



## 2018–2019 Detention Facilities Inspection Report

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### Summary

The 2018–2019 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury’s inspection of detention facilities within Santa Cruz County included tours of the facilities listed below, discussions with staff and management, and a review of reports, policies, and procedures. California Penal Code Section 919(b) requires the Grand Jury to “inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons” within the County.

The Grand Jury toured and inspected the Main Jail, Blaine Street Women’s Facility, Rountree Detention Facility, Juvenile Hall, the Court Holding Facility in Santa Cruz, and Conservation Camp #45 in Ben Lomond. The Santa Cruz County Sheriff runs all of these facilities except for Juvenile Hall (run by the Probation Department) and Conservation Camp #45 (run by the State of California). Table 1 shows the dates of the Grand Jury’s tours.

**Table 1: Detention Facility Tours**

<b><i>Detention Facility</i></b>	<b><i>First Tour</i></b>	<b><i>Second Tour</i></b>
Main Jail	8/27/18	2/5/19
Blaine Street Women’s Facility	8/27/18	
Rountree Detention Facility	8/27/18	2/21/19
Juvenile Hall	8/21/18	
Court Holding Facility	11/15/18	
Ben Lomond Conservation Camp #45	12/6/18	

*Source:* Grand Jury records.

## **Background**

The California Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) establishes standards for the construction, operation, and administration of local detention facilities administered by a county or city. The BSCC defines a jail as a locked adult detention facility, which holds both non-sentenced and convicted adult criminal offenders. A temporary holding facility holds inmates for up to 24 hours in a locked room or secure enclosure under the control of a peace officer or custodial officer, primarily for the temporary confinement of those recently arrested. A court holding cell, located in a courthouse, is used to hold inmates for a court appearance for as long as 12 hours. The BSCC defines two types of detention facilities for juveniles: a Juvenile Hall, which is a locked facility that holds both non-sentenced and convicted juvenile offenders; and a Juvenile Camp, which is a minimum to maximum security facility for sentenced juvenile offenders. Santa Cruz County has one Juvenile Hall.

## **Scope**

In meeting its responsibility to inspect the County's detention facilities, the Grand Jury toured each physical property. Management and staff were questioned regarding inmate care, services, diet, access, and availability of programs and opportunities for community engagement. We reviewed policies, procedures, logs, and documentation. Facility areas that were inspected included: entry, intake, processing, holding, safety cells, medical, food prep, serving, kitchen, dining, recreation, classrooms, outside patios, grounds, and restrooms. The Grand Jury also viewed courts and hearing rooms.

## ***Document Review***

Following are the main documents that the Grand Jury obtained from the Sheriff's Department and reviewed in relation to this report:

1. **Policies, procedures, and protocols** related to the operations of Santa Cruz County detention facilities.
  - Inmate searches for drugs and other contraband
  - Visitor searches for drugs and other contraband
  - Drug testing of inmates
  - Proposed staffing plans for all detention facilities
  - Inmate screening and housing classification for males and females
  - Policy for, and list of, officer training topics
  - Schedules for training and retraining for detention facility assignments
  - Administrative segregation of inmates (removal from general population, solitary confinement, etc.)
  - Use of force: when, why, and how administered
  - Inmate grievances on restrictions/control of inmates
  - Inmate disciplinary plan

## 2. Reports

The following reports include actions, incidents, and follow-ups for the calendar year 2018:

- Results of inmate drug testing
- Results of searches
- Incident reports of drug use within facilities
- Current detention facility staff (filled and unfilled positions)
- Copies of Board of Supervisors (Board) requests for additional funds for staffing and other detention facility safety needs
- Detention facilities officer injuries by cause
- Detention facility profile survey
- Results of inmate screening and classifications
- Daily census report
- List of administrative inmate segregation by cause
- Daily Facility Risk by incident
- After-action reports regarding the use of force protocols
- Inmate grievance reports by issue
- Disciplinary actions on inmates report by incident

## Discussion

### ***Main Jail (259 Water Street, Santa Cruz)***

Because of the close proximity of the two facilities, the Grand Jury toured the Main Jail and Blaine Street on the same day.

The Main Jail is a maximum security facility that opened in 1981 at a cost of \$8.5 million. The original structure totalled 47,000 square feet and housed 92 inmates. A renovation in 1986 added 23,000 square feet, increasing the capacity to 230 inmates of both genders. Further modifications in 1999 allowed for a capacity of 319 inmates.

