

# PROBATION DEPARTMENT

John Keene  
Chief Probation Officer



# COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

## Members

**John Keene**  
Chief Probation Officer

**David Pine**  
Board of Supervisors

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County Manager

**Susan Etezadi**  
Superior Court

**Steve Wagstaffe**  
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**Stephen Kaplan**  
Behavioral Health and  
Recovery Services

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Human Services Agency

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Private Defender

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Chief, San Mateo Police  
Department

**Trisha Sanchez**  
Sheriff's Office

**Joan Rosas**  
County Office of Education

**Richard Boitano**  
Jefferson Union High  
School District

**Jane Smithson**  
At-large community  
representative

**Susan Swope**  
Juvenile Justice  
Delinquency Prevention  
Commission

## JUVENILE JUSTICE COORDINATING (JJCC) COUNCIL Meeting September 27, 2013

### Minutes

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order at 1:45 p.m.

#### II. PUBLIC COMMENT

- There were no public comments

#### III. INTRODUCTIONS

#### IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Minutes Approval - November 2012
- Minutes Approval - May 2013

**M:** Pine/**S:** Wagstaffe to approve minutes from November 2012 and May 2013:  
The minutes were **APPROVED** as distributed.

#### V. NEW BUSINESS

##### A. Probation Transitions & Assignments

As a result of the Probation Department Reorg., Michelle Mendez has been reassigned to the Adult Division. Noelle Vergara will replace Michelle as the Management Analyst for the Juvenile Division and assigned to the JJCC.

##### B. Recidivism Study - ASR (Handouts distributed at meeting)

A discussion around recidivism initially started in October of 2012. Today's presentation will include the following:

- Review of study goals, guiding questions, and priority outcome indicators
- Review of study methodologies
- Review of initial findings
- Discussion around next steps

##### Study Goals:

- 1.) Estimate the rate of re-entries into the juvenile justice system, using more granular indicators of recidivism
- 2.) Estimate the rate of first entries into the juvenile justice system
- 3.) To use this data to discuss and agree on common definitions of recidivism for the County

4.) To use this data to establish benchmarks for County juvenile services and track trends

5.) To set up framework to more fairly evaluate the justice-related outcomes of the variety of programs funded

### **Study Methodologies**

In October 2012, the Council agreed to the need for a recidivism study. Initially, the questions were broad and general. The questions were then redefined into recidivism indicators, which were then defined as data elements. Finally, ASR worked with Probation to extract these data elements in order to present the findings to the JJCC. *(This process took about 6 months from start-to-finish.)*

### **Study Population & Population Parameters**

Youth were divided into sub-groups that were similar to each other in terms of their risk to recidivate and based on their probation status at the time of program entry. The first group consisted of youth on court-ordered probation (215 youth); the second group consisted of those on non-court ordered probation (287 youth); the third group had no previous probation contact prior to program entry (692 youth). Eleven percent of youth were in two programs during the study period. Youth could only be counted once; the program they entered first became the program they were associated with.

The study followed youth who entered into a JJCC funded program during the 2010 – 2011 and 2011 – 2012 fiscal years. There needed to be a 12-month window in order to follow the recidivism path *(starting from the date of program enrollment.)* After 12 months, a review was done to see if there were any new law or probation violations, and if they were sustained. An additional 6 months was built in to allow for processing of cases through court. Youth had to be younger than 17 ½ years old at time of enrollment to be included in the study.

Once the three study groups were established, *(court-ordered probation; non-court ordered probation; and no prior contact)* another group of youth emerged that either had a 'pending' status, or had had prior involvement with the justice system but weren't currently involved at the time of the study; these youth were not included in the study. (The grand total of youth across all three study groups totaled 1,194.)

