meredith Sadin from the University of California, Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy to conduct an evaluation of the pre-release case-planning video conferences. Drs. Lerman and Sadin reviewed 74 client records for those who received a case-planning video conference between March 2019 and December 2020. They also reviewed 263 high-risk client records for those who did not receive a case-planning video conference. After controlling for demographics, risk and needs assessment scores, and eliminating ineligible clients, Drs. Lerman and Sadin found that 94% of clients who received a case-planning video conference prior to release reported to their probation officer within two business days, as required for post-release community supervision sentences, compared to 82% of clients who did not receive a pre-release case-planning video conference. These results suggest that completing a pre-release case-planning video conference increases the likelihood that a client will report to the department within two business days by 12 percentage points.

Drs. Lerman and Sadin also found that 96% of clients who received a case–planning video conference received at least one service referral from their deputy probation officer compared to 88% in the control group. Additionally, clients receiving a case–planning



video conference received an average of 6.2 total service referrals from their probation officer compared to 4.4 total service referrals among clients who did not receive a case-planning video conference, a difference of 1.8 total referrals.

These results indicate that the impact of pre-release case-planning video conferences on initial reporting and service referrals is highly significant. Drs. Lerman and Sadin will continue to evaluate the impact of pre-release case-planning video conferences on recidivism over the next 31/2 years as part of a larger re-entry evaluation funded by a grant from a Bureau of Justice Assistance's Second Chance Act grant program.



### Enhanced programs, systems, and collaboration among partners servicing youth at the Transition Center

The Transition Center, located at the Juvenile Hall, provides re-entry services and support to youth, families, and/or caregivers before the youth is released from custody. The Transition Center also provides support and services to youth who come to the attention of the Juvenile Court as a result of allegations of misbehavior. In the summer of 2017, the Transition Center improved its service delivery model by: (1) enhancing reentry planning processes and service referral systems, (2) creating an automated data collection process to measure the efficacy of its service referrals, and (3) redesigning the Transition Center to make it more client and family friendly. This included the creation of videos shown within Juvenile Hall waiting rooms to familiarize youthful clients and their families to services available in the community.







Deputy Probation Officer Rownee Winn and Aaron Lee reviewing and discussing a Transition Center re–entry plan.



To strengthen our understanding of client and stakeholder needs, we used surveys, focus groups, and interviews to collect information from staff, clients, and community–based organizations

To ensure the department considered the perspectives of those with the potential to impact or be impacted by the department's policies, programs, and practices, we





# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS & SERVICE CONNECTIONS

conduct regular surveys, focus groups, and interviews with staff, clients, community members, and community-based organizations. This facilitated our ability to better measure and understand the impact of our systems from the perspective of our clients, families, and stakeholders. It also helped us identify deficiencies in contracts with service providers requiring corrective action. In all research activities, we carefully followed guidelines related to confidentiality and departmental policies, including obtaining informed consent from participants.

Surveys were conducted for a range of purposes, to include:

- O Identifying needed improvements to basic Juvenile Institutional Officer training
- Conducting transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex research
  - Understanding client experiences with community supervision
- Understanding the impact of services and programs upon youth
- Improving the re-entry process from jail and prison back to the community for adult clients
- Measuring the impact of internal and external programs



Supply Clerk II Michael Redding, Supply Clerk II Justin Vierra, Departmental Facilities Manager Jon Clover, Storekeeper Gabriel Almaguer, Supply Clerk Tony Bith.



Surveys are developed by our departmental researchers, administered using best practices in human subject research, and analyzed using industry standard software.

We also conducted focus groups and interviews for the purpose of:

Updating risk assessment instruments, such as the Juvenile Detention Risk Assessment Instrument

Improving access to housing and community services for adult clients

Understanding levels of opioid use among juvenile clients

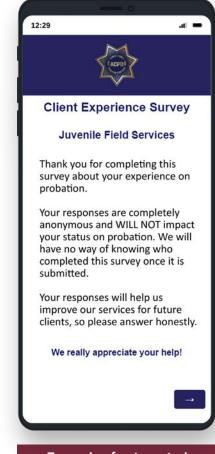
Identifying areas of staff training requiring improvement

Understanding the challenges of re–entry for adult clients

Understanding staff supervision practices in an effort to identify deficiencies

Focus groups and interviews are conducted by researchers with experience utilizing qualitative

research methods and extensive fieldwork experience with vulnerable subjects.



Example of automated client survey

#### **MOVING FORWARD**

Although we have significantly strengthened service delivery to our clients and their families in the past five years, there is much work to be done. In the ensuing months, we will focus on incorporating specific elements into data sharing agreements that will provide us with the type of information we need to facilitate informed decision making. We will also enhance community outreach efforts through our staff, contracted service providers, and media campaign outreach events intended to inform our clients of the services available.

Moreover, we will continue to work towards co-locating more deputy probation officers within communities which service the largest portion of our youth and adult probation population, and by expanding our reach through subcontracts with service providers.



#### **KEY POINTS -**

#### O--- Start small, build on successes, and do not oversimplify evidence-based practices

The complexity of the components of an evidence-based supervision model requires us to think and act strategically. Evidence-based strategies are difficult to implement and sustain because doing so requires a significant change in practice and culture. When implementing evidence-based practices, it is important to remember that change must occur incrementally. Big changes, especially a culture change within the context of evidence-based practices, require small steps and take time, usually more than we originally envisioned. It is more effective to start small and expand once the practice is functioning with fidelity. Additionally, it is also important to celebrate short-term successes to boost staff morale and promote buy-in. <sup>19</sup> It is also important to not oversimplify evidence-based practices to the point that they no longer resemble what the evidence says.

### Make a deliberate effort to avoid sending messages that imply previous efforts were ineffective

When incorporating evidence-based practices, avoid sending messages that can be interpreted as marginalizing or devaluing what staff have previously done or are currently doing. For example, the evidence has been very consistent in establishing that in the absence of other activities, contact-driven supervision, surveillance, and condition enforcement have limited ability to change behavior. When this concept is not fully explained or clearly articulated by management, it is easy for line staff to feel that what they are doing is not appreciated or valued. This component is critical to avoid entrenching resistance to change among staff. Changing our own behavior is difficult

under the best of circumstances, and when staff start to believe that agency leadership neither understands nor supports the work they have been doing, implementing evidence–based practices becomes even more challenging, if not, impossible.<sup>20</sup>

"Implementing a vision of recidivism reduction is not about finding fault with past practices, but rather, about pursuing what can be accomplished when we implement evidence-based practices with fidelity."



<sup>19</sup> Warren, Roger K. "Evidence-based practices and state sentencing policy: Ten policy initiatives to reduce recidivism." *Ind. LJ* 82 (2007): 1307.

<sup>20</sup> Aarons, Gregory A. "Transformational and transactional leadership: Association with attitudes toward evidence-based practice." *Psychiatric services* 57.8 (2006): 1162–1169.

## On Provide staff with the tools to change client behavior through state-of-the-art evidence-based training, regular reinforcement of concepts, observation, coaching, and mentoring

Evidence-based supervision strategies require skill sets that are not easy to apply and employ a different way of thinking and interacting with clients. Successful implementation depends on equipping and empowering staff with the knowledge, skills, and tools to enable them to interact meaningfully with clients and to impact behavior change. This is accomplished by providing staff with training that focuses on knowledge development (such as the risk-need-responsivity principles and the eight principles of effective intervention) and skill acquisition (such as motivational interviewing and similar cognitive behavioral interventions). Staff must be mentored and coached, and given time and support to incorporate these skills into their daily activities. The fact remains that it is what our staff do, not what we say, that will impact client behaviors and outcomes. Knowing what works and how to apply evidence-based concepts is critical, but these practices will only be effective if they are implemented properly and with consistency.

## Develop systems to ensure ongoing quality assurance and continuous process improvements are built into the design and implementation of every new practice and program

If an evidence-based strategy or practice is not consistently implemented with fidelity, it will not produce the expected results. Like many other things in life, if an evidence-based practice is not nurtured and properly supported, it will not produce the expected results. <sup>21</sup> This requires that supervisors and managers receive training and coaching to sufficiently prepare them to mentor staff to utilize core correctional practices. A performance standards system requires trained supervisors and coaches to directly observe staff when they deliver services and provide feedback regarding their strengths and areas requiring improvement. Research demonstrates that the clients of staff who receive this type of performance feedback and who are afforded opportunities for ongoing improvement through training and coaching have better outcomes than those who do not have these opportunities. <sup>22</sup>

Furthermore, supervisors must provide positive reinforcement whenever possible and deliver constructive feedback with sensitivity. If staff feel judged and criticized by this process, it will not lead to improved performance. The effective incorporation of this process will help ensure that the evidence-based practice is implemented as designed and thus poised to produce the desired results.



<sup>21</sup> Taxman, Faye S., and Steven Belenko. *Implementing evidence-based practices in community corrections and addiction treatment.* Springer Science & Business Media, 2011.

<sup>22</sup> Lowenkamp, M. S., Robinson, C. R., Koutsenok, I., & Lowenkamp, C. T. (2012). The importance of coaching: A brief survey of probation officers. Fed. Probation, 76, 36.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL GAPS -

When I joined the Alameda County Probation Department, the department's annual training plan for peace officers included a focus on evidence-based practices. However, implementation of these practices was inconsistent as a result of several key factors: (1) the existing training curriculum failed to reinforce practices in a consistent manner through on-the-job coaching and mentoring; (2) the department lacked a quality control component for supervisors to determine whether staff were applying the principles of evidence-based practices with fidelity, and (3) the opportunity for non-peace officer staff to learn about evidence-based practices was not available.

Throughout my career I have learned that most staff, who are provided formal training about evidence-based concepts and strategies, oftentimes return to their offices and continue conducting business as they always have. Training is insufficient in the absence of other activities that reinforce these concepts and ensure they are being applied as intended. To further reinforce this point, research also demonstrates that most classroom training is lost if it is not immediately applied and practiced in a day-to-day work environment. Even skills that are developed through coaching that directly follows classroom training erode if they are not continually reinforced through booster training and continuous quality improvement efforts, such as ongoing skill practice, observation, and feedback. This was certainly the case in this department where systems did not exist to ensure staff were applying the concepts learned within the classroom environment.

#### WHAT WE DID ABOUT IT



#### Trained all staff, not just our peace officers, on evidence-based practices

To infuse the concepts of evidence-based practices throughout the organization, all sworn and non-sworn staff were trained on the principles of evidence-based practices. The goal was to ensure that staff at all levels were knowledgeable about how to achieve the best outcomes possible for clients. The overarching goal allowed staff to understand why evidence-based practices are central to the department's mission and how their individual role contributes to improved outcomes through these concepts.



### Incorporated intensive training, coaching, and mentoring into the curriculum for sworn personnel

Advanced evidence-based practices training was provided to all sworn personnel and included activities, training, and skill development opportunities in core correctional practices. The training focused on building the capacity of mid-level supervisors to coach and mentor staff in these core areas. To accomplish this, The Carey Group (TCG),



a nationally recognized consulting firm that has worked with dozens of jurisdictions across the United States on implementing evidence–based practices, was commissioned to conduct training and coaching. The TCG curriculum outlined the "what" and "why" of evidence–based practices, providing basic knowledge about the research behind evidence–based practices.

After learning the basics, sworn personnel were trained on the five core competencies, which focused on the skills needed for risk reduction, building professional alliance, using skill practice to address criminogenic needs, effective case planning and management, and responding to prosocial and noncompliant behavior. The course provided opportunities for hands-on skill training in each of the competency areas and introduced sworn line staff, supervisors, and managers to two Brief Intervention Tools (BITS) worksheets to help offenders address skill deficits. To further elaborate on the four core competencies, a more detailed and specific BITS training was provided using various guides and workbooks. The goal was to help staff identify the criminogenic needs that most influences a client's behavior and to address those needs and skill deficits in clear, specific, and structured ways.

All these trainings were sequenced to build on each other and intended to complement the department's mission to reduce recidivism through improved client outcomes.



#### Built fidelity monitoring through the use of first-line supervisors into our evidencebased practices

A critical factor in an endeavor of this nature is ensuring that staff apply what they learn with fidelity. In response, supervisors and managers were trained on continuous quality improvements processes to ensure staff were applying what they learned consistently and with proficiency. This encompassed training on the BriefCASE (Coach and Advance Staff in Evidence-based practices) curriculum developed by TCG. The skill-based training introduced an 18-month curriculum designed to be delivered by the supervisor in one-hour meetings with sworn staff. This curriculum provided supervisors with the structure

to establish a collaborative coaching relationship with staff, and the knowledge and tools to teach and reinforce evidence-based practices and core competencies.

Through this training, supervisors learned how to facilitate real-time skill practice and identify skill deficits during observations of staff interactions with clients. The goal was for staff to achieve the best client outcomes possible by providing them the support necessary to facilitate their ability to apply evidence-based practices with fidelity. It also allowed supervisors and their staff



to identify skills that required improvement and to put in place corrective action plans when necessary. This process also enabled the department to decrease the likelihood that classroom training would not be lost upon returning to the office.



<sup>23</sup> BITS, or Brief Intervention Tools, were created to help corrections professionals effectively address key skill deficits particularly those associated with criminogenic needs—in short, structured interventions.





#### Created an Evidence-Based Practices Unit and a Research and Evaluation Unit

As a part of my reorganization, two units were established to build quality control processes into our existing systems.

- The Research and Evaluation Unit was created to ensure that the department's systems and practices are informed by high-quality data and the latest knowledge in the fields of community corrections and criminal justice. The unit's responsibilities cover four key areas: (1) development and management of our data systems; (2) evaluation of our programs, services, and processes; (3) exchange of research and knowledge with practitioners and researchers in the community corrections field; and (4) collaboration with the Evidence-Based Practices Unit to ensure the integration of evidence-based and evidence-informed practices into departmental procedures and processes.
- The Evidence-Based Practices Unit works closely with the Research and Evaluation Unit and is responsible for incorporating practices that have been proven effective in rigorous studies into the department's daily operations and ensuring those practices are implemented with fidelity.

Through these units, we continue to assess our practices regularly to determine impact, and whether the time, money, and effort supports improved client outcomes. Among their many duties, these units collaborate closely in gathering data for my quarterly ProbStat meetings, and posting it on our public webpage.<sup>24</sup>

#### **MOVING FORWARD**

The implementation of evidence-based approaches cannot occur all at once and with all staff. Systems of this nature must be operationalized incrementally and with patience and persistence. This was a difficult lesson for me to learn early in my career, but it is one that has served me well and will serve this department well across future changes in leadership.



<sup>24</sup> ProbStat stands for Probation Statistics and is a tool that utilizes data to improve outcomes through the identification of: (1) successes that can be duplicated, (2) deficiencies that should be strategically addressed, and (3) anomalies that should be explored further.

It goes without saying that the elements of a supervision model informed by evidence-based practices take significant time to understand and master. This includes developing the capacity of staff to accurately determine a client's risk and needs by administering a validated risk and needs assessment tool; accurately interpreting and sharing the risk and needs results with clients; understanding a client's degree of motivation; having the interactive skills to facilitate their client's willingness to change; collaborating with clients in the development of an individualized case plan; placing clients in an appropriate program to address their identified criminogenic needs; applying the principles of positive reinforcement; collaborating with a client's family and other members of the community to provide ongoing support for the client. As we continue operationalizing and reinforcing these concepts in the months and years to come, we will keep this very critical notion at the forefront lest we return to antiquated and ineffective practices.



**Berkeley Marina** 





#### **KEY POINTS -**

## On Develop a recruitment, hiring, and promotional strategy that is diverse and reflective of the community it serves

Recruit, select, and promote staff who live in or are from the surrounding communities they would be expected to serve and who understand the community's demographics and needs.<sup>25</sup> Staff who identify with and have shared experiences are more likely to develop trusting relationships with clients and ultimately, be more effective in their roles.

#### On Incorporate questions into your interview process with the end in mind

Incorporate questions about the department's strategic direction in interviews for supervisors, mid-level managers, and executives. Asking applicants about the department's strategic direction and mission – information that should be readily available on your external website – is an important indicator that can help you separate those who are simply seeking employment from those who have actually conducted their homework about the organization's mission and how it plans to get there.

## Streamline the hiring process to avoid losing highly qualified candidates to other agencies

Within this department and others that I have led in my career, I have lost many quality candidates because the hiring process took too long. Candidates have often accepted job offers with other probation departments and agencies who have completed the hiring process first, despite the fact that they were offered and accepted tentative employment with my department while pending background clearance. A matter of days can make a difference, so it is important for an organization to explore reducing days between testing, interviews, and background checks, without sacrificing hiring standards. The fact remains that within the current environment of this profession, recruiting the next generation, in particular, of peace officers, is more difficult than ever before. With the pressures, demands, and expectations of the community, finding individuals who want to "step in and stay," and who are qualified is uncertain, but not impossible.

