

Adult Detention Facilities

Background

The California Penal Code, Section 919(b), requires the Grand Jury to inquire into the condition and management of public prisons within the county. To discharge this responsibility, the Law, Justice, and Public Safety Committee of the 1998-1999 Ventura County Grand Jury made announced and unannounced inspection visits to adult and juvenile detention facilities in the county. Juvenile detention facilities are the responsibility of the County Probation Department and are the subject of a separate report.

The Sheriff reorganized the Detention Services Division in 1993. A Chief Deputy supervises overall operations, with Commanders assigned to each of the three bureaus.

- Court Services Bureau
 1. Provide security and bailiffs for 31 courtrooms located in the Ventura Hall of Justice and the Simi Valley Court House.
 2. Transport prisoners throughout the state.
 3. Facilitate civil processes for the Ventura County court system.
- Unsented Facilities Bureau
 1. Operate the Pre-Trial Detention Facility (Main Jail) located in the Ventura County Government Center.
 2. Operate the East County Jail located in Thousand Oaks.
- Sentenced Facilities Bureau
 1. Operate the Honor Farm located in Ojai.
 2. Operate the Todd Road Jail located in Santa Paula.

This report does not include activities of the Court Services Bureau. In gathering facts the Grand Jury visited the following adult detention facilities:

- Ventura County Main Jail,
- Todd Road Jail,
- Ojai Honor Farm
 1. Men's Facility
 2. Women's Facility
- East County Jail.

During the course of the inspection visits, the Grand Jury:

- Reviewed the provisions of Title 15, Subchapter 4, Minimum Standards for Local Detention Facilities.
- Reviewed written policies and procedures.
- Observed operations within the adult detention facilities, both during day and night time hours.
- Interviewed management personnel and sworn and unsworn employees who work in the facilities.
- Interviewed male and female inmates.

For comparison purposes, the Grand Jury visited the Los Angeles and Santa Barbara County Jails, as well as the State Prison in Frontera.

The Main Jail, Todd Road Jail, and Ojai Honor Farm are the County's primary detention facilities. The East County Jail provides only short term, temporary detention.

Main Jail

We spent several hours observing the booking process. We observed operations in each of the four quadrangles, the medical ward, the kitchen area, and in the high security area.

Todd Road Jail

The Grand Jury visited the Todd Road Jail on August 21 and September 16, 1998. This is the newest and most modern detention facility in the County.

It is County policy that the following inmates not be housed at Todd Road:

- Inmates charged with murder or attempted murder,
- Three strikes inmates,
- Inmates sentenced to State Prison.

We observed operations in three of the four quadrangles (the fourth was not in use), the medical facility, the kitchen area, the high security area, and the vocational training area.

Ojai Honor Farm

The Grand Jury visited the Honor Farm on September 4, 1998; February 2, and March 10, 1999. The Honor Farm houses minimum security male prisoners and sentenced and unsentenced female prisoners. It is County policy that the following male inmates not be housed at the Honor Farm:

- Inmates who are not on Level 1. See F-5 below for a definition of Level 1.
- Inmates charged with soliciting or engaging in lewd, obscene, or dissolute conduct in a public place.

The County plans to move the male prisoners to the Todd Road Jail and make the Honor Farm an all female facility in the near future.

We observed operations in both the male and female housing areas, the medical ward, the kitchen area and the vocational training area. One of the Grand Jurors ate an inmate meal and found it satisfactory. We also observed operations in the farm area.

The Sheriff conducts “boot camp” style programs at the Honor Farm. Project Pride is for male inmates and Project Discovery is for female inmates. These programs provide discipline, exercise, strict behavior standards, education, and substance abuse treatment for inmates who are drug and/or alcohol dependent. Both programs have an average daily population of approximately twenty inmates.

East County Jail

The Grand Jury visited the East County Jail on September 4 and September 26, 1998. This facility is on the lower level of the East County Sheriff’s Station on Olsen Road in Thousand Oaks. Its primary purpose is booking, release, and overnight housing of male prisoners arrested by police agencies in eastern Ventura County. It also houses a small number of inmate workers. The facility is capable of temporarily holding up to 100 prisoners in the event of mass arrests. We observed the booking process, the holding cells, and kitchen facilities. There are no medical facilities at the East County Jail.

Findings

We reviewed the provisions of Title 15, Subchapter 4, Minimum Standards. Using unannounced facility visits, analysis of written procedures, statistical documents provided by the Sheriff, interviews with sworn and non-sworn employees, and interviews with inmates, the Grand Jury made the following findings concerning Ventura County adult detention facilities:

- F-1 Title 15, Section 1006, defines detention facilities as follows:
1. **Type I facility** means a local detention facility used for the detention of persons for not more than 96 hours excluding holidays after booking.
 2. **Type II facility** means a local detention facility used for the detention of persons pending arraignment, during trial, and upon a sentence of commitment.
 3. **Type III facility** means a local detention facility used only for the detention of convicted and sentenced persons.
 4. **Type IV facility** means a local detention facility or portion thereof designated for the housing of inmates eligible under Penal Code Section 1208 for work, education, and furlough and other programs involving inmate access into the community.

