



PROBATION DEPARTMENT COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

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Date: June 2, 2016

From: Bill Damiano, Chief Probation Officer

To: Amy Nilsen, County Administrative Officer

RE: 2015-16 Grand Jury Report

I have reviewed the 2015-16 Humboldt County Grand Jury Report, Section titled "Jails and Law Enforcement Facilities", and am responding as required pursuant to PC 933.05(a) and (b).

R.1. Response, with related Findings (F.1):

F.1. Several County facilities are overwhelmed with stored paper files, boxes, and shelves containing paper records.

I agree with this finding – our facilities do, indeed, struggle with housing all of our paper records.

R.1. The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends that the County facilities, digitize records as a space saving, transparency, and a cost-saving measure.

The recommendation has been implemented, is in the process of being implemented in the near future, and is being considered for implementation in the further future as resources allow.

A significant amount of Probation Department data and documents are already stored digitally – within our Department-developed Juvenile and Adult Management System (consolidated case management system for client records and reports, and personnel training records), ONESolution (County fiscal records), and on our assigned Department servers (miscellaneous letters, reports, data files, tracking spreadsheets, evidentiary photos, and more).

There are also a number of current County IT projects involving the expansion of service suites within existing applications (ONESolution budget management tools and other

budgetary record solutions), the purchase and implementation of new applications (ExecuTime, for time sheets, scheduling and automating payroll processes), as well as exploration of applications to manage necessary Human Resources processes and record keeping. These projects involve multiple County departments, including Probation.

However, there are limits to what can or should be digitized, and those are based on budgetary resources available (IT server expansion/maintenance costs, new positions to perform digitizing functions), each department's capacity to implement these practices (staff time to participate in all of the necessary application conforming activities, applications testing, record cleanup, conversion of paper records to digital format, etc.), and logistics of county and non-county agencies ability to accept digital records (for technological, legal or regulatory reasons).

- a. County IT infrastructure is presently inadequate to expand digital storage without significant purchase of server space.
- b. County budgetary constraints and structural deficit make the purchase of the necessary storage capacity to accommodate this recommendation and hiring of new personnel within all of the identified departments to perform these new tasks unlikely in the near future, unless phased in as is currently being done.
- c. Few of our partner agencies have the capacity to accept digitized work product from us, send us digitized work product of theirs, or have in place the protections required by statute and regulation to protect the transfer of electronic confidential criminal record information.
- d. Digitization of complete client records poses a risk to community and officer safety, since loss of electrical power and/or communications capability leaves the agency (and all agencies trying to contact us about the offenders we are responsible for) blind to its own records, as has already occurred on numerous occasions in the recent past here in Humboldt County.
- e. Certain paper records require a "wet" signature and cannot be digitized under current County policies and processes.

R.12-R.13. Response, with related Finding (F.13):

F.13. The Northern California Regional ~~Center~~ Facility is a source of income to Humboldt County.

I agree with this finding – contracts with other counties to treat their youths generates revenue for the County.

R.13. The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends that the Humboldt County Probation Department maximize the use of the Northern California Regional ~~Center~~ Facility.

The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action.

The Humboldt County Probation Department and Department of Health and Human Services have been actively promoting the New Horizons Program to other California counties for several years. Information is regularly shared statewide via our professional associations – the Chief Probation Officers of California, the California Mental Health Directors Association, the California Association of Probation Institutions Administrators, the California Association of Probation Services Administrators – as well as through annual mailers to the heads of probation and mental health departments throughout the state. Presentations at statewide conferences regarding best practices for treating youths involved in the juvenile justice system have been occurring since the program opened – specifically, at the California Mental Health Advocates for Children and Youth, the California Institute for Mental Health conferences, among others. Five presentations were done statewide for the Youth Law Center, regarding the program's access of MediCal funding to support the program. And, KEET Television produced a documentary of the program, giving it wide exposure. Promotion is ongoing.

Humboldt County has successfully executed contracts with 10 other counties over the years, to provide treatment services to their youths. In addition to a contract between counties, youth referred to the program must be committed by the Juvenile Court in that county, and must meet multiple statutory and regulatory criteria before they may be accepted for treatment. All of those conditions, as well as the contract cost to send a youth to the program, can be prohibitive for a number of counties, but is particularly so for small rural counties. Yet, we have been successful none-the-less in continuing to develop new contracts, particularly through word of mouth from satisfied counties.

In short, it is doubtful there is anything more the Department could do to increase the number of contract youth being referred from other counties.