#### On Promote racial and ethnic equality through your hiring practices

In light of the issues of racial and gender equality facing our nation, is the need to assess the presence of racial or other bias among applicants, and whether bias can be



25 Edel, S. F. (2018). "Representative Bureaucracy" In Police Hiring Practices: A Case Study Of A Diverse Police Agency.

accurately singled out and measured as a part of the hiring process.<sup>26</sup> Explicit bias – attitudes and beliefs that exist on a conscious level and that control one's judgment and behavior toward certain people – must be an automatic disqualifier.

However, the issue gets more complex when implicit bias becomes part of the equation. Implicit bias refers to bias in judgment or behavior that results from subtle attitudes and stereotypes that exist below the level of conscious awareness and which the individual does not intentionally control.<sup>27</sup> Most social scientists agree that every person harbors various types of implicit bias. As a result, finding candidates who are 100% bias–free is an unrealistic expectation. So you must look at every aspect of your hiring process, from the written and oral exam, psychological and polygraph tests, and reference checks as predictors of implicit bias to whether the candidate has the ability to perform the job the way they are being asked to in their interactions with clients, their families, the community, and stakeholders.

#### On Institute exit interviews to gather information about why staff leave

When staff leave your department to take advantage of positions externally, the organization not only loses the individual's wisdom and experience, but the financial cost and time associated with recruiting, hiring, training their replacement. Other costs associated with employee turnover include overtime required to cover vacant positions, decreased employee morale due to an inability to take time off or transfer to other units, and decreased delivery of services to the community. It is therefore important to identify why employees leave a department so efforts can be made to minimize employee turnover. Your human resources office should conduct a frank and honest exit interview with all employees before they leave to understand the factors that led to their termination. It might not influence the employee's decision to leave, but it will give you the opportunity to gather information that may help the department adjust practices moving forward to increase its retention.

#### **ORGANIZATIONAL GAPS**

When I was first appointed Chief Probation Officer in Alameda County, I noted that the department had difficulty recruiting staff to fill many of its vacancies, particularly classifications where higher education requirements exist. Through more extensive discussions with my staff and the county's Human Resource Services Agency, it became apparent that the issue was three–fold:

Our recruitment efforts were haphazard and not focused in areas where we were most likely to find interested and qualified candidates, such as higher education institutes and agencies focused on social work.



<sup>26</sup> Bendick Jr, M., & Nunes, A. P. (2012). Developing the research basis for controlling bias in hiring. Journal of Social Issues, 68(2), 238–262.

<sup>27</sup> For additional background on implicit bias and research on the topic, see "Implicit Bias," Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/implicit-bias/. For background on the impact of implicit bias on policing, see Lorie Fridell, "Psychological Research Has Changed How We Approach the Issue of Biased Policing," Subject to Debate: A Newsletter of the Police Executive Research Forum 28, no. 3 (2014), http://www.policeforum.org assets/docs/Subject\_to\_Debate/Debate2014/debate\_2014\_mayjun.pdf.



- O The hiring process took so long that we were losing desirable candidates to other agencies that were completing the background process and making employment offers faster than we were.
- There was a strong perception among staff that nepotism was rampant, thereby supporting the belief that promotions were based on personal relationships rather than merit.

#### WHAT WE DID ABOUT IT



Reduced the time frames associated with hiring and background clearance processes to avoid losing qualified candidates to other entities

In 2017, I convened the department's executive leadership, staff from the Professional Standards Unit, and our Human Resource Officer, to develop and implement a strategy for streamlining the hiring and promotional process. Our primary focus was to institute systems to eliminate inefficiencies in the hiring process and streamline the preemployment screening and background processes. In response, we:

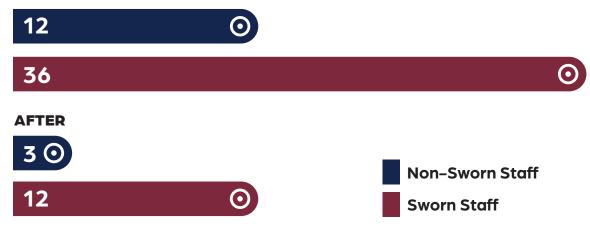
- O Incorporated into the county's civil service examination process an initial screening to identify and eliminate unqualified applicants at the front end of the application process rather than at the back end
- Implemented a secondary and more detailed review process for remaining candidates to identify disqualifying factors not readily available during the initial screening process
- Contracted additional background investigators, polygraph examiners, and physical and mental health clinicians to complete assessments and requirements associated with the background clearance of sworn candidates
- Identified and eliminated unnecessary background clearance requirements for nonsworn applicants that were contributing to hiring delays and creating a significant backlog in the processing of sworn and non-sworn candidate packets

Through these refinements, the department was able to focus its limited resources on only those who had successfully passed the multiple phases of the hiring process (initial background questionnaire, application review, testing, hiring interview, criminal rap sheet background check, reference checks). These actions alone resulted in a marked reduction in the amount of time it took for qualified candidates to clear the entirety of the hiring and background process from 36 to 12 weeks for sworn staff, and from 12 to 3 weeks for non-sworn staff.



## REDUCTIONS IN BACKGROUND CLEARANCE TIME FRAMES (In Weeks)

#### **BEFORE**





Incorporated a comprehensive strategy into the hiring and promotional selection process to recruit, retain, and hire only the most qualified candidates

In my career, I have encountered candidates who have the requisite experience and education and who perform well during the hiring interview, but who are unable to perform at a high level once hired or promoted. In contrast, I have found candidates who are not good interviewees, but are exceptional employees with all of the traits, characteristics, and professional motivation to be effective. That is when a candidate's references and prior performance evaluations become critical. It is also important to ask for and check additional references provided by those on the candidate's reference list. For internal candidates, reputation should also be considered.

In our department, we prioritize hiring individuals who are committed to what we stand for. One way we accomplish this is by reviewing their work history for repeated short periods of employment, which may be reflective of a career-oriented person who is more concerned with quickly moving up the promotional ladder than someone who is committed to the department's mission. We also assess their practical experience and ability to cope with pressure, tight deadlines, and complex client demands through multipart questions asked during the interview process. We also inquire about these areas during our reference checks.



Incorporated external professionals into the interview process to promote objectivity and eliminate perceptions of favoritism

To promote transparency and objectivity into the hiring process, I placed external professionals, with no personal connection to the department, on interview panels for all levels, in particular for mid-level and executive management interview panels. This helped to extinguish much of the perception that hires and promotions were based on favoritism rather than merit, and gave me the opportunity to learn about the "behind the scenes" discussions by the panel from an unbiased credible party.







#### Incorporated elements into the hiring process to elicit implicit/explicit bias

As the head of this department, part of my responsibility is to incorporate practices that weed out employment candidates who display explicit racial bias. To address this very sensitive and important issue, background investigators within this department make it a point of reviewing different sources of information that may uncover bias. For example, investigators may look at a candidate's social media accounts for signs of explicit bias or other conduct that might call into question their suitability to be a peace officer. Although the incorporation of these methods into our hiring practices cannot totally eliminate undesirable candidates, it is an important component of our efforts to eradicate practices that could contribute to racial/ethnic inequality.



#### Tied promotions to desirable performance traits

To ensure we were selecting and promoting only the most qualified individuals into supervisory and leadership positions, I focused on the demonstration of three critical traits: (1) requisite skills, (2) a commitment to organizational goals and objectives, and (3) behavior that is consistent with embracing evidence–based practices in their everyday work.

I partly accomplish this objective by using outcomes associated with the ProbStat process, automated performance reports generated through our Tyler Supervision case management system, quality control reports generated by the Research and Evaluation Unit, and other internal quality control mechanisms that we have put in place to assess staff performance at an individual level. Through these systems, I am able to glean information, at the individual level, that speaks to behaviors associated with that commitment.



#### Incorporated exit interviews to inform future recruitment and retention efforts

Within this organization, the department's human resource officers conduct exit interviews for employees leaving the department. Employees are asked to participate and over half agree to do so. A written questionnaire is also made available to solicit feedback. The department's Chief Human Resources Officer and I review the questionnaires, and depending on the responses, I may personally follow up with the employee prior to their departure to request clarification via a face–to–face discussion. This process of obtaining feedback from employees who are terminating their employment is one that I have always prioritized. I have learned a lot from exit interviews, including the impact organizational culture has on the decision of some staff to leave.



EXIT INT	UNTY ERVIEW Q	JESTIO	NNAII	RE 1	Dute:		
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Agency/Department:	gency/Department: Divisio			Loc	ation:		
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How long were you continuo Less than 1 year	usly employed with 1 to 5 years	the departn		11 to 20 year	s More	than 20 yes	
Have you accepted another jo	b? Yes No	If yes, is t	he job in tl	ne same can	er field?	Yes 📗	
Better training opportunities Career change Relocating out of the area Better commute Schedule and hours		Difficult wor Dissatisfactio Retirement Other (please	a with curre	nt role/career	path [		
C. Job Experience at  Please check the option that i  Job was challenging  There were sufficient opportunitie Workfood was manageable Sufficient resources and staffer My colleagues listened and appre I had access to adequate training i My work will weeked well togeth.	ses of advancement e available inted my suggestions and development		Agree	Neutral, or N/A	b experienc Disagree	Strongly Disagree	

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The salary was adequate and competitive in relation to	Agree		or N/A		Disagree			
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Had sufficient knowledge of the job	Agree		or N/A		Disagree			
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Encouraged and was open to suggestions					=			
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Provided adequate training and assistance								
Set clear goals and expectations								
Offered or made available relevant professional development opportunities								
Provided regular, constructive feedback								
Clearly communicated management decisions and impact								
Promoted a positive work environment								
F. Comments and Suggestions  Would you recommend Alameda County as an of Please explain:  Would you consider returning to County employ Please explain:			Yes	No No				
OTHER COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS FOI (Please use separate sheet if additional space is		ENT?						
	completing this							

#### **Alameda County Exit Interview Questionnaire**



## Administered annual organizational surveys to glean information about the health of the department

Since 2017, the department has been conducting annual organizational surveys to gather information about how well it is doing, and to solicit feedback on how we can improve. The surveys are developed and administered by George Mason University. In 2020, the survey was modified to account for the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic upon operations. Ultimately, the goal of the survey was to:

- O Measure employee satisfaction and gather recommendations related to the department's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the overall working environment
- Determine how we can increase employee engagement, clarify roles, accountability, improve communication, and working relationships
  - Determine whether employees were knowledgeable and felt comfortable applying core correctional and evidence-based practices, utilizing automated case management systems, and administering new processes intended to improve client engagement and outcomes
- Examine employee perceptions regarding our workplace climate and how they are receiving the many changes being made throughout the department, what we can do to enhance these systems, and how the COVID-19 affected employees' abilities to do their jobs





## RECRUITMENT, HIRING & RETENTION

Obtain a holistic perspective from employees at all levels to assess overall organizational health

To encourage employee participation, the survey was confidential and administered by George Mason University. Additionally, weekly raffles were held for participating employees and supervisors/managers who were actively engaged in encouraging employees to share their views through the survey, and efforts were made to provide employees multiple opportunities to complete the survey. During the three years in which the organizational survey was administered, the average rate of employee participation was 54%, and resulted in the department initiating a number of changes to systems and processes.



#### Alameda County Probation Department Organizational Survey



Welcome to the Alameda County Probation Department's Organizational Survey!

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. This survey is being conducted in partnership with our research team at George Masor University (GMU) and will help us inform a number of Departmental initiatives.

We care about your thoughts and opinions, so please be honest and open. Your responses are completely confidential and will only be seen by the GMU research team. All information shared back to the Alameda County Probation Department and its executive staff will be anonymous.

You need to complete this survey in one sitting because you cannot exit and return to your survey. Please make sure to read the Informed Consent Statement at the beginning of the survey. This statement is required to ensure transparency and the confidentiality of your responses.

If you have any questions about the statement, survey, or any research related issues, please contact our lead researcher, Sara Debus-Sherrill, at sdebussh@gmu.edu.

Introductory letter to organizational survey



## Established a recruitment strategy and recruitment team representative of the community

In 2017 we established a recruitment team consisting of a cross-section of employees that was diverse and representative of our communities. Team members held regular recruitment events at community colleges and state universities. They also staffed recruitment booths at community job fairs, law enforcement events, and other community forums. As a part of the recruitment and education process, team members conveyed why they joined the department, how it impacted their personal lives and the lives of the clients they served, how to successfully navigate the complex application process, and the benefits associated with county employment. Furthermore, throughout the year, team members collaborated with our Information Technology Unit to regularly update webpages related to employment and recruitment.

Additionally, we focused our efforts on posting electronic and physical recruitment notices within agencies, associations, and locations where we were more likely to attract individuals with social work backgrounds, and individuals from the communities we serve.



As a result of our recruitment, hiring, and promotional efforts, we were praised by Alameda County's Human Resource Services Agency as the most diverse department in Alameda County. Moving forward, we will continue our commitment to a diverse workforce, recognizing the value of embracing those with different perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences. This strategy will also facilitate our ability to increase creativity, promote innovation, encourage improved problem solving through the open exchange of ideas, promote higher morale, reduce employee turnover, and recruit the best talent.



Former human resources employee Nancy Tran, Departmental Human Resources Officer Donna Hom, and Deputy Probation Officer III Erin Guess at the 2018 Chinatown Street Festival 2018.



Chief Wendy Still pictured with Director Sherron Lee, Assistant Chief Karen Baker, and Deputy Probation Officer III Eric Akiyama at the 2019 California Probation, Parole & Correctional Association's annual conference.

#### **MOVING FORWARD**

This section is complex in that it deals with the business of humans with different needs, motivations, and desires. Although there is no magical solution that will allow you to hire, promote, and retain the best of the best each and every time, much of what I allude to are basic rules I have learned that will allow you to make the best decisions about the most important asset of any organization – your staff.

Moving forward, we will focus our efforts on utilizing our case management system to determine the extent to which staff are incorporating desired behaviors and practices into their work. This includes client–level outcome data for sworn staff and data elements specific to administrative areas of the department for our non–sworn staff. For example, our case management system currently allows my executive management team to monitor client outcomes by unit and probation officer. This is not meant to act as a tool for auditing or disciplining staff, but rather, to assist in identifying staff who may require additional training, or who demonstrate exemplary skills and could be utilized as peer mentors.





## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

#### **KEY POINTS -**

#### Orrecte an organizational structure that supports your mission

Given that your mission defines the purpose of your department, it is critical to have in place an organizational structure to support its execution. This means that your organizational structure must entail the appropriate subordinate organizational units and decision–making reporting structure to facilitate a high level of performance. At a more granular level, this means a framework that conveys how the organization is put together and how it works. It should support the appropriate level of management control, employee cooperation and influence, and overall operational responsiveness to the changing needs of probation.

## One Establish organizational performance standards through well-defined and comprehensive policies and training

Performance standards generally refer to specific performance expectations based upon individual positions. However, the reference alluded to in this section is specific to the establishment of operational performance standards through the implementation of policies that define processes and systems, the role individual employees play in carrying out policy, and the associated training provided by the department to further define individual level expectations. The formal establishment and adoption of policy and training supports the implementation of local and legislative mandates in a consistent and well–defined manner. When effectively combined with your organizational decision–making structure and quality control systems, policies and training create a recipe for improved outcomes through a focus on effective practices.

## Establish systems to measure whether your department is following its own policies and practice expectations

The process probation departments utilize to carry out their duties is multi-faceted in that the culture, training, desk references, published policies, and supervisorial mandates influence how these tasks are accomplished. To measure whether they are being followed and their effect, you must have micro and macro level systems in place. This should encompass quality control processes and systems that are built into the normal course of business, automated management reports that enable you to drill down to data on an individual employee or unit at the touch of a button, and dedicated regularly scheduled supervisory, management, and executive-level meetings to review information and data that has been adequately analyzed for impact and/or corrective action.



### On Build systems and a personnel structure to support a continuous process improvement system

Adopt a continuous process improvement system to enable you to regularly examine and enhance impact within the context of programs, organizational efficiencies, and client outcomes. <sup>28</sup> Although there are different methods to achieve continuous improvement, it is critical to start with the end in mind. In doing so, you must examine processes that impact performance measures tied to specific strategic goals and objectives. This includes: (1) ensuring you have the personnel infrastructure to manage and make policies explicit, (2) assessing and analyzing the flow of information and data, and (3) creating feedback loops that allow for the continuous review and modification of processes and programs based on their impact upon performance measures and outcomes. If adopting such a system seems labor intensive, it is! But if done correctly, the end result will not only equate to cost savings, streamlined operations, and the leveraging and best use of resources, it will constitute an investment in our communities through a long-term reduction in recidivism.

#### **ORGANIZATIONAL GAPS**

One of the first areas that I focused on when I was initially appointed was determining whether the department's decision–making structure supported the organization's ability to carry out its mission effectively. What became clear from the onset was that we lacked the type of operational units and decision–making infrastructure needed to facilitate data–driven decisions.