F-2 The Ventura County adult detention facilities are classified as follows:

- 1. Main Jail Type II
- 2. Todd Road Type III
- 3. Ojai Honor Farm
Men Type III
Women Type II
- 4. East County Jail Type I

F-3 Table 1 provides the average daily population of the Ventura County Adult Detention Facilities for 1998.

FACILITIES	AVERAGE POPULATION	RATED CAPACITY
Main Jail		
Male	594	400
Female	18	12
Total	612	412
Honor Farm		
Male	132	152
Female	163	96
Total	295	248
Todd Road	514	782
East Valley	24	31
TOTAL		
Male	1264	1365
Female	181	108
Total	1445	1473

Table 1. Average Daily Population for 1998

F-4 Initiatives to alleviate overcrowding in the Ventura County Adult Detention Facilities include:

- 1. An increase in the use of the Cite and Release option by deputies in the field.
- 2. Liberalizing of the Own Recognizance release program.
- 3. Expansion of the Work Release program.
- 4. Expansion of the Work Furlough program.

F-5 Table 2 provides staffing levels for the Ventura County Adult Detention Facilities:

Position	Mgmt	Main Jail	Todd Road	Honor Farm	East VALLEY	Total
Chief Deputy	1					1
Commanders		1	1			2
Captains	1	5	1	1		8
Sergeants	3	13	11	6		33
Senior Deputies		15	14	4	4	37
Deputies		61	38	15	8	122
SSTs		73	44	27		144
Other Civilians	12	55	33	13		113
TOTAL	17	223	142	66	12	460

Table 2. Adult Detention Facility Staffing

The Commander in charge of the Main Jail also supervises the East Valley Jail, The Commander in charge of Todd Road also supervises the Ojai Honor Farm.

F-6 Table 3 provides budget figures for the Ventura County Adult Detention Facilities:

FISCAL UNIT	97/98 BUDGET	97/98 EXPENSES	98/99 BUDGET
Administration	\$8,105.0	\$8,772.4	\$7,585.7
Main Jail	\$16,938.0	\$16,573.6	\$16,959.9
Honor Farm	\$5,094.5	\$5,260.3	\$5,132.8
Todd Road	\$13,988.3	\$11,993.1	\$13,952.9
TOTAL	\$44,125.8	\$42,599.4	\$43,631.3

Table 3. Adult Detention Facility Budget. (In thousands)

Based on an average daily population of 1445 (F-1), the yearly cost to maintain an inmate in a Ventura County Adult Detention Facility was \$29,480.

F-7 Title 15, Section 1050, requires the County to develop and implement a written classification plan. This plan assigns inmates to housing units and activities according to the categories of sex, age, criminal sophistication, seriousness of crime charged, physical or mental health needs, assaultive/non-assaultive behavior, and other criteria that provide for safety of inmates and staff.

F-8 The Sheriff classifies inmates as follows:

- 1. Administrative Segregation** is for inmates segregated for their own safety or the safety of others.

- a. Inmates in custody for a warrant of arrest for violence or assault against a parent or guardian.
 - b. Inmates in contempt of court.
 - c. High Profile cases.
 - d. Inmates who are blatantly homosexual or transsexual.
- 2. Psychiatric Inmates** are those who display a continual pattern of bizarre behavior or have a mental disorder.
- 3. Protective Custody** is for inmates segregated for their own safety. This classification includes:
- a. Inmates in contempt of court.
 - b. Inmates charged with crimes against children.
- 4. Violent/Assaultive** inmates are those charged with violent crimes within the past ten years. Violent crimes include:
- a. Murder, attempted murder, and mayhem.
 - b. Kidnapping, abduction, and false imprisonment.
 - c. Battery against a public official or battery involving serious bodily injury.
 - d. Inciting a jail riot or using force during a riot.
 - e. Violence in obstructing or resisting a peace officer.
- 5. Security Threat** includes inmates charged, within a 10-year period, with:
- a. Escape or attempted escape from jail, prison, work release, or home detention.
 - b. Aiding or abetting and escape or attempted escape.
 - c. Bringing controlled substances into a jail, camp, prison etc.
- 6. Level 3** includes inmates who, within 5 years, have been charged with:
- a. Robbery or car-jacking.
 - b. Rape or assault.
 - c. Terrorist threats.
- 7. Level 2** includes all other unsentenced inmates.
- 8. Level 1** includes all other sentenced inmates.