### ***Inmate Population***

The inmate population was 370 on the first day that the Grand Jury toured and 369 on the second visit, which is 16% above rated capacity. Staff reported that the facility has an average daily inmate population of 375 inmates (17.5% above rated capacity). The jail handles overpopulation with the use of bunk beds and temporary plastic beds known as "boats." Overpopulation is a continuing problem at the Main Jail, exacerbated in part due to the passage of AB 109, the Public Safety Realignment Act (Realignment). AB109 was passed in 2011 to alleviate the problem of overpopulation in the California state prison system by allowing non-violent, non-serious, and non-sex offenders to serve their sentences in county jails instead of state prisons. Realignment has also contributed to

overpopulation in our Main Jail—resulting in inmates who are detained for crimes with longer sentences serving in a facility intended for shorter stays.

### *Undetected Drugs*

Staff at the Main Jail were candid about the problem of controlled substances coming into the facility, sometimes with visitors, other times hidden in an inmate's body cavities. The Grand Jury was told that if staff suspects a person has drugs in their possession, during the Intake process their clothes and possessions are searched; if they suspect drugs are hidden in body cavities, the individual is kept in a separate cell with a toilet that does not flush, until drugs are passed.

### *Recovery Center*

In 2015 the Sheriff's Department established the Recovery Center, a 10-bed facility, often referred to as the "Sobering Center." Initially established as a program to handle only drunk-in-public arrests, the program now includes those arrested for being under the influence of drugs, and those arrested for first time DUI offenses. The Recovery Center is adjacent to the jail and admits an average of 20–30 people a day, and 40–60 per day during summer weekends with an average stay of 4–6 hours. Prior to being released offenders are connected with a referral specialist who can provide them with resources, including: opioid overdose prevention kits, drug and alcohol treatment referrals, and other community resources. The facility is managed by a contract with Janus of Santa Cruz, a drug and alcohol recovery center. The Grand Jury did not tour inside this facility, but only observed it from outside.

### *Medical Services*

Since 2012, all medical services for the correctional facilities have been contracted with the California Forensic Medical Group (CFMG). Nurses at the Main Jail are available at all hours. There is a Physician's Assistant (PA) available five days a week. There is a medical doctor on call who is available to see at-risk inmates within 72 hours. Mental health services are provided by the County Health Services Agency. The Medical Unit is an area with two holding cells for inmates waiting for a medical appointment. Generally inmates are accompanied by a Corrections Officer (CO); however when there is a staff shortage, which is often, the inmate is left alone. These holding cells are inside the Medical Unit, which houses all medications, medical equipment, and medical staff.

### *Staffing Issues*

The Grand Jury was concerned to learn of the distances that many staff travel to work (to all detention facilities), primarily due to local shortages of affordable housing. As a result they drive from nearby areas and counties (Santa Clara, San Benito), and some even drive in from Tracy and other Central Valley communities. When questioned, several staff acknowledged that it adds stress to an already demanding job. In addition, because of ongoing staff shortages, mandatory staff overtime has been in effect for quite some time. This is another element that many staff acknowledged adds stress to

their lives. Both staff shortages and unfilled positions are often the result of nearby counties offering higher salaries than Santa Cruz County.

***Blaine Street Women’s Facility (141 Blaine Street, Santa Cruz)***

This facility closed in 2016 for renovations and reopened in early 2018 as a women’s minimum-security facility rated for 32 beds; 17 women were there on the day of our tour. Blaine Street also offers job training skills. The facility was below capacity during our visit, as many women in the Main Jail are not suited for this facility due to their risk assessment or crimes committed. The facility is in a residential neighborhood without a high level of security at its perimeter fencing. Contraband can enter the facility by anyone throwing something over the fence into the outside inmate area.

***Rountree Detention Facility (90 Rountree Lane, Watsonville)***

The Rountree Detention Facility consists of two medium security units, and the newly renovated, minimum security Rehabilitation and Re-entry facility that opened in July 2018. While the Grand Jury toured all facilities, the main focus (and second visit) was on the Re-entry facility. Originally known as “The Farm,” the building opened in 1968 as a minimum security facility, then closed in 2008 due to structural issues. The Sheriff’s Department received a grant of \$24 million from BSCC for extensive remodeling and redesign. There are now 64 additional beds for selected male inmates. There is a strong emphasis on reducing recidivism with case management services, using programs to understand the factors leading to criminal behavior and reduce those risks. Vocational programs are available for inmates to choose one of three tracks: hospitality, agriculture, and construction. Educational and other support programs are offered by local community partners, including classes on domestic violence prevention, parenting, and anger management. Technical skills can be gained through writing and computer literacy programs. Personnel described job fairs where inmates can learn about potential jobs when they are released, but employers make no commitments to hire former inmates. The Grand Jury was impressed by the array of classes and training programs offered, and hopes that personnel are able to obtain commitments from local businesses to hire inmates after release.