Additionally, the division of labor was uneven and tended to overwhelm certain areas within the department, thereby creating a reactive and inefficient system and unnecessary stress upon staff. This was even more evident within the leadership ranks where, because of the lack of functional support elements, upper echelon personnel were expected to perform additional duties, outside of their realm of expertise, rather than concentrating their efforts on their primary functions. Further exacerbating the issue was the lack of investment in leadership and management development training to support individuals in key areas of responsibilities.

The culmination of these issues created confusion and placed additional strain upon an already overburdened department. As a result, the department remained stagnant, maintained the status quo, and functioned reactively. This translated into an administrative infrastructure that was not focused on continuous improvement processes.



<sup>28</sup> Showalter, M. J., & Mulholland, J. A. (1992). Continuous improvement strategies for service organizations. Business Horizons, 35(4), 82–88.



## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

#### WHAT WE DID ABOUT IT



Restructured the department's hierarchy and created operational support units and positions

After a comprehensive analysis of our organizational structure, we created, staffed, and/or implemented internal administrative units and individual positions through the county human resource administrative and budgetary process. The rebuild focused on creating an internal structure to measure and enhance our effectiveness through evidence-based practices, increase operational efficiencies, and facilitate our ability to leverage internal and external resources.

This extensive process encompassed many months of discussion, negotiations, and collaboration with the Alameda County Human Resources Agency, Alameda County Board of Supervisors, labor unions, community stakeholders, local leaders, our criminal justice partners, advisory committees, our staff, and many others. It entailed modifications to our annual budget, the creation of positions and duty statements associated with each additional unit, extensive labor negotiations, hiring and training new personnel, and many other activities associated with the reorganization of the department.<sup>29</sup>

The culmination of these efforts resulted in the creation of the following administrative support functions and positions which up to this point were non-existent within the department:

- Re-entry Services Unit
  - ▶ Promotes continuity of care for clients returning to Alameda County from state prison or jail by connecting them to services
  - **Evidence-Based Practices Unit**
  - ► Facilitates the incorporation of evidence-based practices into the department's programs, contracted services, policies, and practices
  - Research & Evaluation Unit
    - Develops data collection processes and systems to enable the department to make data-informed decisions related to the utilization, effectiveness, and quality of its programs



<sup>29</sup> As of June 30, 2021, positions associated with the creation of some of these units continue to be filled and/or developed.

#### Finance & Contracts Unit

Manages the department's budget, conducts financial audits, manages grants and trust funds, procurement, centralized contracts, facilities, and assets

#### Policy & Standards Compliance Unit

▶ Develops, tracks, and publishes policies and procedures based upon operational necessity, and local and legislative mandates

#### Program Design & Development Unit

► Facilitates the development of programs supported by research and evidencebased practices to improve client outcomes

We also created positions that report directly to the Chief Probation Officer, to help support the department's success and bring relief to staff previously tasked with these functions as additional duties:

#### Ombudsman (client advocate)

► Acts as an independent intermediary to provide clients, families, and the community with a confidential avenue to address complaints and resolve issues at the lowest possible level

#### Labor Relations Director

Works collaboratively with human resources staff, bargaining unit representatives and other stakeholders to develop and implement policies, interpret labor union contracts, resolve disputes, and address labor relations issues.

#### **External Communications Director**

▶ Develops and implements strategies to communicate the department's message, promote transparency, and foster positive community relations

#### Web Developer

▶ Responsible for the development and design of the department's website, for the appearance of our internal and external websites, and for creating site content requiring technical features



### Built a quality control and decision–making structure focused on continuous process improvements

The adoption of a continuous process improvement system was the last phase of our multi-year plan to improve outcomes through enhanced systems and programs. Before we could dedicate extensive resources to analyze and build substantive processes to improve our operations, we had to build the infrastructure. I will allude to them briefly in this section given that all six have already been addressed in other parts of this manual. They include the components on the following pages.





## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

An overarching strategic plan to guide our efforts Adopted a five-year strategic plan, Vision 2023. This plan was developed by a cross-section of employees and labor representatives over the course of seven months, and was subsequently adopted by executive management in mid-2018. It includes 6 high-level goals, 30 objectives, and over 230 performance measures.

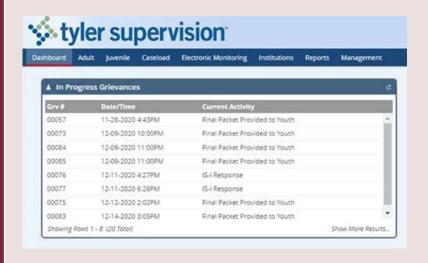
Performance measures tied to each strategic goal and objective Created performance measures tied to specific goals and objectives within the strategic plan. Working with a cross–section of departmental employees and labor representatives, the Carey Group facilitated the research, analysis, and discussion associated with identifying performance measures and target benchmarks for each strategic objective. This resulted in the adoption of over 230 performance measures by executive management in March 2019.

A strategic execution plan to track implementation Developed an execution plan to ensure that each performance measure was implemented. This entailed the assignment of each performance measure to designated staff responsible for leading their team in executing specifics tasks. The execution plan also incorporated a quarterly meeting with the Chief Probation Officer and executive management to report their progress in meeting targeted timelines associated with each performance measure. This also includes the presentation of corrective action plans in circumstances where performance measure timelines are not being met.



An automated case management system with built-in management reports

Adopted the cloud-based case management system, **Tyler Supervision.** This state-of the-art automated case management system was deployed on a pilot basis in January 2019 and expanded throughout the department in 2020. Its functionality includes the following: (1) allows deputy probation officers to input and track information on client demographics, dates of contact, progress on case plan goals, and other descriptive data, (2) provides up-to-date information regarding court dates, conviction and sentencing decisions, arrests, warrants, pretrial data, and other critical information as a result of its integration with data systems from the Alameda County Sheriff's Office and the Alameda County Superior Court, (3) allows communication with service providers via a secure messaging system, and (4) generates automated management reports.



A personnel and decision—making infrastructure to manage the entire system

Created a personnel and decision–making infrastructure consisting of a myriad of support elements and positions.

To support the department's ability to establish, analyze, measure, and improve its systems, it must have the decision–making infrastructure and personnel resources to do so. As alluded to on page 104, this entailed the creation of support elements and personnel to manage and oversee the day–to–day operations of their respective areas and lead efforts to maintain a high standard of performance within their functional areas.



A quality assurance process to maintain operational fidelity

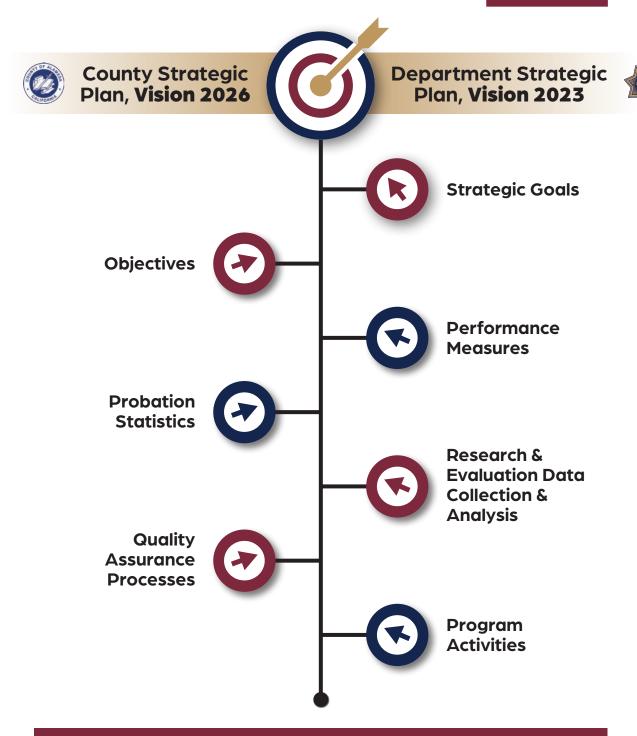
Implemented a department-wide Probation Statistics (ProbStat) process that includes a performance **improvement component.** To measure the cumulative impact of systems, we established an internal ProbStat process that allows staff to present critical data to executive management on a quarterly basis. The data collected is tied to one or more strategic performance measures which are indicators of the health of the organization and the extent to which it is improving outcomes through its programs and systems. In circumstances where obstacles to our progress in meeting performance measures are identified through the ProbStat process, I incorporated the requirement that process improvement plans be presented concurrently on how issues will be resolved. At subsequent quarterly meetings, staff are expected to report out on their progress in meeting the timelines and tasks associated with their performance improvement plans.

#### **MOVING FORWARD**

The culmination of all these efforts resulted in a feedback loop that will enable the department to continue to assess its performance and improve its processes and systems in perpetuity. In the months ahead, we will continue to refine the functions of these new units and our data collection and quality control processes to meet the changing needs of the department and improve our overall performance.



## CONTINUOUS PROCESS IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM



The image above depicts how quality control processes flow in our efforts to improve systems and outcomes, commencing with program activities and culminating with the accomplishment of the department's and county's strategic goals.







# 5 YEARS OF PROGRESS

he purpose of probation is to serve the courts, provide community supervision of adults and youth under its jurisdiction, and provide care and treatment for youth within its facilities. At our core, probation departments throughout California's 58 counties also provide a host of other services utilizing flexible funding streams and our legislative authority. Our role, as the primary community corrections entity for the state, allows us to use this funding to influence our service delivery model.

Although what these domains entail varies from youth to adults and from jurisdiction

to jurisdiction, in this section I provide a high-level overview of new initiatives and existing program enhancements that have been implemented within the past five years that have transformed our ability to impact client outcomes, and ultimately, public safety.

This section is not intended to be an all-inclusive list or a roadmap, but rather, a summary of systems, structures, and practices that we have executed in facilitating the redesign of our service delivery model to one that is aligned with progressive evidence-based practices.



## **JUVENILE OPERATIONS**

The department provides traditional services to youth through local resources and in response to legislative mandates. We strive to incorporate the least restrictive environment through alternatives to incarceration when possible. When it becomes necessary to detain and/or house a youth in response to a commitment, we endeavor to provide services that will make a positive difference.

In the past five years, we expanded our service delivery model to improve outcomes and facilitate a youth's transition into the community. The following programs and systems represent state-of-the-art advancements in our practices. They also represent a culmination of our efforts to incorporate progressive evidence-based practices into the fabric of the organization.



### **DIVERSION, PREVENTION & INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

### Deployed a Youth Advocate Program to serve high-risk youth more effectively

The Youth Advocate Program (YAP) provides 30 high-risk youth on probation and their families with intensive mentoring and wraparound services in their homes, school, and community for up to six months. For each youth referred, a holistic assessment is conducted and an individualized service plan is developed based upon the assessment. The service plan is utilized to provide support in areas such as crisis intervention, skill development, and vocational work. To further enhance outcomes, the model also includes wraparound services, family support, mentoring, positive youth development, and restorative justice. More information on this program can be found on page 142.

## Developed and implemented the Breaking Barriers family support program to better engage with families

In 2019, the department operationalized the Breaking Barriers program after months of development and refinement. Breaking Barriers is a voluntary program that is designed to support youth and families by reducing financial stressors so that parents can engage in services and activities with, and in support of their children. A primary focus of the program is to stabilize the home environment and support the overall success of the family.

To support long-term sustainability, Breaking Barriers also provides parents with information on employment opportunities, higher education, and vocational training, and assists with living expenses. Assistance is provided in three-month increments, while



the family works together to achieve targeted program goals. As of April 2021, \$129,543 has been expended on 27 families who have been served by this program since its inception. Many of these families have been served multiple times.

## Incorporated Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings to explore the least restrictive alternatives to incarceration for youth facing out-of-home placements

In circumstances where a youth may be better served outside the home as a result of alleged behavioral issues and/or familial circumstances, a deputy probation officer conducts an initial screening of the case in collaboration with the Out-of-Home Services (OHS) Committee. If the OHS committee believes the youth should be removed from the home, the deputy probation officer initiates a Child and Family Team (CFT) meeting. CFT meetings are multidisciplinary meetings, held in partnership with the Behavioral Health Care Services Agency (BHCSA), to assess the youth's strengths and supports. The representative from the BHCSA schedules, facilitates, and documents the recommendations and plan established during the CFT meeting. During the meeting, the youth, family members, trusted adults, and caring professionals work together to seek alternatives to help the youth achieve positive behavioral goals and improve child safety, permanency, and well-being. The recommendations are then submitted by the deputy probation officer to the Juvenile Court for consideration.



**Deputy Probation Officer I Allison Eiesland** 



Institutional Supervisor I



**Deputy Probation Officer III** Tamara Scott



### IN-CUSTODY REHABILITATIVE PROGRAMS

### **Expanded Camp Wilmont Sweeney's program to** promote positive behavior and continuity of care

Camp Wilmont Sweeney's program considers each youth's risk and protective factors in the development of a comprehensive case plan intended to support success. Risk factors are dynamic elements in the youth's life that potentially contribute to delinquency, e.g., attitude, thoughts, family dynamics, peer associations, substance use, education, employment. Protective factors are positive elements in the youth's life that increase the likelihood of success. While at Camp Wilmont Sweeney, youth participate in various programs and services that are tailored to their unique needs.





## **JUVENILE OPERATIONS**

In 2019, Camp Wilmont Sweeney enhanced its overall program by focusing even more on strength-based approaches to rehabilitation and continuity of care. They include the following:

O Merit Badge Program: Camp Wilmont Sweeney utilizes a four-level, merit-based system to facilitate a youth's ability to gain privileges during his time in detention by meeting pre-determined behavioral benchmarks and participating in prosocial activities. This program was modified to provide youth with additional avenues by



Youth tending to the garden at Camp Wilmont Sweeney

which to gain privileges. One modification involved empowering youth to influence decisions that are made regarding their program while at the Camp. Throughout the entirety of the program, youth meet with a success team regularly to identify new ways of coping with challenges and to identify strategies to help them achieve their behavioral benchmarks. This approach rewards positive behaviors and promotes buy-in from the youth by making them a part of the solution and decision-making process.

- Success Planning: The department strengthened the case planning process through the incorporation of a comprehensive continuity of care component appropriately named the success plan. The success plan identifies issues driving the youth's behavior and addresses those issues. Juvenile Hall and Camp Wilmont Sweeney staff then facilitate skill building activities and intervention strategies consistent with the youth's success plan. The plan then follows the youth upon release from custody where deputy probation officers in the community continue working with the youth and the family in meeting the goals of the plan.
- Multidisciplinary Team Meetings: Every 30 to 60 days, each youth meets with a multidisciplinary team (MDT) consisting of the youth's assigned deputy probation officer, a clinician, and a juvenile institutional officer mentor. The youth's parents, caretakers, or community supporters are also invited to participate in these meetings. The team checks on the youth's progress and collaboratively determines how to best facilitate the youth's continued success, including assigning the youth to



specialized treatment groups. Specialized treatment groups help youth develop and enhance critical life skills, including anger management, decision making, abstinence from illicit substances, trauma management, and building healthy relationships.

**Continuity of Care:** When a youth is released from Camp Wilmont Sweeney, he continues reporting to the aftercare deputy probation officer assigned to him during the last three months of his confinement. The intention is to ease the youth's transition back into the community by allowing him to remain with the same deputy probation officer with whom he has hopefully developed a trusting relationship. The aftercare deputy probation officer, with the assistance of the MDT, works with the youth and his family or caregivers to coordinate community resources to ensure the youth continues to receive the services and supports he needs to be successful. After three months, the youth is assigned to a deputy probation officer based in the community.

### SUCCESSFUL CAMP COMPLETIONS



Incorporated a restorative justice component into Camp Wilmont Sweeney to help young men learn to effectively process emotions and resolve conflicts

Staff from Camp Wilmont Sweeney host daily circles every morning and afternoon to help youth learn how to productively resolve issues and conflicts in a prosocial manner. Circles are used as a healing practice and to help young men develop healthy relationships and build a community among the youth, staff, and service providers. Additional details regarding this program can be found on page 140.

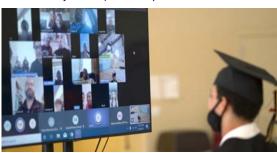




## JUVENILE OPERATIONS

## Implemented the Youth In Custody Practice Model to increase positive youth and family experiences and improve outcomes

In January 2019, the department initiated the Youth in Custody Practice Model in



Youth videoconferencing with family and friends after receiving his high school diploma.

the Juvenile Hall and Camp Wilmont Sweeney. This program focuses on:
(1) promoting a safe, healthy, and therapeutic environment for staff, youth, and their families; (2) supporting staff in the provision of effective services; and (3) increasing positive outcomes. Given the success that the department has experienced with this program, we highlight details associated with this model even further starting on page 46.