Inmates wear color coded wrist bands to represent these categories. For example: Administrative Segregation inmates wear green wristbands and Psychiatric inmates wear gold wrist bands. The wrist band has the inmate's picture and other identifying information imprinted on it. Officers count the inmates several times a day using the wrist band for positive identification. They observe sleeping inmates hourly to guarantee that all is well. They also separate members of opposing gangs within the facility.

- F-9 Title 15, Section 1061, requires the county to provide for the voluntary academic and/or vocational education of both sentenced and pretrial inmates housed in Type II or III facilities.
- F-10 The Sheriff's Department contracts with the Oxnard Adult Education Division to provide certified educators for its academic programs. The Sheriff offers classes the following areas:
1. GED preparation and testing.
 2. Reading programs for adults (literacy).
 3. English as a second language (ESL).
 4. Substance abuse education and counseling.
 5. AIDS/HIV education and anonymous testing.
 6. Vocational training is available in computer repair, print shop operations, and horticulture.
- F-11 Title 15, Section 1200, requires the county to provide emergency and basic health care services to all inmates.
- F-12 The Sheriff's Department contracts with the California Forensic Medical Group for medical services at all Adult Detention Facilities except the East Valley Jail. The California Medical Association accredits these medical services, and the State Board of Corrections inspects them regularly. Nurses are on duty, and doctors conduct Sick Call at all locations. The nurses keep track of inmate prescriptions, issue proper dosage, and monitor consumption. Sick inmates are transported to the Medical Ward at the Main Jail. Inmates who require advanced diagnosis or treatment are transported to the Ventura County Medical Center.
- F-13 Title 15, Sections 1240 through 1248, requires the county to provide inmates with three meals a day that meet the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) of the Food and Nutritional Board of the National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences (1989), and of the California Daily Food Guide.
- F-14 The Sheriff's Food Services Staff provides meals for inmates of the Main Jail, Todd Road, the Ojai Honor Farm, the East Valley Jail, the Work Furlough program, and to all of the Juvenile Detention facilities within the county. The Food Services Staff prepares more than 5,000 meals a day. Supervisors maintain monthly planning menus. A civilian staff operates the kitchen facilities, supported by inmate labor.

Conclusions

The above findings led the Grand Jury to the following conclusions concerning Ventura County Adult Detention Facilities:

- C-1 The inmate population is nearing the rated capacity of facilities (F-3). However with the conversion of the Honor Farm to an all-female facility, the opening of the fourth quadrangle at Todd Road Jail, double bunking of inmates, and the steps taken to alleviate overcrowding (F-4), we conclude that the Ventura County Adult Detention Facilities are not overcrowded, and will not be overcrowded in the near future.
- C-2 The Grand Jury has no issue with the cost of operating Adult Detention Facilities within Ventura (F-6).
- C-3 The Sheriff's Department properly segregates, accounts for, and monitors inmates for security purposes and for the safety of the inmates (F-7), (F-8).
- C-4 The Sheriff's Department offers an academic and vocational training program that meets or exceeds the requirements of Title 15 (F-9), (F-10),
- C-5 Medical facilities at the Adult Detention Facilities are sparse, but adequate. Medical care provided to inmates meets or exceeds the requirements of Title 15 (F-11), (F-12).
- C-6 Food Service at the Adult detention facilities meets or exceeds the requirements of Title 15. (F-13), F-14).
- C-7 While no system is perfect, and there is always room for improvement, the Grand Jury concludes that the citizens of Ventura County are well served by its Adult Detention Facilities.

Recommendations

Since the Grand Jury concludes that the Adult Detention facilities operate in an efficient and effective manner, we make no recommendations.

Responses Required

Since the Grand Jury makes no recommendations concerning the operation of the Adult Detention Facilities, no response is required.

Response Letter



VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

- BOB BROOKS
SHERIFF
- RICHARD S. BRYCE
UNDERSHERIFF

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April 23, 1999

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[Handwritten signature]

Honorable Charles Campbell
 Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
 Ventura County Hall of Justice
 800 So. Victoria Avenue
 Ventura, CA 93009

Dear Judge Campbell:

We have reviewed the Grand Jury's *Adult Detention Facilities* dated April 20, 1999. Per Section 919(b) of the California Penal Code, the Grand Jury is given the authority and responsibility to inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within Ventura County

I concur with Findings 1-14 as noted in the report. Please note that the Grand Jury has made no recommendations requiring a response by the Sheriff's Department.

The employees of the Sheriff's Department and I appreciate the Grand Jury's comment that the Adult Detention facilities are operated in an efficient and effective manner.

Sincerely,

BOB BROOKS
 Sheriff

C: Grand Jury
 Chief Administrative Office

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