The Rountree facility is open and spacious and has family visiting rooms that are light and airy and include games, toys, and books for visiting children.

***Juvenile Hall (3650 Graham Hill Road, Felton)***

This facility is for juvenile offenders. The focus is on temporary custody of youth who are referred by local law enforcement agencies, Juvenile Court, and the Probation Department. Youth are assessed for counseling, crisis intervention, substance abuse, and psychiatric needs. Classes and tutoring are offered for educational and behavior-modification needs. The goal is to assist the youth while at Juvenile Hall and then release them to parents and guardians. Once released, a juvenile is eligible to receive supportive services that will reduce the likelihood of reoffending.

Their current capacity is for 42 youths; there were significantly fewer on the day the Grand Jury toured the facility.

The staff described in detail many of the educational and support programs available to the juveniles. The Grand Jury questioned staff about the efficacy and long-term impact of some programs, especially those focused on behavioral change, for youth who are there for relatively short times (an average of three weeks). Juvenile Hall personnel did not clearly answer juror questions about the effectiveness of behavioral change programs.

### ***Court Holding Facility (701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz)***

This facility is located in the basement of the Court House. Inmates are transported by vehicle from their custodial facilities by Sheriff's Deputies to a Court Holding room before and after their court appearances. There is a maximum capacity of 75 inmates, and their average occupancy ranges from 35 to 60. There are four multi-person cells, and several single cells used for inmates who, for various reasons, cannot be mixed in with general population inmates.

### ***Ben Lomond Conservation Camp #45 (13575 Empire Grade, Santa Cruz)***

This facility, located in the Santa Cruz Mountains, is colloquially referred to as the "Fire Camp." It is a minimum security institution whose inmates volunteer for the program and must have a minimum security status. Inmates volunteer and their applications are reviewed and screened for acceptance into the program. While it is part of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and staffed by Correction Officers, several key staff also come from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE).

Inmates are trained at the California Correctional Center in Susanville and then sent to the Fire Camp. The camp houses a maximum of 113 inmates (96 were there the day of our tour), all of whom are minimum security with no convictions for violent or sex-related offenses, arson, or escape. Most of the inmates are serving time for alcohol or drug offenses or property crimes. Their sentences are reduced two days for every day they work at the Camp. Inmates earn \$1.45 per day and skilled inmates (plumbers and welders, for example) earn \$2.56 per day. Firefighter trainees earn \$1 per day and \$1 per hour when on fire fighting assignments.

Inmates work on fire crews and assist in maintaining fire equipment. They also work as kitchen staff, mechanics, and gardeners (the Camp grows much of its own food). Fire crews assist with fires, fuel breaks, floods, landslides, and rescues. They restore hiking trails and streambeds in Santa Cruz and nearby counties, and when needed in more distant places within California.

Staff were proud to note that Fire Camp inmates contribute to society at the same time that they are learning life skills and discipline required for successful rehabilitation.

## Areas for Future Investigation

The Grand Jury recommends that future Civil Grand Juries consider further investigation into the effects of overcrowding at the Main Jail, safety issues for inmates and staff related to drugs coming into the facilities, and the budget for Juvenile Hall.

## Findings

- F1.** Drugs continue to come into all facilities undetected.
- F2.** Overcrowding continues to be an issue at the Main Jail with no-long term solution in place. (See Grand Jury reports from 2013–2014, 2014–2015, and 2016–2017.)
- F3.** Ongoing staff shortages and unfilled positions result in mandatory overtime.
- F4.** Many detention facility staff commute long distances because local housing is unaffordable, increasing staff stress.

## Recommendations

- R1.** The Sheriff’s Department should research and evaluate body scanning equipment to detect drugs coming into facilities. (F1)
- R2.** The Sheriff’s Department and Board of Supervisors should evaluate long-term solutions to the overcrowded Main Jail, including bond measures to replace or renovate the facility. (F2)
- R3.** The Sheriff’s Department and Board of Supervisors should address the effects of mandatory staff overtime. (F3)
- R4.** The Sheriff’s Department and Board of Supervisors should explore options for subsidized housing to reduce the number of staff commuting long distances due to unaffordable local housing. (F4)
- R5.** The Sheriff’s Department should, within the next six months, set a target date for implementing the recommendations in this report.

## Required Responses

<i><b>Respondent</b></i>	<i><b>Findings</b></i>	<i><b>Recommendations</b></i>	<i><b>Respond Within/ Respond By</b></i>
Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors	F1–F4	R1–R5	90 Days September 17, 2019
Santa Cruz County Sheriff	F1–F4	R1–R5	60 Days August 19, 2019