## Provided tablets to youth at Juvenile Hall and Camp Wilmont Sweeney to promote technological literacy

In early 2020, tablets were distributed to all youth in custody or detention to help youth develop technological skills and increase their access to educational programming. Through these tables, youth have the opportunity to advance their education, build life skills, and access a variety of entertainment and recreational activities. The tablets contain: (1) educational media [including pre-GED, middle and high school], (2) eBooks, (3) a library of math, grammar, science, and history lessons that span from kindergarten through early college, (4) 150 self-driven courses for career training, (5) curricula that prepare youth for technological certifications, (6) web-based games, radio stations and streaming movies, (7) a virtual family room where youth can talk, play, draw, read, complete homework, and watch videos with their family within a secure technological environment, (8) a financial literacy application, and (9) online job training and certification.

## Refined the youth grievance system to promote a culture of integrity and accountability

In 2019, the department updated its youth grievance system to ensure it contained guidelines for addressing youth grievances in a professional manner and with the



utmost expediency. As a part of this process, youth are informed of their right to file a grievance regarding any perceived inappropriate or inadequate condition of confinement and are informed of the corresponding grievance process. This process enables youth to report, appeal, and resolve issues related to health care services, classification decisions, program participation, food, mail, and violations of the nondiscrimination policy. To maintain the integrity of the process, staff were trained on the updated procedures, a tracking system was created to ensure appropriate resolutions and timeliness, and a supervisory and management quality control review component was incorporated as an additional measure of accountability.

## Established a national best practice use of force training and review program to mitigate the potential for unnecessary or excessive use of force

In June 2017, the department revamped its use of force program. This entailed:

- The development and operationalization of updated policies, procedures, and training for staff, supervisors, and management
  - The deployment of a standing Executive Use of Force Review Committee tasked with reviewing and evaluating use of force incidents to determine their compliance with existing policy, procedures, and training, and to assess the extent to which modifications to these areas may be necessary
- An ongoing quality control and accountability process for staff commencing with line-level supervisors and management

The review process also includes a comprehensive review of video to determine if the information and/or reports provided by staff are accurate. Actions that violate use of force related policies are dealt with in a timely, fair, and consistent manner through established disciplinary and training protocols. When appropriate, this occurs in collaboration with bargaining unit representatives.



Point Emery Lane 2, Emeryville





## **JUVENILE OPERATIONS**

## Modified the Juvenile Detention Risk Assessment Instrument to promote objectivity and fidelity

In 2019, the Juvenile Detention Risk Assessment Instrument (JDRAI) was revised using criteria established by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.<sup>30</sup> The JDRAI is a tool that enables intake staff at the Juvenile Hall to objectively measure a youth's likelihood of reoffending if released into the community while his or her case is reviewed by the district attorney. Information collected by the JDRAI is also used to assess the risk that a youth will fail to appear in court. The tool was strengthened through the incorporation of a robust supervisory review and training process focused on reducing racial and ethnic disparities.<sup>31</sup> The enhanced assessment process created new categories (e.g., home supervision, notice to appear) that allowed youth to remain in the community as an alternative to detention. Through the use of this tool, Juvenile Hall intake staff now have more options to divert youth to alternatives in the community.

### Established a collaborative countywide system to combat sexual exploitation

In 2019, in an effort to combat the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC), the department developed and implemented a CSEC training program by establishing a process for staff to identify victims of sexual exploitation and vulnerable children. In circumstances where a victim of sexual exploitation is identified, staff utilize the resources of the department, District Attorney's Office, Alameda County Social Services Agency, schools, and community-based partners to assist youth in extricating themselves from the situation. In general, while youth are in the department's custody, prescribed efforts are made to educate youth and raise their awareness to prevent them from becoming victims.

## Facilitated career and employment opportunities for youth through two grants focused on developing employment skills among youth

In 2019, the Alameda County Office of Education awarded the department two separate 30-month grants focused on developing employment skills for youth under our care. The Building The Future (residential and commercial construction) and STEAM Ahead (Google and Microsoft Program Training) grants encompass career



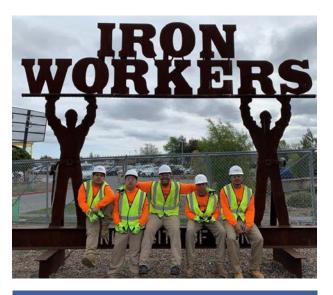
<sup>31</sup> Racial and ethnic disparity refers to the unequal treatment of youth of color in the juvenile justice system.



and technical education offered through the California Community Colleges.<sup>32</sup> As of April 2021, 16 youth have graduated from the program.



Youth graduate receives national and individual recognition.



Youth touring union training programs in the community.



Assistant Chief Brian Ford (left), Juvenile Institutional Officer II Jose Arroyo, three Multicraft Core Curriculum Construction Program graduates, Juvenile Institutional Officer Richard Valle and Deputy Chief Ian Long (right).



<sup>32</sup> The grants were offered through the California Community Colleges. CTE programs are a multi-year sequence of courses that integrate core academic knowledge with technical and occupational knowledge to provide students with a pathway to postsecondary education and careers. These programs provide academic skill development and practical work experiences.



## **ADULT OPERATIONS**

The programs briefly outlined in this section are a sampling of our work in the areas of pretrial, re-entry planning, continuity of care, and community supervision. Collectively, they reflect our dedication to serve clients returning from jail or prison via a warm handoff model that involves pre-release services, programs, and integrated case management. This process is further enhanced through our collaboration with the courts, communitybased providers, local advocates and agencies, our state and federal partners, and our staff.

Although we implemented many significant advancements in re-entry support since mid-2016, only initiatives with a wide impact on our adult population are reflected below.

### PRETRIAL & RE-ENTRY PLANNING

### Reinstituted and enhanced the Pretrial Services Program

In 2019, the department and the Alameda County Superior Court restored Alameda County's pretrial program through a grant from the Judicial Council of California. The goal of the pretrial program was to minimize the impact of incarceration to individuals who pose little risk to the public. In the deployment of the program, the department established procedures, adopted a validated risk assessment tool, hired and trained staff to support a 24/7 operation, upgraded automated systems, expanded the use of electronic monitoring and court date reminders for defendants, and adopted supervision standards and options for those granted pretrial supervised release.

### Strengthened the system of re-entry

In early 2019, the department, in collaboration with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, initiated the Pathways Home pilot funded through a federal grant. Based upon the initial success and request for ongoing funding, two additional components were subsequently granted. The grant focused on strengthening re-entry services for individuals returning to Alameda County from California state prisons to ease the transition from confinement to the community. This pilot focused on assessing the needs of clients while they were in custody and linking them to programs and services prior to release. Three innovative components were subsequently added to the pilot to enhance client engagement with services offered through this program.



- Virtual Reality Programming: allows clients in custody to experience scenarios they might encounter in the outside world that might encourage recidivism and to practice appropriate responses to those situations
- Vergil mobile application: a client-centered mobile application that helps clients meet their supervision goals and engage with community-based service providers
- Re-entry Workbooks & resource directory: intended to help clients prepare for the re-entry process and provide concrete information about services

More information can be found beginning on page 42.

## **CONTINUITY OF CARE & COMMUNITY SUPERVISION**

### Facilitated technological advancements in case management

The 2016/17 Alameda County Grand Jury report spotlighted the department's difficulty integrating new technology, citing that we were utilizing 20th century tools to address 21st century problems. The issue stemmed from the department's historical inability to adopt technological solutions to assist in making evidence-based decisions in the management of our clients. Within two years of the Grand Jury's report, we integrated an automated case management system, Tyler Supervision, within the Adult Field Services Division. After months of testing and refinement, the system was subsequently expanded to both Juvenile Operations and the Pretrial Division. These solutions subsequently won two national awards for innovations in technology. Details regarding this technological solution can be found on page 74.

### Developed and deployed an evidence-based service delivery model

Over the course of five years, the service delivery model for adult clients was strengthened through a comprehensive overhaul of five major programmatic components. They encompass the following components:

- Evidence-based training for all staff on the science and methods to reduce recidivism Specialized training for supervisors to assist them in mentoring staff and reinforcing risk reduction techniques with clients
  - Establishment of case management standards to ensure clients receive the appropriate level of service and supervision
  - Incorporation of an automated case management, service referral system, and mobile case management application to increase efficiency and access to critical information





## **ADULT OPERATIONS**

- Use of adult risk and needs assessment tools to guide supervision goals and objectives, including the management of specialized cases involving domestic violence, sex offenders, and/or clients with a history of mental health issues.
  - Use of Skype to facilitate the case planning process while clients are pending release from custody
- Establishment of a gender-responsive program and geographically-based caseloads to better meet the needs of clients
- Establishment of collaborative committees consisting of mental health, physical health, and substance use practitioners to inform decision making regarding individual client cases

## Collaborated with county agencies to support employment opportunities for the re–entry population

Through Alameda County's re-entry hiring initiative, the county hired 505 justice-involved individuals into county jobs between 2016 and April 2021. Additional details may be found on page 149.

## Expanded the Safety First Program to promote safety and collaboration with clients and their support systems



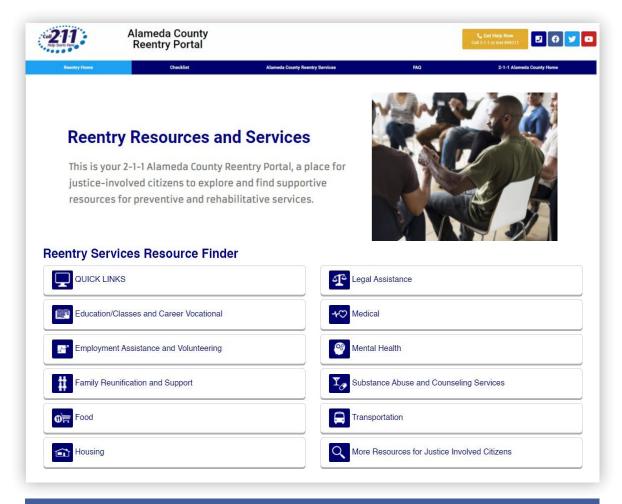
Deputy Probation Officer III
Elaine Le

In 2019, the Safety First Program was expanded to promote safety and facilitate probation staff's ability to develop collaborative relationships in the community with adult clients and their support system. This entailed a comprehensive training program centered on safety, effective communication, cultural competency, the application of de–escalation techniques in potentially volatile encounters, and strategies for dealing with situations involving addiction, homelessness, mental illness, and domestic violence. The overall objective of the program is to equip deputy probation officers with the skills necessary to minimize and resolve issues effectively, safely, and with compassion.



### Enhanced Alameda County's 2-1-1 Community Re-entry Resource Portal

The Alameda County 2–1–1 system is a central repository for social service providers in Alameda County. Residents can access 2–1–1 online (http://211alamedacounty.org) or by dialing 2–1–1 on their telephone. In January 2020, the department collaborated with Alameda County 2–1–1 to launch the Alameda County Re–entry Portal. This portal, located within the existing Alameda County 2–1–1 system, identifies and provides electronic access to over 100 vendors under contract with the department to provide re–entry services most often needed by clients returning to Alameda County from state prison or county jail. This portal also contains over 300 additional vendors and government agencies that partner with the department or the County of Alameda to provide additional re–entry services.



### Homepage for 2–1–1 Alameda County Re-entry Portal

### Invested in community-based services to improve outcomes

In the past five years, the department has invested \$80,452,167 in local organizations that provide critical services to the adult population. Services include substance abuse, mental health, housing, support services for families, life skills training, anger management, etc. These service contracts expand multiple years into the future and are spread throughout every supervisorial district based upon the needs of the population.





## ADMINISTRATIVE ENHANCEMENTS



Institutional Supervisor I Christopher Carson and Deputy Probation Officer III Elizabeth Douglas receiving 15–year service awards from Chief Wendy Still. The Administrative Division is responsible for planning and executing a range of administrative services that support internal operations and collaboration with external stakeholders. These services encompass the areas of policy, research, community programs, human resources, finance, contracts and grants, training, and information technology.

Since 2016, the Administration Division has been responsible for providing the support necessary to enable other internal divisions to operationalize the many initiatives that have been strengthened or created within

that time period. The accomplishments below reflect some of the most relevant and impactful achievements in the past five years.



### PERSONNEL

## Promoted the value of departmental employees through its Employee Appreciation & Recognition Program

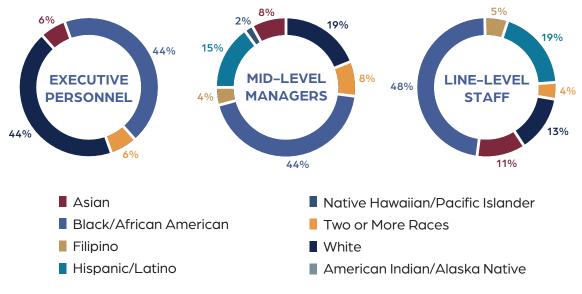
In 2018, the department established its first-ever Employee Appreciation and Recognition Program (EARP) to fulfill its commitment to recognize the dedication and contributions of its employees. The EARP consists of a quarterly and annual recognition selection process and ceremonies in which employees are publicly recognized for their contributions. The program is unique in that any employee may nominate another employee or external stakeholder who has demonstrated their commitment to supporting the department in the accomplishment of its public safety goals. This is an exciting program that allows the department to recognize and promote the many contributions of its employees and stakeholders and to profile the difference their work makes in improving the lives of our clients, their families, and our communities.

### Promoted diversity through our hiring practices

Our commitment to promote creativity through inclusiveness and diversity is most evident in our personnel hiring and promotional practices. In 2020, the department was



recognized by the county's Human Resources Agency, as one of the most ethnically diverse departments within Alameda County. This is evidenced by the fact that 85% of our employees self-identify as a racial or ethnic minority.



Less than 1% not reflected in the graphics.

### Reduced the timeline associated with the hiring and background clearance process

In 2017, a comprehensive strategy was developed and implemented to streamline the hiring and promotional process. Our primary focus was to streamline the pre-employment screening and background clearance process. The department significantly reduced the backlog of background investigations by eliminating redundant processes and unqualified candidates earlier in the process. This, in turn, created efficiencies by facilitating the department's ability to focus its limited background resources on those candidates who had successfully passed the different phases of the hiring process, i.e., initial background questionnaire, application review process, testing, hiring interview, criminal rap sheet background check, reference checks, etc. These actions alone resulted in a marked reduction in the amount of time it took for qualified candidates to clear the entirety of the hiring and background process from 36 to 12 weeks for sworn staff and from 12 to 3 weeks for non–sworn staff. Details associated with this strategy and its implementation may be found on page 96.

### Refined the employee grievance system

Grievances not previously addressed by prior probation administrations were successfully resolved in 2018. The department further refined the employee grievance system in collaboration with labor unions, resulting in a reduction in the number of grievances filed by employees by about 50% in the past five years.





## **ADMINISTRATIVE ENHANCEMENTS**

### DEPARTMENTAL REORGANIZATION & QUALITY CONTROL

### Reorganized the department to increase efficiencies and improve outcomes

To strengthen operations, enable data-driven decision making, and make the most effective use of its limited resources, an internal restructure and reorganization was initiated in 2018. The reorganization involved the creation of distinct units pertaining to research and evaluation, evidence-based practices, policy development, contracts and procurement, and program design and development. It also involved the creation of specialized positions to support the organization's success. These units and positions will enable the department to further streamline operations and better measure and support the outcomes of its programs and policies while reducing costs and improving outcomes for its clients. More detail regarding the department's reorganization is found on page 104.

### Adopted a comprehensive continuous process improvement system

In 2020, after several years of pre-planning, the department executed a comprehensive continuous process improvement system (CPIS). Prior to the adoption of this system, we engaged in a number of major projects intended to establish the foundation for the CPIS. Each project entailed the dedication of significant resources and required extensive collaboration prior to departmentwide adoption. They included the adoption of a five-year strategic plan, and an accompanying execution plan, with performance measures tied to specific goals and objectives. It also involved the creation a research and evaluation component to facilitate data collection and data-informed decision making. Additional details regarding these systems can be found beginning on page 105.

## Created performance standards through the establishment of a Policy and **Standards Compliance Unit**

In 2019, we established a Policy and Standards Compliance Unit to guide performance, practices, and operational expectations. Since then, we have successfully developed and published 131 policies in response to changes in legislation, local mandates, and operational necessity. This includes 45 policies that enabled the department to comply with standards set by the Board of State and Community Corrections related to the operation of the Juvenile Hall and Camp Wilmont Sweeney.



In 2020, we created a Research and Evaluation Unit. This unit provides direct oversight of research activities and program evaluations, and is responsible for facilitating quarterly executive management ProbStat meetings. Details regarding the ProbStat process may be found on page 76. This unit also includes a quality assurance function that enables the department to provide its justice partners with accurate and timely data for case studies or research. The Research and Evaluation Unit uses PowerBI, a business intelligence software, to extract and visualize data from the department's case management system.