### **Outcomes**

At 6 – 12 months after enrollment, the following were measured as indicators:

- 1.) Percent with a new law violation
- 2.) Percent with a new *sustained* law violation *(a new referral occurring after the date of the participant's first program entry and had an offense level of felony or misdemeanor – about 15%)*
- 3.) Percent with a probation violation
- 4.) Percent with a sustained probation violation

New *probation* violations within 12 months after date of entry: 16% for youth on court-ordered probation; about 4% for youth on non-court ordered probation. New *law* violations within 12 months after their program start date: 27% of youth on court ordered probation had a new sustained law violation; about 15% for non-court ordered probation.

### **Which Youth are more likely to offend?**

Predictor variables:

- Gender
- Race/Ethnicity
- Age at first offense
- Age at program entry
- Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT) overall risk level – low, moderate, high – at entry into program (*PACT is an assessment tool used in the Probation Department for youth on court-ordered probation. The tool assesses the child's risk of committing a new law violation.*)

PACT assessments are only done for court-ordered youth. The Recidivism Team had to match the PACT data to youth relative to their program enrollment date. In order to get a PACT assessment that was fairly close to the program enrollment date, a window was allowed for an assessment to be conducted up to 90 days before program enrollment, or up to 30 days after. The yield: 164 youth were included in this part of the study.

Among youth who had a new sustained law violation within 12 months, boys were 4.5 times more likely than girls to reoffend. Those with a high PACT Risk level were also more likely to reoffend. In using the PACT risk level alone as a predictor: 53% of youth with a high risk level reoffended, vs. 11 % of youth with a low risk level. Additionally, youth who were 1 year older at program entry were more likely to reoffend than youth who were younger.

S. Swope: It would be very interesting to see if youth recidivated after completion of a program. Did they return to prior behaviors once left to their own devices?

### **Next Steps**

- 1.) Work with additional predictor data (substance use, mental health, gang involvement, school, CPS involvement, etc.) to find out to what extent these factors indicate likelihood to reoffend
- 2.) Take a closer look at 'first contact' youth to find out who they are

After reviewing the findings with the Subcommittee, the team had questions about the numbers -- Were these good numbers or not? -- since there is no real industry standard on recidivism and there are many different definitions. Also, different groups have different types of interventions that affect recidivism. Some states look at recidivism between 12 and 24 months post program completion but in general, the numbers for other states were similar to ours.

### **Reaction to Findings**

Generally speaking the numbers were in keeping with what was expected.

### **Additional questions/comments from the Board**

- 1.) It would be helpful to know if the youth who recidivated and were dropped from the study went on to have contact with the system as adults. (This data would be difficult to gather because as children, youth are supervised in the county they live in, but adults are supervised in the county they offend in.)
- 2.) The difference in the rate of recidivism between males and females was surprising; it was expected that the gap between males and females would be much greater.

### **C. Budget Update – Hong Liu**

The department is doing well; FY12-13 closed with significant savings. The budget for FY13-14, and FY14-15 have been approved by the board. The County has adopted a two-year budget cycle. The allocation for PCF and JJCPA programs will have the same allocation for the next two years. There will be no reductions but there will be no room for cost-of-living increases.

### **D. Contract Extensions – Hong Liu**

Contracts will expire in June 2014, and a new RFP will be due in the next contract cycle (in three years). The Local Action Plan is in place until the end of 2015. Hong proposed that the current contracts be extended for one more year and that the RFP process be postponed until next year. This will allow for better review of the Local Action Plan, as well as allow the recidivism study to continue and yield a better baseline for future program outcome measures.

**M:** Wagstaffe/**S:** Swope to extend the current contracts, and postpone the RFP process for one year:

The motion was **APPROVED**.

### **E. Next Meeting Change**

Supervisor Pine suggested that JJCC meetings continue as scheduled despite any scheduling conflicts that may arise. These meetings will continue to be on the first Friday of each quarter. The final JJCC meeting for 2013 is scheduled for **Friday, November 15, 2013**. The meeting location will be announced at a later date.

### **F. 2014 Meeting Schedule**

Meeting dates for 2014 to be confirmed at the next JJCC Meeting (November 15, 2013).

## **VI. ADJOURNMENT**