### Established a Re-entry and Outreach Unit to improve re-entry services for clients

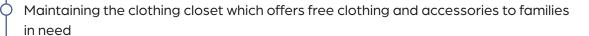
In January 2020, the department launched the Re-entry and Outreach Unit. Since then, the unit has embraced its mission to improve the re-entry experience for probation clients by encouraging a strong community voice in funding decisions, and working to build capacity across the county to meet the needs of the re-entry community.

In addition to coordinating the activities of the county's Community Corrections

Partnership Executive Committee, the unit acts as a liaison between the department and the community. The team also conducts regular community outreach activities, including:

Ç	Conducting community focus groups and administering surveys to better
	understand client needs and improve service delivery

Hosting an annual Christmas toy and food giveaway



Providing various platforms to ensure the interest and needs of the community are both heard and addressed

Community Outreach Workers (program workers) use their real-life experiences, as former justice-involved individuals, to directly connect with clients and provide support through peer mentoring, client advocacy, resource coordination, and transportation. In addition to directly supporting clients, Community Outreach Workers collaborate with community-based organizations to develop programs, identify service gaps and challenges, and resolve client-level and departmental issues. They also support the onboarding process for contracted providers through training on the provider portal in our case management system.

In the past year, the Re-entry and Community Outreach Unit collaborated with internal and external partners to increase the quality and quantity of available services. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the unit focused on housing. In addition to increasing the number of housing service providers contracted by the department, the unit





## **ADMINISTRATIVE ENHANCEMENTS**

expanded available housing options, to include single-room occupancy, housing for individuals convicted of sex offenses, family housing, and gender-responsive units.

The Re-entry and Community Outreach Unit also partnered with the department's Research and Evaluation Unit and Contracts and Grants Unit to develop and distribute a re-entry mobile telephone application, virtual reality simulations to ease a client's transition into the community, and four re-entry workbooks for clients to complete prior to their release from custody.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## Developed succession planning through the deployment of a Professional **Development Academy**

Within any organization, regular opportunities for professional development are essential to producing a highly skilled and productive workforce. Developing knowledgeable, self-assured, and compassionate leaders is an investment in the department's long-term succession plan. To identify and groom staff for future leadership positions, we created the department's first Professional Development Academy in 2018. The academy is also an opportunity for existing leaders to identify staff with the potential to fill future leadership vacancies. To ensure that all staff receive the opportunity to develop their skill sets and prepare for future promotions, the academy is now made available to all staff, regardless of their role in the department.

### Doubled the number of professional training opportunities for staff

In the past five years, the Staff Development and Training Unit doubled the number of professional training opportunities for staff to promote professional development among employees and ensure departmental compliance with legislative mandates and department initiatives. Training subjects include evidence-based practices, trauma-informed care, gender-responsive practices, and topics specific to local, state, and federal mandates. Furthermore, the department continues to receive exceptional remarks and perfect compliance each year during its annual training audit by the Board of State and Community Corrections.



## Incorporated an extensive array of mental health training to help staff effectively manage clients with mental health needs

In mid-2019, the department was awarded an Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant for \$108,000 to be used on mental health training through September 2021. These funds are currently being utilized to provide a host of trainings to sworn staff regarding interactions with mentally ill individuals. Training topics include suicide prevention, use of force, implicit bias, and crisis intervention techniques. These training opportunities complement existing elective training opportunities already offered by the department that focus on emotional intelligence, trauma, addictionology, and cultural competence.



## **TECHNOLOGY**

### Launched a public data program

To promote transparency, enhance collaboration between government and community partners, and help our partners to better understand our client population, we redesigned our public internet page and created a public data page. This public page provides access to individual—and aggregate—level demographic data on probation clients. They are updated quarterly and contain information on probation clients' city of residence, type of supervision, race/ethnicity, age, and gender. The datasets and dashboards are accompanied by a narrative description, a data dictionary, and a data request form that the public can use to request additional data.

## Utilized technology and social media platforms to promote transparency, innovation, and operational efficiencies

- **Rebranded the department:** The department hired an outside firm to assist in the creation of a new probation logo, PowerPoint Template, and interface for the intranet and internet. The result of this extensive process was a departmental website that allows users to easily learn more about the department, its mission, and the services it provides to the community and its probation clients.
- **Utilized Social Media:** In April 2021, and in conjunction with the National Month of Hope, the department launched a social media blitz, with the goal of creating a greater social media presence, including an Instagram account, in addition to our current Facebook and Twitter presence. The primary objectives of these efforts were to highlight the diligent work the department is engaged in to improve the lives of our clients, promote community safety, and ensure communication is occurring across different platforms. The social media blitz included the posting of some of the many of the project the department is engaged in, including the Advancing Racial Equity & Justice Webinar, the Women in Probation Webinar, and the Wall of Success Initiative.





## ADMINISTRATIVE ENHANCEMENTS

## Redesigned our external webpage:

The department launched its redesigned website. It includes important enhancements in the areas of client information, community partnerships, and the overall user-experience. The new web design is



aesthetically pleasing, mobile–friendly, and searchable, allowing clients, community partners, and the public to easily stay connected with the department.

- Created a virtual employee suggestion mailbox: The department embraces the unique perspectives, diverse backgrounds, and expertise of its employees and recognizes that these perspectives are essential to creating a thriving organization. To gather input from employees on an ongoing basis, the department created a virtual employee suggestion box. The intent was to solicit feedback and suggestions regarding process improvements, employee morale, cost savings, and general innovation. All suggestions receive full consideration and the employee making the suggestion receives a written response from the Chief Probation Officer or a member of the executive team within 90 days of submission. Alternatively, the employee may request a meeting to discuss their suggestion in person. An employee can also choose to submit their suggestion(s) anonymously.
- Installed digital cameras to promote accountability and transparency: In 2019, the department initiated the replacement of its 12-year-old analog camera system with a 43-camera system at Juvenile Hall and Camp Wilmont Sweeney. By doing so, we enhanced our ability to remain compliant with the Prison Rape Elimination Act, promoted staff accountability, and maintained the integrity of activities within these facilities.



- Upgraded wireless internet speed at Juvenile Hall: The wireless internet in Juvenile Hall's computer lab was upgraded to a significantly faster speed, making it easier for youth to participate in online college instruction. Prior to this upgrade, the slow internet speed made it difficult to stream lectures and school-related videos through the Blackboard instruction platform. With this enhancement, the number of students participating in online college instruction increased dramatically.
- Upgraded financial management system: The department replaced its 20-year-old finance system with a state-of-the-art, centralized web application hosted on a virtual private cloud. The new system allows users to easily view the department's financial activities, including payments, purchase orders, budgets, and financial forecasting for all programs and divisions. The new system also facilitates seamless production of annual budgets and quarterly budget forecasts, and financial reports for submission to the Chief Probation Officer and County Administrator's Office.

Incorporated automation into existing paper systems to reduce purchase order processing times, ensure prompt payment to vendors, and reduce Board letter submission time frames

In 2018, the Finance and Contracts Unit undertook extensive efforts focused on incorporating automation into existing paper processes to eliminate inefficiencies, enhance fiscal tracking systems, and ensure prompt payment to vendors.

- Automated Purchase Orders: The unit developed an automated system to track the processing and payment of purchase orders to ensure that program units received essential goods in a timely manner and vendors received timely payment for their services. With the procurement team's "same day" philosophy at the forefront, purchase orders from vendors, whether large or small, are processed on the same day services are confirmed as received and forwarded to the Finance and Contracts Unit.
  - Centralized Electronic Online Invoice and Billing Submission: The incorporation of a centralized online invoice/billing application into the department's finance system allows vendors to submit their monthly billing through the finance system module. This enhancement to the automated finance system resulted in the reduction of payment time frames and invoice tracking for audit and reconciliation purposes.
  - Online SharePoint Board Letter System: To ensure critical documents and Board letters are provided to the Board of Supervisors in a timely manner, in early 2021, the Finance and Contracts Unit transitioned from a traditional shared folder system to an Online SharePoint platform to manage the department's Board letters. This platform improved collaboration among the Unit's staff by eliminating version history errors, enhancing team collaboration within the documents using the "New Comments" and "Tag@," and by providing shared files and folder options. This new SharePoint platform is used to manage and save Board letters and their attachments in the department's network, and allows for easier and more efficient access and updated status in real time.



Director Adriana Manzano–Farrell and Unit Supervisor Antonio Gomez pictured with Chief Wendy Still (middle) after receiving Challenge Coins from the Chief for their contributions to the development of the department's strategic execution plan.





## **SPOTLIGHTS**

ithin this section I am pleased to highlight special moments, initiatives, and our efforts to create and nurture a more personal connection to our communities. It reflects advancements to promote equality, diversity, and creative approaches to furthering the tenets of our mission. From technological innovations in our practices through our partnerships with pioneering private organizations to our deliberate efforts to invest in and build the capacity of our communities, we come together to ensure the public is informed, empowered, and engaged in the business of probation.

In light of the tumultuous year we experienced in 2020 and now, 2021, and within the context of a challenging political and social landscape, it is tempting to focus solely on immediate impact. However, within this department

we have taken a more futuristic view. We believe that advancing true social change takes time, particularly as it relates to our justice-involved clientele. To that end, within the past five years, we were fortunate to have had the support of our many partners who also share this view, and who also worked tirelessly to help build long-term strategies to create a more socially and equitable criminal justice system.

Although within this section we highlight some of these advancements, many of these efforts are strewn through the pages of this manual. I am hopeful they will serve as illuminating and inspirational examples of how we, as a community, can serve as a catalyst for change to help others thrive and be the best that they can be.

## PROMOTING RACIAL EQUALITY

An out-of-home placement is an option for the juvenile court when it is determined that a youth's home environment is not suitable or the youth is in imminent risk of removal because of safety concerns. It is recognized that removing a youth from the home is an adverse childhood experience that can be disruptive to the entire family. Youth are more likely to thrive when they reside with their families and are provided with supportive services to meet their needs.

In recognition of these facts, in 2016, the department commissioned an independent study by Impact Justice, a national innovation and research center, to analyze the disproportionate number of African American and Latino youth who are removed from their homes in the county, and to make recommendations for improvements. The study, "Reducing Out-of-Home Placements in Alameda," analyzed comparison data from the department.<sup>34</sup>

## ALAMEDA COUNTY – BUCKING NATIONAL TRENDS THAT IMPACT MINORITIES

In response to this analysis and with the support of state legislation and local community and government partners, the department instituted changes that have had a significant impact on out-of-home placements, particularly among African American and Latino youth.

## CORRESPONDING REDUCTIONS IN JUVENILE OPERATIONS

With respect to youth placed out of state, the department re-evaluated its placement options by prioritizing in-state placements. These efforts resulted in a reduction from 18 in December 2018 to zero out of state placements to date.

Corresponding with these reductions, the impact to the number of youth committed to Camp Wilmont Sweeney or detained at the Juvenile Hall also experienced significant declines.

The changes that contributed to this decline include:

- O Providing wraparound services to families to address issues that, in the past, would have resulted in out-of-home placement decisions by the courts
  - Strengthening efforts to establish additional family connections as an option for the Juvenile Court
  - Incorporating strength-based and family-centered reunification supportive services
  - Developing a robust System Improvement Plan to enable our county partners to effectively utilize and leverage resources (e.g., mental health, behavioral counseling, parenting classes)



34 https://impactjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/alameda.placement.grid\_16apr2018.pdf

- Increasing training and staff meetings focused on the changes in policy and practice
  - Educating staff and stakeholders on research demonstrating the importance of limiting out-of-home placements and reducing the amount of time spent in those placements
- Improving collaboration with outside entities, such as community-based organizations and school districts

These reforms place the county's rates of institutional placement below the state average. For example, on average 3.2 youth per 1,000 are sent to institutional

placements within the state. In contrast, 1.6 per 1,000 are sent to institutional placements within Alameda County - half the state average (Wong and Ridolfi, 2018). These decreases are largely a result of the department's focus on incorporating multiple reforms into the existing system, in collaboration with a community of local, state, and federal partners intent on improving outcomes for youth.

## **AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION IN JUVENILE HALL AND CAMP WILMONT SWEENEY**



Graphic depicts population counts as of the last day of the calendar year. For 2021, data depicts population as of **April 2021** 



## CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



## OAKLAND MIDNIGHT BASKETBALL LEAGUE

Since midnight basketball returned to Oakland in

Summer 2018, the department has been a proud sponsor and coordinator of the league. The Oakland Midnight Basketball League (OMBL) is a violence-reduction and youth-development program designed to: (1) provide a safe activity for players and attendees during hours when shootings increase in Oakland; (2) connect players and attendees to needed resources and services in the community; and (3) foster positive relationships between players, their peers, and adult mentors.



Midnight Basketball Game, 2020



Midnight Basketball Game, 2019

The OMBL's objectives are to reduce criminal and/or violent behavior involving players by impacting the following constructs, demonstrated through research to reduce an individual's likelihood of delinquent behavior:

- O Increase positive peer associations:
  - Players have the opportunity to develop positive relationships with teammates and other league players, all of whom have a shared interest in the prosocial activity of basketball.
  - Increase prosocial attitudes and orientation: In weekly life skills workshops, players hear from motivational speakers who can connect them with positive resources, services, and opportunities in Oakland. Players are also surrounded by caring adults via OMBL staff members and coaches.



- time: Players are occupied in life skills workshops and basketball games between the hours of 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. on Friday evenings, when shootings increase in Oakland.
- Connect individuals to employment and internship opportunities: Each season, at least two player workshops are dedicated to employment, with the goal of connecting players to training opportunities and career pathways. The league also hosts an employment resource fair once each season to connect players and spectators to immediate job openings.

Each season, youth and young adults ages 16 to 25 play on one of 12 to 16 teams over a period of 8 weeks. Players are required to attend a life skills workshop for one hour before their game each night. Life skills workshops are intended to familiarize players with resources and opportunities that can directly benefit them outside the league, in areas such as employment, legal aid, and parenting. Players and spectators also receive a free meal each week provided by a rotating lineup of food trucks. Operation of the league is a partnership between the department and the Oakland Police Activities League (PAL).

In June 2019, the department applied for and received a \$1 million grant from the California Board of State and Community Corrections to operate six seasons of the OMBL over three years and provide case management services to high-need players. Players identified through the league as needing additional support with personal, family, or community challenges are referred to Youth ALIVE! for case management services.

## EMPLOYMENT EXPOSURE PROGRAM

When the COVID-19 pandemic arose, the department was unable to continue with the Summer 2020 and Winter 2021 seasons of OMBL. To continue the league's mission of connecting young people in Oakland to resources and positive activities, the department and PAL developed an eightweek employment exposure program to provide youth with instruction in the fields of construction, medical services, entrepreneurship, and sports technology. The construction pathway provides nine hours of instruction per week (72 hours total) in basic construction skills, with training provided in carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, tool identification, and construction terminology. The medical services pathway provides 2 hours of



Cypress Mandela Training Center Graduation, Construction Trade, 2020



instruction per week in first aid, CPR, medical terminology, and anatomy. The technology pathway provides two hours of instruction per week in sports video analytics, statistics, and coding. Students who participated in the medical services and technology pathways were also invited to participate in weekly yoga and legal rights education sessions. All program activities conformed with county orders regarding social distancing and restrictions on large gatherings.

Thirty-five youth enrolled in the Fall 2020 employment exposure program, with ten youth enrolled in two pathways. Of the 25 youth who completed at least half of the program sessions:

- O 25 (100%) would recommend the program to a friend
- 24 (98%) said they learned new skills that will help them in the future
- 20 (80%) plan to stay in touch with other participants they met in the program
- O 18 (72%) plan to stay in touch with adults who led the program

- ) 11 (44%) said they now think they can get a better job in the future
- All pathways provide weekly life coaching and dinner.

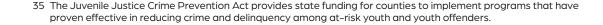
## SUMMER ENRICHMENT ACADEMY

In 2019, the Probation Department developed and implemented its first-ever Summer Enrichment Academy (SEA), a nine-week program designed to occupy and educate youth during summer months when they are likely to otherwise be idle. The design and implementation of the SEA was a collaboration between the Juvenile Facilities and Juvenile Field Services Divisions. Funding for this program was made possible by the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act. 35

Through this academy, juvenile institutional officers and deputy probation officers facilitated two classes each week for 40 youth on probation using two evidence-based curricula: Making Proud Choices! and the Carey Group Publishing's Carey Guides. On Tuesdays, instructors used the Making



Sports Technology Pathway, Employment Exposure Program





### **2019 Summer Enrichment Academy Graduation**



Director Alicia Mitchell, Deputy Probation Officer II Shawntea Williams, Institutional Supervisor II Nicole Perales, Director Delean Carson–Walker, Deputy Probation Officer III Annie Yeh, youth academy graduate, TAP Marquetta Moore, Unit Supervisor Sherri Guzman, Assistant Chief Brian Ford, Deputy Probation Officer II LaTanya Blakney, and Deputy Probation Officer II Ebony Mayfield (kneeling).

Proud Choices! curriculum to educate participants about the safe–sex approach to teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease prevention. On Thursdays, instructors used the Carey Guides to address skill areas in which adolescents are commonly deficient, including decision—making skills, overcoming impulsivity, and conflict resolution. Additionally, a representative from the Delinquency Prevention Network facilitated workshops on a range of topics that include career exploration, financial sustainability, and substance abuse education.

At the end of each week, youth who attended the two weekly classes were eligible to participate in prosocial field trips on Fridays or Saturdays. Field trip destinations included the Google campus, an Oakland Athletics baseball game, California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond's Office, the California State Capitol, the California Academy of Sciences, and an amusement park.

### **EVALUATION**

To evaluate the SEA, the Probation
Department's Research and Evaluation
Unit developed and administered a postprogram survey to participants. Survey
questions were developed based on an
informal group interview that members
of the Research and Evaluation Unit
conducted with program participants at
the beginning of the summer. In addition
to administering surveys, a member of this
Unit met individually with select students to
learn more about their experiences and to
determine how activities and curricula could
be modified to enhance the experience for
future participants.

In general, the SEA received positive feedback and aided in strengthening relationships between staff, service providers, youth, and their families. Probation will continue to operate the SEA in the coming years when it is safe to do so given the COVID-19 pandemic.



## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

## RESOLVING CONFLICT & HARM THROUGH RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative justice views crime in terms of the harm caused to people, relationships, and the community. Restorative justice programs allow victims, juvenile probation clients, and their family members and friends to come together to explore how everyone has been affected by an offense or conflict and, when possible, to decide how to repair the harm. It provides a very different perspective through which youth can better understand how their actions can harm others. Victims have the opportunity to convey how the crime or conflict affected them and ask the youth questions.



Learning first-hand how they have hurt others often helps youth to accept responsibility. Answering questions about the incident makes youth accountable to those they have harmed. These meetings sometimes lead to transformational changes in their lives by causing fundamental changes in a youths' relationships.

In the spirit of this understanding, the department contracts with three service providers to conduct restorative justice programs in Oakland, Hayward, Union City, and at Camp Wilmont Sweeney and Juvenile Hall.

- Justice Education Program, provides services for youth referred by the Juvenile Court and the department. The program teaches restorative practices to facilitate accountability strategies and encourage youth to take responsibility and make amends for the harm caused within their communities. Youth taking the course also receive case management services.
- Hayward Youth and Family Services
  Bureau offers youth at Camp
  Wilmont Sweeney and Juvenile
  Hall a minimum of four, one-hour
  monthly group sessions utilizing the
  evidence-based WhyTry curriculum,
  and multimedia activities to engage
  participants. Youth are engaged in
  age-appropriate sessions focused on



personal accountability and character building. The program connects youth with transitional services post-release, including navigation services and case management. An individualized assessment of each youth and their family is conducted to determine the appropriate linkage to services.

Union City Youth and Family Services offer restorative justice services to youth at Camp Wilmont Sweeney and Juvenile Hall. Their program begins with individual working sessions in which coordinators meet with youth to identify a support network in their community. The individuals who youth identify are invited to attend a group discussion session to learn about restorative justice practices. After the

youth is released, Union City Youth and Family Services works closely with the youth's school district and teachers to ensure the youth's academic needs are met when they return to school.

These organizations are a part of an expansive network that provide contracted services to the department. This network spans throughout Alameda County and provides prevention and intervention services to youth in the community and on probation.

Monthly Average Number of Families Receiving Restorative Justice Services		
2019	23	
2020	26	
2021	22	



Restorative Justice... Talking, Learning, Understanding, Healing



# PARTNERSHIPS THAT SUPPORT COMMUNITY-BASED ALTERNATIVES FOR YOUTH

Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. (YAP) operates a pilot program that provides wraparound services, an average of 10 hours a week and up to six months, to up to 30 high-risk youth on probation and their families.<sup>36</sup> This pilot program is one of six community-based youth justice agencies in the country funded by the Safely Home Fund, an initiative implemented by YAP in partnership with Georgetown University's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR). YAP shares the belief that every individual possesses strengths, potential, interests, and talents that make them unique, and can be built upon and shared. The program has been recognized as a promising practice by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the National Council on Crime and Delinquency.

YAP and CJJR collaborated to create this unique grant opportunity which includes a year of funding to provide community-based rehabilitative services for the highest-risk youth, many of whom have committed serious offenses, or have multiple arrests and lengthy out-of-home placements. In addition to improving youth outcomes, the Safely Home Fund

aims to provide public safety alternatives that decrease systemic racial disparities.

In late 2019, probation staff, YAP, and CJJR collaborated with local stakeholders to design the pilot program. The goal was to ensure that the program addressed the needs of youth in Alameda County. This program also adheres to the YAP model of hiring and training community-based advocates to empower youth and their parents/guardians to achieve their goals and affirm their family foundation.

YAP completes a holistic assessment for each referral and creates an individualized service plan for the youth they serve.

The service plan is then utilized to provide support in areas such as crisis intervention, skill development, and vocational training. Their model combines wraparound services, family support, mentoring, positive youth development, and restorative justice.

The foundation's contribution of \$580,162 provided program funding for 12 months. The program began receiving probation referrals in late Summer 2020 and will continue until the end of the program, September 2021.



<sup>36</sup> YAP is a national nonprofit that partners with justice and social services systems in 29 states and the District of Columbia to provide community-based alternatives to youth incarceration and out-of-home placement.

Chief Probation Officer Wendy Still shared her support for the YAP pilot program by stating,

"One of Alameda County's strategic plan goals is to be the safest in the nation.

The YAP partnership has proven to be essential in assisting the Alameda County

Probation Department to reach substantial milestones for our juvenile clients.

Community-based solutions, as an alternative to incarceration, is a long-standing strategy of the department and one that will remain at the forefront of our mission.

We are committed to supporting client-based services for our youth and families in a way that is meaningful, respectful, and designed to meet their unique needs."



Promoting success through strength-based, family-centered services designed to meet the needs of the youth.



## FOCUS ON YOUTH IN EXTENDED FOSTER CARE

## ASSEMBLY BILL 12 EXTENDED FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

Assembly Bill 12 created California's Extended Foster Care Program to improve outcomes for youth in foster care. The program allows eligible youth in the child welfare and probation systems to remain in foster care until age 21. These young adults are referred to as non-minor dependents and remain under the jurisdiction of the court and the supervision of the department. Furthermore, they must reside in licensed or approved placements to receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children -Foster Care. The goal of the program is to promote independence and selfsufficiency through mentoring and supportive-services provided by the department and its partners.

## IN YOUR CORNER: Alameda County Youth Adult Opioid Initiative

Between June 2019 and May 2020, overdoses were linked to more than 81,000 deaths, jumping 18% compared to the previous 12–month period. Every day 128 people in the United States die of opioid overdoses. Synthetic opioids, primarily the illicitly–manufactured

fentanyl, appear to be the main reason for the spike.<sup>37</sup> Although less impacted, the number of opioid-related deaths in California dramatically increased in recent years. In Alameda County, the rate of deaths for 20 to 24-year-old young adults more than doubled from 2018 – 2019.<sup>38</sup>

In 2018, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention awarded the department with a grant to identify and implement approaches for addressing youth affected by opioids in Alameda County. The *In Your Corner*: Alameda County Young Adult Opioid Initiative aims to reduce the negative impact

"A lot of youth are iffy asking for help. I've known a lot that have had bad experiences when they've asked for help, so a lot don't ask for help. They deal with it on their own."

- Youth in extended foster care

of opioids on youth in extended foster care in Alameda County. Youth in foster care, especially those transitioning to adulthood, are susceptible to opioid and substance use disorder. This is a stressful time when they are likely to exhibit



<sup>37</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Overdose Deaths Accelerating During COVID-19. December 2020. Available from: https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/p1218-overdose-deaths-covid-19.html

<sup>38</sup> California Department of Public Health. California Opioid Dashboard. January 2021. Available from: https://skylab.cdph.ca.gov/ODdash/

behaviors that reflect the effects of early trauma, abuse, and neglect.<sup>39</sup>

In 2020, the *In Your Corner* initiative focused on increasing awareness and reducing stigma around opioid use. Below are a few highlights:

- The initiative's task force increased community engagement at its monthly meetings and held discussions to increase awareness about the treatment barriers faced by youth in extended foster care
- The initiative partnered with The Social Changery to develop and launch an awareness campaign. This was informed by a literature review, interviews, and surveys with youth and community providers
- The awareness initiative partnered with community-based organizations,
  La Familia, and the Urban Strategies
  Council given their mental health and

substance use expertise and their dedication to serving the community

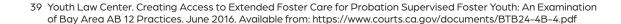
The *In Your Corner* awareness initiative and evaluation kicked off in early 2021 with digital and printed materials and a small–group training series

The *In Your Corner* initiative is aligned with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommendations to expand awareness about and access to treatment for substance use disorders.





Youth-informed pocket resource card; one of many campaign materials disseminated.





#### **WE RISE PROJECT**

In October 2018, the department received a three-year grant for \$519,040 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention through its Second Chance Act grant program to implement the WE RISE project. WE RISE provides intensive case management and life coaching support to gang-affiliated male youth returning to Oakland from Juvenile Hall. Services are delivered by one dedicated deputy probation officer and one dedicated life coach employed by the East Bay Asian Youth Center. The life coach and deputy probation officer work together to help youth achieve the following goals:

- O Comply with their terms and conditions of probation
- Reintegrate into school successfully and attend school regularly
- Strengthen relationships with family and social groups that have a positive influence
- Avoid violence and illegal activity

During the three-year grant period, WE RISE will serve 45 youth and their families. Program activities include the following:

Pre-Release Case Planning: Before a youth is released from Juvenile Hall, the deputy probation officer meets with them to discuss services that may be necessary in the community. The deputy probation officer and life coach then make referrals to services and programs, and work with the youth's family to address pressing needs.

- **School Welcome Circle:** When school is in session, the deputy probation officer and life coach convene a meeting with the youth and supportive teachers and staff to assist with a successful transition back to school.
- Life Map Development: Using the results from the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessment, the life coach helps participants develop a life map that outlines personal goals. The life map also incorporates steps to achieve these goals over a 12 to 18 month period.
- **Life Map Completion:** The life coach and youth regularly review and discuss the youth's progress on each life map goal. Youth earn up to \$800 for completion of life map tasks and goals.
- Contacts with Life Coach and Deputy Probation Officer: The deputy probation officer and life coach communicate with program youth weekly, often multiple times. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, contacts were more frequently conducted by phone or text message, but in-person outdoor meetings still took place.
- probation officer and life coach work closely with parents to address pressing needs for the family, understanding that youth will do better when their families do better. They organize family engagement activities,

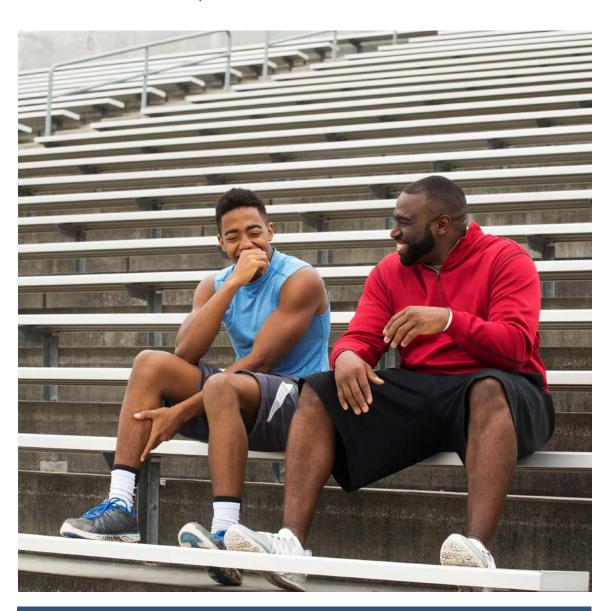


including family game and activity nights, to promote family bonding. The department also provides significant financial support to families in the form of bill payments and gift cards.

To determine program impact, the department assesses the following outcomes for each participant:

- Completion of probation
- School attendance and performance

- Strength of relationships with family and positive groups
  - Relationships with negative groups or gang affiliates
  - Technical violation of probation
  - Recidivism (conviction of a new offense)



Adult mentoring a young person



## COMBATING HOMELESSNESS THROUGH COLLABORATION

To combat the growing issue of homelessness, in particular among the justice-involved population, the department funded multiple innovative housing programs to address the housing and stabilization needs of our clients, and to educate partner agencies about housing services available to probation clients.

The department also participates in Alameda County's Department Heads Roundtable on Homelessness, the Homelessness Operational Committee and Encampment Response Team, and other housing-related committees throughout the county. Through these collaborations, providers of homeless services and advocates are better able to plan for outreach, prevention, and education around the issue of homelessness. These forums allow stakeholder organizations to influence

policy and ensure access to programs for homeless individuals who are served by the various city, county, and state agencies. Furthermore, by highlighting outstanding service delivery programs within the county and state, effective programs can be duplicated and shared.

Through the various collaborative meetings on homelessness, strong partnerships were fostered between homeless service providers, the department, Health Care for the Homeless, the City of Oakland, and many other stakeholders. In 2020 and beyond, the department plans to continue combating this crisis by providing streamlined services, educating clients about available resources and ultimately, creating long-lasting solutions to housing issues for probation clients. Between 2018 and April 2021, 4,232 referrals for housing were made.

#### PROBATION-SPONSORED DEDICATED RESOURCES

RESOURCE	SERVICES	INVESTMENT & SOURCE
Residential Multi-Service Center	30 beds for re–entry clients and wraparound services, including counseling, mental health, substance use, and educational support	\$6 Million AB 109 Funds
Dedicated Transitional Housing	35 beds for re–entry clients and supportive services	\$2.7 Million AB 109 Funds
Transitional Age Youth Initiative	60 to 80 beds for youth, housing stabilization services, shelter beds, transitional housing, and case management services	\$2 Million Title IV–E & Youthful Offender Block Grant Funding



## CREATING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The department continues to take the lead in coordinating activities to support Alameda County's Re-Entry Hiring Initiative. This Board of Supervisors' initiative aims to foster partnerships with public agencies and community-based organizations to reduce employment barriers and provide access to a livable wage for the hardest to employ population. This population is typically defined as individuals who have been involved with the criminal justice system.

Since the inception of the Re-Entry
Hiring Initiative in 2016, the department
collaborated with various county agencies
and community organizations to develop
a comprehensive strategy to employ
the re-entry population through the
establishment of an entry-level program
worker classification. Since then, agencies
and organizations participating in the ReEntry Hiring Initiative have collectively hired
over 500 individuals who are currently or
formerly involved in the justice system.

The department also allocated \$3 million to employment–related service contracts for youth and adults. Services are available in Oakland and multiple locations in the Southern Alameda County area, from Livermore to San Leandro. Contract services include job readiness and placement, transitional employment, job coaching, employment retention, vocational skill building, and education.



Joey Mason was the first individual hired into the program worker classification by the department.

#### **RE-ENTRY HIRING INITIATIVE**

CLASSIFICATION	NUMBER OF HIRES
Countywide Justice Involved Hires	505
County Department Program Worker Hires	37
Probation Community Based Provider Hires	57
Temporary Assignment Pool (TAP) Placements	3



### INVESTING IN FEMALE CLIENT-CENTERED PRACTICES

Women have distinct pathways that lead them to criminal activity as compared to men. It is often marked by violence, abuse, trauma, mental illness, and unhealthy relationships — all factors that translate into risk and need factors different from men. However, traditional risk and need assessments are primarily designed for men given that the great majority of justice—involved clients are male.

In response, in 2020, the department launched gender-responsive programming for adult female clients. One of the basic foundational components of the program was the implementation of the Women's Risk and Needs Assessment (WRNA) tool within Adult Operations. The WRNA was created by the National Institute of Corrections in collaboration with Dr. Patricia Van Voorhis, from the University of Cincinnati. It is a genderresponsive actuarial risk assessment tool designed to consider women's risk factors and to bring gender to the forefront of rehabilitation. From a public safety perspective, the department determined that it was crucial to use a risk and needs assessment tool that took into account a justice-involved female's socialpsychological needs.

The department also took the following steps to make its service delivery model for women more gender responsive. They include:

- Entering into a contract focused on assisting staff to build competencies on the WRNA in order to account for gender differences in risk factors and treatment needs
- Developing specific linkages to gender-responsive goals and referrals within our case management system
- Modifying existing contracts to include language related to gender-responsive treatment and minimum standards
- Creating gender-specific treatment groups
- Facilitating listening sessions with the community, justice-involved females, and community-based organizations to inform a gap analysis of existing programs and services
- O Contracting with community-based organizations to provide transitional housing to female clients

Through gender-responsive programming, the department is poised to provide more effective levels of supervision and treatment that will reduce recidivism among female clients.



### GENDER-RESPONSIVE SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL



#### **TAILORED CASE PLANNING**

Case planning is geared towards providing gender– responsive and trauma–informed care and based upon each individual's unique needs and cultural differences



#### **WOMEN'S RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

The WRNA is utilized to measure a female client's specific criminogenic needs and strengths, and used to create a comprehensive, holistic case plan



#### **GENDER-RESPONSIVE CASELOADS**

Female–only specialized caseloads were created to ensure clients are provided with access to quality services and supports specific to their needs



#### **COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES**

Service provider contracts include gender–responsive requirements and a quality control component to ensure female clients are provided with responsive, tailored services geared to their unique needs



#### STAFF DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

The effectiveness of services is enhanced through advanced coaching and staff development techniques, a curriculum focused on gender–responsive practices and trauma–informed care



## AWARDS FOR INNOVATION & COMMUNITY SERVICE

In Fiscal Year 2019/20, the department received awards in the areas of data, juvenile services, adult services, technology, community service, and reducing racial disparities. These awards were granted by state and national entities, non-profit organizations, and local collaboratives. They are a demonstration of the county's commitment to advancing progressive criminal justice practices and would not have been possible without the support of the department's staff, Alameda County Board of Supervisors, Alameda County Administrator's Office, local agencies, community-based organization, labor unions, government partners, and many others.

### TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS IN CASE MANAGEMENT





#### Excellence Award – 2019

#### Excellence Award - 2020

In recognition of the department's successful implementation of Tyler Supervision, a state-of-the-art case management system

In recognition of the department's enhancement of Tyler Supervision through the addition of pretrial program components



The department also received awards from local, county, and national organizations. Five awards were received from NACo, an advocacy organization that represents the interests of county government within the United States.

CATEGORY	BASIS FOR AWARD
Oakland Police Activities League Award – 2019	In recognition of the department's financial support of the Oakland Midnight Basketball League, a collaborative program focused on providing young adults with positive alternatives, resources, and mentorship during hours when shootings increase in Oakland
No More Tears Award – 2019	In recognition of Chief Still's support of the organization in its efforts to serve men incarcerated at San Quentin State Prison and the re-entry population. This includes strengthening rehabilitative and educational services provided to inmates while in custody, and enhancing re-entry and continuity of care processes and services in the community
Words to Deeds Award – 2019	In recognition of Chief Still's 42 years of dedicated service to criminal justice reform, and for her leadership to end the criminalization of individuals with mental illness by supporting proven strategies that promote early intervention, access to effective treatments, planned reentry, and the preservation of public safety
NACo's Civic Education & Public Information Award – 2019	Creation of an automated public data program that makes information about probation clients available to the public online
NACo's Criminal Justice & Public Safety Award — 2019	Achievement of significant reductions in out-of-home placements and racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system
NACo's Criminal Justice & Public Safety Award – 2019	Elimination of adult criminal justice fees in Alameda County
NACo's Criminal Justice & Public Safety Award — 2020	Creation and incorporation of a first-of-its-kind pretrial component into the department's case management system, Tyler Supervision
NACo's Achievement Award – 2020	In recognition of its support of the Oakland Midnight Basketball League (see Oakland Police Activities League – 2019 for a description)



## **EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION**& RECOGNITION PROGRAM



#### Display of Awards

In late 2018, the department created the Employee Appreciation & Recognition Program. The purpose of this program was to celebrate the contributions of our employees and to promote an innovative, inclusive, and high-functioning organizational environment. This program is unique from the standpoint that an employee may nominate another employee for an award, or external stakeholders who have demonstrated their commitment to supporting and/or partnering with us in the accomplishment of our collective public safety goals.



Chief's Challenge Coin

The determination of award recipients involves a highly competitive selection process where nominees are carefully considered by various selection committees. Award categories include Administrative Staff of the Year, Peace Officer of the Year, Divisional Employee of the Quarter, and Special Recognition. Award recipients receive a letter of commendation, a certificate, and a challenge coin from the Chief Probation Officer. This is an exciting program that has enabled the department to recognize and promote the many contributions of its employees and to profile the difference their work makes in the lives of our clients and the community.



**Award Cake** 





**Peace Officer** 

of the Year

MR. JOHN TORRES

Deputy Probation Officer II



MR. ROBERT WALTON
Probation Specialist



MR. JUSTIN EAGLIN
Deputy Probation Officer III



MS. DONNA HOM

Departmental Human Resource Officer



MS. NICOLE PERALES
Institutional Supervisor II



MS. CLEO LIAO
Financial Services Specialist II



## KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE



Pictured above is \$438,675 in cash and over \$5.9 million (street value) worth of narcotics (cocaine, fentanyl, heroin, and methamphetamine) confiscated from three locations in March 2021.

The department is an active member of four multi-agency law enforcement task forces: the Alameda County Narcotics Task Force, the Alameda County Regional Auto Theft Task Force, the Oakland Police Department Crime Reduction Team, and the Sexual Assault Felony Enforcement Task Force. Membership in these task forces includes representatives from the Alameda County Sheriff's Office, Oakland Police Department, Alameda County District Attorney's Office, Hayward Police Department, East Bay Regional Parks Police, Oakland Housing Authority, California Highway Patrol, United States Marshals Service, and the National Insurance Crime Bureau.

Participating on these task forces allows the department to leverage resources and establish professional relationships that enable a comprehensive, multidisciplinary response. The purpose of these teams is to:

- Cocate and apprehend fugitives and high profile "shooters" in Oakland
  - Conduct surveillance and searches for firearms and activities associated with narcotics, human trafficking, chop-shop operations, and crimes of violence
  - Conduct investigations of sexually exploited persons, human trafficking, and child pornography cases.

Deputy probation officers assigned to these teams are highly trained professionals who volunteer for the assignment despite the high-risk nature of task force operations. They participate in operations that range from recovering stolen vehicles and conducting surveillance activities to confiscating numerous firearms and illicit substances.

Probation task force members also participate in the Ceasefire strategy as a part of a multi-agency coordinated effort to reduce gun violence in Oakland. The ceasefire strategy offers services to individuals who are at the highest level for risk of gun violence due to



gang and group affiliation, or proximity to recent acts involving gun violence. As a part of this process, team members make telephone contact or more personalized notifications to the homes of individuals of interest in an effort to encourage their participation in services offered through the ceasefire strategy. Individuals who agree to participate attend face–to–face meetings with multiple law enforcement entities, community–based organizations, and members from the clergy. During these meetings, individuals are offered life coaching and other services and interventions through community providers. They are also advised by law enforcement, the community, and members of the clergy of the need to come together to end gun violence within our communities.

#### **2016 – 2020 SPECIAL TASK FORCE RECOVERIES**

\$	CASH	\$9,510,211
	NARCOTICS (STREET VALUE) \$7	8,854,588
600	AUTO RECOVERIES	733
وأ	FIREARMS	3,535
80	ARRESTS	1,049
	SEARCH AND ARREST WARRANTS EXECUTED	1,030
	SEX OFFENDER COMPLIANCE CHECKS	949
iji	CEASEFIRE CALL IN ATTENDED BY CLIENTS	156
	CEASEFIRE NOTIFICATIONS	884



Probation Task Force Supervisor De Andre Lewis



Deputy Probation Officer III Michael Toy



Deputy Probation Officer III Enrique Cisneros



Deputy Probation
Officer III
Melvin Winn

Undercover probation personnel not pictured for safety reasons.



## HONORING THE FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF THAT PEOPLE CAN CHANGE

The Wall of Success initiative was suggested by staff via the virtual suggestion box on the department's intranet. This staff-led initiative consists of 10 committee members representing a cross-section of employees. It supports the department's goal of continuously developing innovative practices that honor the belief that people can change. The Wall of Success displays photos of successful probation clients with a summary of how each individual changed their lives for the better. It also includes positive commentary about the client from their deputy probation officer.

At its core, the Wall of Success serves as proof that the department lives up to its mission of restoring communities by providing compassionate supervision and accountability to justice-involved youth and adults. It is a repository of human impact and client success stories that foster client motivation by showcasing stories that define what it means to "lead by example."

A ribbon cutting ceremony to unveil the Wall of Success occurred on April 7, 2021, in conjunction with the *National Day of Hope*, at the Juvenile Justice Center. Eventually each of the department's division headquarters offices will also display a Wall of Success. This endeavor is scheduled to come to fruition in the late Fall of 2021.

Probation client Samuel Neeley was one of the first to be recognized during the ribbon cutting ceremony. Samuel's triumph over a long life of struggles prove that it is never too late to change and create a better life for yourself. As a child, Samuel grew up with parents who were involved in the criminal justice system. At the age of 12, Samuel entered the criminal justice system himself. Throughout his teenage and adult years, Samuel was on probation, on parole, and incarcerated numerous times.

Samuel decided to turn his life around by the time he was released from Soledad State Prison in 2014. While at Soledad, he voluntarily completed numerous self-help courses and earned his GED. Once released, he obtained a job as a chef at the Academy of Sciences. Within a year, he promoted to supervisor and eventually became a sous-chef de cuisine, the second in command in a kitchen. He hopes to serve as an example that it is never too late to make healthier choices.

The Alameda County Probation Department is confident that Samuel will continue to excel in all his endeavors and wishes him continued success along his path.



05



## WALL OF SUCCESS RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY APRIL 7, 2021









Staff and probation client Samuel Neeley(bottom right) pictured with Chief Probation Officer Wendy Still.



#### PROMOTING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SAFE ALTERNATIVES FOR FAMILIES

In 2017, members of the department's ICare Committee coordinated an annual Trunk-or-Treat event, a community outreach event intended to provide children with a safe alternative to traditional trick or treating. ICare is a departmental collaboration that seeks to promote public outreach, staff inclusion, and community engagement.

During the Trunk or Treat event, volunteers from the department, the Alameda County Sheriff's Office, the Alameda County Fire Department, and the Alameda County District Attorney's Office decorated the trunks of their cars in different festive themes and handed out candy to hundreds of local children on Halloween night. The

event was held in the parking lot of the Juvenile Justice Center in San Leandro. The family–friendly environment included lively music, popcorn, picture booths, and games. Youth from Camp Wilmont Sweeney also participated in the event and cast their vote for the most creative trunk designs.

Trunk or Treat was such a resounding success in 2017 that it was continued on Halloween night in 2018 and 2019. Unfortunately, the event was suspended in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it is the department's plan to continue this tradition in the future in order to provide a safe and fun Halloween night alternative for local families.







#### TRUNK OR TREAT 2017 – 2019















#### **3RD ANNUAL** THANKSGIVING OUTREACH

This was the third year in a row the

enjoy the Thanksgiving holiday.

department provided Thanksgiving meals

to clients. It is our intent to continue this

tradition to help clients and their families

Holiday celebrations are usually centered around food, but for clients who are struggling financially, it can be a difficult time of the year. For others, shopping, prepping, and cooking a Thanksgiving feast can feel like a daunting undertaking, and even more so, amid the pandemic.

To help our clients and their families overcome these challenges and enjoy Thanksgiving, the department provided 125 chef-prepared Thanksgiving meal kits to 70 juvenile and 55 adult clients and their families. Given the limited number of meals available, eligibility for a Thanksgiving meal focused on clients with children.

Probation staff picked up fully cooked meals and delivered them to clients or provided each client with a voucher to enable them to pick up the meal kits from Lucky's grocery store. Each meal kit included the following food items, which fed six to eight people:

Fully cooked turkey (10-12 lbs.)

40 oz mashed potatoes

32 oz stuffing

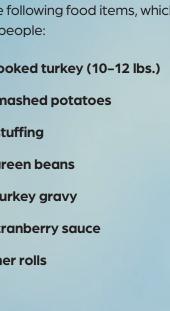
16 oz green begns

24 oz turkey gravy

24 oz cranberry sauce

12 dinner rolls

8" pie







Pictured are Deputy Probation Officers Andy Tran, Annie Yeh, and John Torres picking up Thanksgiving Dinners and food vouchers for delivery to clients and their families on Thanksgiving day. Photograph on bottom right is the parent of a youth on probation receiving a Thanksgiving dinner.









## BIKES! BIKES! AND MORE BIKES!

#### **FOLSOM STATE PRISON**

Throughout the year, Cameron Park Rotary Club members collect bicycles from various locations throughout Northern California, deliver them to Folsom State Prison where they are refurbished and reconditioned by inmates. This program allows inmates to gain employment skills, while providing refurbished bicycles to youth and adults in the community.

The department donates bicycles during community outreach events throughout the year, to include school events and during the holiday season.

On December 10, 2020, Folsom State Prison Warden Rick Hill, in collaboration with the Cameron Park Rotary Club, donated approximately 260 bicycles to various community organizations. The department was amongst several agencies that received bicycles of which the department received 85.

In true holiday spirit, the department promptly donated the 85 bicycles to three organizations within Alameda County:
California Field Schools, Eunice Law – The Legacy Continues event, and Trybe, Inc.



Bike Restoration Program at Folsom State Prison





Images below represent family-oriented events within Alameda County in which the department donated refurbished bicycles, helmets, and safety equipment.





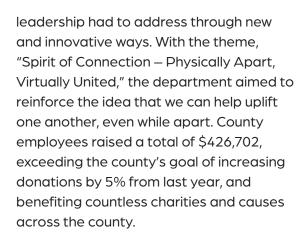






## COMBINED CHARITIES CAMPAIGN





In addition, the county exceeded the number of employees who donated by 108% (1,057). This amazing feat could not have been accomplished without the kindness and generosity of each and every employee.

As a department, we raised a total of \$25,010, which reflects a 91% increase from 2019's overall department total, and tying for first place. Moreover, the department exceeded its goal of employee participation by 282%. In

Each year, departments throughout Alameda County participate in a fundraising drive known as the Combined Charities Campaign. The Combined Charities Campaign is an easy way for Alameda County employees to make donations to a wide variety of charities through the ease of payroll deductions. County employees can select a charity from a pre-established list of charities falling under several charitable federations or select their own charity. Donations can be made in monthly installments via payroll deductions or through a one-time donation made by check or a mobile payment service. This creates ease for employees through the provision of a multitude of ways to give.

In 2020, the department led the Alameda County Combined Charities Drive. Due to the impact of COVID-19, 2020 saw the first year that the campaign was conducted virtually posing new sets of challenges that the department's Combined Charities



addition to raising significant funding for charity, probation executives and staff came together to donate a variety of gift cards and prizes for the weekly combined charities raffle. The department's Combined Charities committee worked

tirelessly to execute the weekly raffle, keep county department coordinators informed and engaged, and troubleshooting issues or questions employees had regarding Combined Charities.







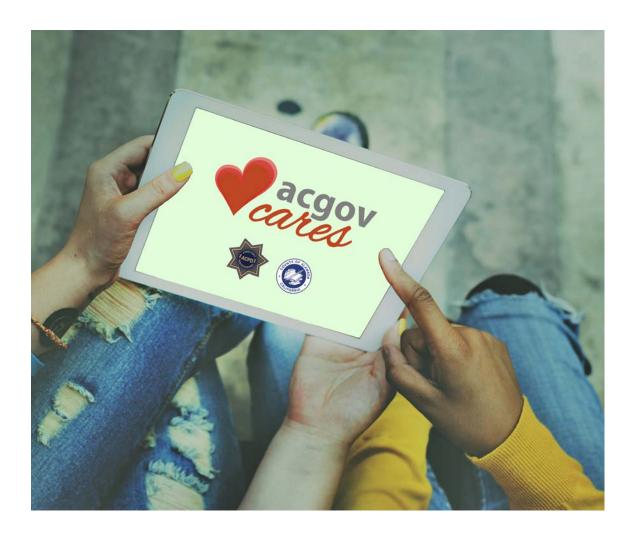






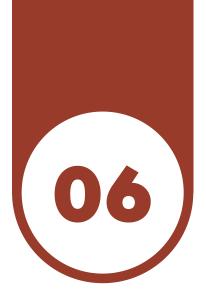












### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Ne creation of this manual would not have been possible without the contributions of our many staff and partners. Together we achieved many successes in the past five years. This was truly a team effort focused on affecting long-term positive change through our deliberate efforts to serve as the catalysts for change within our communities.

As an Alameda County strong collaborative, we have demonstrated success time and time again through our commitment to staying the course amid the many challenges we worked

together to overcome. To that end, I am thankful for your partnership throughout this adventure and for staying true to the principles that we stand for as a community through your unwavering support.

As I transition into retirement in the near future, it is my hope that this manual will serve as an example to others of the possibilities that can be achieved when we choose to overcome mediocrity through a mindset that refuses to accept failure as an option.

## ALAMEDA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT

#### **ADULT COURT**

Each branch of the Superior Court of California has jurisdiction over infraction, misdemeanor, and felony cases that occur in the county where the court is located. Within the superior court system, criminal courts conduct arraignments, pretrial, preliminary examination, motion, readiness, trial, sentencing, and probation-related hearings, and other criminal proceedings. Alameda County has four criminal courts: Fremont Hall of Justice, René C. Davidson Courthouse, Wiley W. Manuel Courthouse, and East County Hall of Justice.

The Superior Court of Alameda County also includes collaborative courts that focus on underlying issues in the lives of persons who come before the court on criminal, juvenile or dependency matters. Collaborative courts may focus on specific groups of people (e.g., veterans or unhoused individuals) or treatment needs, e.g., substance abuse or mental health.

#### **JUVENILE COURT**

The juvenile court system focuses on delinquency matters or violations of criminal law involving children under the age of 18 (minors), extended foster care for youth up to age 21, and dependency matters. The court also handles juvenile dependency matters related to the abuse

or neglect of a minor. In Alameda County, cases involving juveniles are heard and disposed through the Juvenile Justice Center located in San Leandro. Deputy probation officers play a prominent role in the juvenile court process. They represent the department in matters involving juveniles, conduct investigations, and prepare detailed reports with recommendations for the court to consider on the disposition of individual cases.



**Alameda County Superior Court** 



## JUVENILE JUSTICE & DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COMMISSION

The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission of Alameda County is a state-mandated, court-appointed authority. Its general purpose is to inquire into the administration of juvenile court law in Alameda County to ensure that youths' rights and their physical, mental, and moral welfare are not violated.

The Commission is dedicated to promoting an effective juvenile justice system that operates with credibility, dignity, fairness, and respect for youth, their families, and their communities.

#### THE COMMISSION'S RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- O Conducting annual inspections of juvenile facilities in the county, including jail and lockup shelters, detention facilities, and group homes used for the confinement or placement of minors
- Conducting public and closed hearings on matters related to juvenile law
- Advocating for youth involved in the justice system and for services to meet their needs

The Commission currently consists of 10 members appointed to four-year terms

(two years for youth members) by the presiding judge of the Superior Court of Alameda County with agreement from the supervising judge of the Juvenile Court. As an objective and diverse body, the Commission is a critical and collaborative partner of the department.

#### **COMMISSION MEMBERS:**

#### **MEMBERS - CITY**

- Vamsey Palagummi, Chair Dublin

  Elana Metz, Vice Chair Emeryville

  Zachary Norris Oakland

  Jessica Selvin Oakland

  Erica Hooper–Arana San Leandro

  Louise C. Anderson Oakland
  - **George Galvis** Oakland
  - **Spencer Hooper** Oakland
  - Pamela Mchombo Oakland
  - Gina Peralta Oakland
  - Patricia Nunley Oakland
  - Xochtil Larios Oakland

#### **MEMBER EMERITA - CITY**

Kamal Nair – Los Altos Hills



#### **PARTNERSHIPS**

The Alameda County Probation Department would like to acknowledge the contributions of its many partners, including the following agencies and organizations:

Alameda County Board of Supervisors
Alameda County Administrator's Office
Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services
Alameda County District Attorney's Office
Alameda County Health Care Services Agency
Alameda County Office of Education
Alameda County Public Defender's Office
Alameda County Public Health Department
Alameda County Sheriff's Office
Alameda County Social Services Agency
Alameda County Superior Court
Oakland Unified School District
Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission
City Police Departments within Alameda County
Community Advisory Board
Community Corrections Partnership Executive Committee
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Service Employees International Union
Alameda County Management Employees Association



**Victim Advocates** 

Probation Peace Officers' Association

Community & Faith-Based Organizations

#### **County Administrator's Office**

County of Alameda - CA



































## EDITING, CREATIVE DESIGN, PHOTOGRAPHY & RESEARCH TEAM

I would like to recognize and give special thanks to the editors, designers, photographers, and research team who worked tirelessly to produce such a wonderful and informative manual.

This team spent countless hours designing the report, selecting



images that represent our values, and composing a compelling story of how this department has achieved so much for our clients in the past five years.

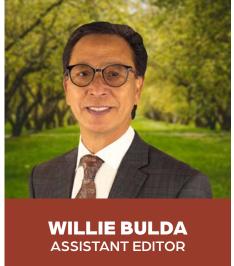
It is through their collaboration with our staff and external stakeholders that they compiled the information in this manual to accurately reflect the needs of the community in a sensitive and enlightened way.









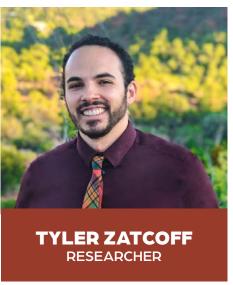




**ASSISTANT EDITOR** 













### **APPENDIX**

o ensure that the general public has the benefit of understanding terms associated with probation, I included within this section commonly used probation terms. These terms support references to specific topic areas, with the caveat that the meaning of these terms tend to evolve with changes in legislation and/or vernacular specific to the criminal justice system.

This section also provides terms that are not used within this manual, but which are commonly used within the justice system.

I am hopeful that you find these definitions useful and that they help accurately communicate the many different topics covered within this manual.

## COMMONLY USED PROBATION TERMS

#### **ADJUDICATION**

The portion of a hearing in which the judge or a hearing officer determines whether a youth committed the crime or any portion of the crime for which they have been charged.

#### **ADJUDICATORY HEARING**

A fact-finding court proceeding that determines whether the allegations of a juvenile petition or other pleading are supported by legally-admissible evidence. An adjudicatory hearing is similar to a non-jury trial in a criminal or civil proceeding.

#### **AFTERCARE**

Refers to the post-release services, supervision, and supports that help adults and youth reintegrate safely and successfully.

#### **ALTERNATIVE SANCTIONS**

Nontraditional sentences in lieu of imprisonment and fines. Examples of alternative sanctions are community service, in-home detention, day reporting, drug treatment, or placement on electronic monitoring.

#### **ARRAIGNMENT**

The initial appearance of youth or adults before a court, at which time the court advises them of their formal charges, informs them of their constitutional rights, appoints counsel, schedules a hearing date, and establishes the need for detention, incarceration, alternative placement, or conditional release pending the next hearing.

#### **ARREST**

The act of taking a person into custody to be questioned or charged for the commission of a crime.

#### **BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT**

A legal standard in which the degree of certainty required by the judge or jury to find a defendant guilty leaves no reasonable doubt that the defendant committed the alleged crime. This standard requires that no other logical explanation can be derived or inferred from the evidence provided.

#### **BURDEN OF PROOF**

The duty to establish a claim or allegation by admissible and credible evidence at the time of hearing. Also referred to as "the legal standard," this duty is usually the responsibility of the accuser, not the accused.

#### **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

A specified period of supervised work or service ordered by a court to be performed by a youth or adult without payment or compensation.



#### **COMMUNITY SUPERVISION**

Formal or informal probation supervision in the community ordered by a court.

#### **COMPETENCY TO STAND TRIAL**

A defendant's capacity to understand the nature of the proceedings, consult with counsel, and assist in preparing his or her defense. Due process prohibits the government from prosecuting someone who is not legally competent to stand trial.

#### **CONGREGATE CARE**

Term used to describe placement settings that consist of 24-hour supervision for youth in varying degrees of highly structured settings, such as group homes, residential child care communities or institutions, residential treatment facilities, or maternity homes.

#### **COOPERATIVE SUPERVISION**

Supervision by the correctional agency of one jurisdiction of a person placed on probation by a court or on parole by a paroling authority in another jurisdiction. This is also known as "courtesy supervision."

#### COURT

An agency of the judicial branch of government, authorized or established by statute or constitution, consisting of one or more judges or judicial officers who have the authority to decide on legal cases.

#### CRIME

An illegal act punishable by law. A misdemeanor is a low-level crime, while a felony is a more serious crime.

#### **CRIMINOGENIC NEEDS**

Issues, risk factors, characteristics, or problems that relate to a person's likelihood of reoffending or recidivating.

#### **DEFERRED ENTRY OF JUDGMENT**

A possible avenue for a youth who commits a felony. To be eligible for a deferred entry of judgment, the youth must be at least 14 years old and have never had probation revoked or been committed to the state's Division of Juvenile Justice. If a youth successfully completes the program ordered by the court, the deferred entry of judgment matter is dismissed and deemed never to have occurred.

#### **DEPENDENT**

A minor who needs the services or intervention of the state, pursuant to Welfare & Institutions Code 300, as a result of parental abandonment, neglect, abuse, or failure or inability to control the minor's behavior. In some jurisdictions, very young children who have committed delinquent acts are treated as dependent children.

#### **DEPUTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY (DDA)**

An attorney who works for the county District Attorney's Office and is charged with prosecuting crimes and representing the state's interests. DDAs are tasked with reviewing cases referred to their office by law enforcement, determining which cases should be brought before the court, and prosecuting cases. They may also work with the defendant's attorney to settle a case or take it to trial, depending on multiple factors.



#### **DEPUTY PROBATION OFFICER**

Pursuant to Penal Code section 830.5, an agent or officer responsible for the court-ordered investigation and community supervision of youth or adults under oversight of the probation department.

#### **DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER**

An attorney appointed to represent defendants who cannot afford to hire a private lawyer.

#### **DETENTION**

The temporary care of youth in physically restrictive facilities, usually before the adjudication and disposition of their case.

#### **DETENTION HEARING**

A court proceeding in which the court determines the interim custody or placement of an accused youth pending adjudication.

#### **DIRECT FILE**

Youth who commit a serious or violent felony after the age of 14 whose case is filed directly in adult court and who face adult consequences. Proposition 57, approved by voters in November 2016, ended the practice of direct file and instead allows a judge to determine if a youth should be transferred to adult court.

#### DISPOSITION

A court order that determines what is to be done with a youth following adjudication; or the formal resolution of a case before the court. For a youth, disposition is analogous to the term "sentence" in an adult criminal case. Dispositions in cases regarding youth and status offenders may include sanctions

and limitations upon the youth's conduct and liberty, as well as treatment and other rehabilitative interventions.

#### **DISPOSITION HEARING**

A hearing that determines the appropriate sentence, placement, or terms and conditions of supervision for a youth following adjudication. The hearing includes consideration of the youth's social and treatment needs.

#### **DIVERSION**

The practice of referring the youth to a community-based program in lieu of adjudication or detention. Successful completion of a diversion program results in the dismissal or withdrawal of formal charges. Youth who fail to comply with the diversion terms and conditions are normally subject to adjudication.

#### **ELECTRONIC MONITORING**

An electronic device that is designed to verify that a person is at a given location during specified times or to ensure compliance with sanctions or restrictions, such as house arrest or curfew.

#### **EMANCIPATED MINOR**

A legal mechanism by which the court agrees to free a person under the age of 18 from the control of their parents or guardians. Emancipated minors are totally self–supporting and their parents no longer have the right to their care, custody, and earnings, nor the responsibility to perform parental duties.



#### **FELONY**

A serious crime designated by law or statute, for which the maximum penalty may be incarceration in a county jail, state prison, or federal penitentiary.

#### **HEARING**

A proceeding before a judicial officer in which information, documentation and legal arguments are submitted by the parties and legal findings are made.

#### **HOME SUPERVISION**

A temporary release program in which a youth or adult is released to their home, with or without an electronic monitoring device, until the court process is complete.

#### **INCORRIGIBILITY**

Youth on probation supervision, pursuant to Welfare & Institutions Code 601, for repeatedly failing to obey parents, habitual truancy, or harmful conduct.

#### INTAKE/INVESTIGATIONS

Youth cases, pursuant to Welfare & Institutions Code 601 or 602, processed through the Intake or Investigations Units of the department.

#### **INTERSTATE TRANSFER**

The transfer of supervision of a youth or adult from one state to another, pursuant to an agreement called an Interstate Compact.

#### JUSTICE-INVOLVED

Individuals who are involved with the criminal justice system, including individuals in prison, in county jail, on probation, on parole, or undergoing an adult or juvenile matter through the court(s).

#### **JUVENILE**

According to California state law, a minor or child under the age of 18.

#### **MIRANDA RIGHTS**

A warning read by a probation or law enforcement officer reminding a youth or adult of their right to remain silent and to have an attorney present during questioning.

#### **MISDEMEANOR**

A crime designated by law or statute that is of a less serious nature than a felony. The maximum penalty provided for a misdemeanor may include imprisonment for up to one year, usually in a county or municipal facility, a fine, or both.

#### **PERMANENCY**

A social work practice philosophy that promotes a permanent living situation for every child entering the foster care system.

#### **PETITION**

A document prepared by a prosecuting attorney and presented to the court that requests relief, damages, or performance by an opposing party.

#### **PLACEMENT**

Youth placed by a juvenile court in a residence in the community other than that of their primary caretaker.



#### PREPONDERANCE OF THE EVIDENCE

A legal standard in which the evidence, facts, or circumstances are more convincing than those offered in opposition. To establish a preponderance of the evidence, a plaintiff needs to show that a particular fact or event was more probable than not to have occurred.

#### **PRIVATE ATTORNEY**

An attorney hired and paid for by a defendant who requires representation in court.

#### PROBABLE CAUSE

A legal standard in which the evidence, facts or circumstances would lead a reasonable person to believe a suspect has committed a specific crime or delinquent act. To establish probable cause, law enforcement officers must be able to point to objective circumstances that led them to believe the suspect committed the crime or delinquent act.

#### **PROBATION**

A legal status imposed by court order that permits an adjudicated youth or sentenced adult to be supervised in the community by a probation officer and requires the individual to comply with conditions, restrictions, and treatment prescribed by the court.

#### **RE-ENTRY**

Re-entry is the process of preparing and planning for adults released from jail or prison or youth who have been in out-of-home placements to transition back to their home communities.

#### RESTITUTION

A payment or service rendered by an offending youth or adult within a specified time for the benefit of their victim(s) who suffered personal injury or economic loss as a result of the offense. Restitution is often imposed as a condition of probation or parole.

#### **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

A process and practice in which all parties with a stake in an offense voluntarily come together to determine collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offense and its implications for the future. Restorative justice is a facilitated approach that involves collaboration among victims, the youth or adult who committed the offense, and the community. It establishes a process and forum for implementing sanctions that make amends for the wrongdoing.

#### REVOCATION

The termination of probation by the court or termination of parole by the paroling authority following a hearing and the finding of a violation. Revocations of probation usually result in more restrictive dispositions or sentences, including confinement.

#### **REVOCATION HEARING**

A judicial or administrative hearing held to determine whether a youth or adult's probation or parole status should be vacated because of an alleged violation of terms and conditions. The hearing is to determine whether the youth or adult has violated the terms of his or her supervision, not to establish criminal liability; the standard of proof is usually by preponderance of the evidence.



#### STATUS OFFENDER

A youth who has been adjudicated for conduct that would not be an offense if committed by an adult (Welfare & Institutions Code 601), such as running away from home, truancy from school, disobeying parents or guardians, or drinking alcohol.

#### **SUBPOENA**

A written order issued by a court clerk or judicial officer requiring that a person appear in court on a specified day and time. Failure to comply can result in a contempt of court charge, which may be punishable by a fine, jail time, or both.

#### **SUPERVISION**

The court–authorized and required oversight of youth or adults by a probation or parole agency that monitors their activities to ensure they comply with the terms, conditions and restrictions of their probation or parole.

#### SUSTAINED JUVENILE PETITION

The same as a guilty verdict in adult court. When a minor is accused of committing a felony or misdemeanor crime, the prosecutor files a "petition" against the minor.

#### **TECHNICAL VIOLATION**

An act by a youth or adult on probation that does not conform to the terms and conditions of their probation, but is not an actual crime.

#### **VICTIM**

An individual or entity that suffered injury or economic loss as a result of an individual's illegal conduct. A victim may be a private citizen, a business, an organization, or a unit of government.

#### **VIOLATION**

An offense designated by statute, ordinance or regulation for which there is no penalty enacted other than a fine, forfeiture, or other civil penalty. A violation is also known as an infraction.

#### **VIOLATION OF PROBATION**

When a probation client engages in conduct that is prohibited by his or her conditions of probation or fails to perform an action that is required by his or her conditions of probation. A violation of probation is not considered a crime.

#### **WARRANT**

An order of arrest issued by the court.

#### **WARDSHIP**

A circumstance where a youth has been placed on formal probation and is considered a ward of the court (Section 602 of the Welfare & Institutions Code). This is commonly referred to as "wardship status."



#### **ALAMEDA COUNTY...**



As we stand together in solidarity to fight against inequality in our justice system, the time for the **change** that we want to see is now.

Wendy Still, MAS

Weeks :



## CREATING THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE





# "Improving the quality of life within our communities..."

**Alameda County Probation Department** 

