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# 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

## **FINDINGS**

**F1.** There is no reason to believe based on the filing of Mr. Heuberger’s Statements of Economic Interests – Form 700, filed with Imperial County and the State of California, that there is a conflict of interest between his consulting business and his duties as Director of LAFCO.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- None

## **DISCLAIMER**

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.



Imperial County  
2021-2022 Civil Grand Jury  
Calipatria State Prison  
ANNUAL INSPECTION

**JUSTIFICATION**

California State Law mandates that the Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) will inspect all prison and jail facilities on a yearly basis.

# 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

## **BACKGROUND**

Calipatria State Prison (CAL) is a minimum-maximum security prison located in Calipatria, California. In May 1989, the City of Calipatria agreed to annex the property as a satellite of its city property and provide city services as a way to increase its revenue through state funding (Bill 328). In September 1990, an agreement between the City of Calipatria and the State of California was made to declare that the annexed land would be owned by the State and exempt from local property taxes (City Resolution 90-16B, 91-14).

CAL opened in January 1992 and is operated by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. It covers a total of 1,227.5 acres (with the prison itself on 300 acres). At 184 feet below sea level, Calipatria is at the lowest elevation of any prison in the Western Hemisphere. The prison was originally designed to house 2,208 inmates, but prior to activation, modifications were made to double the number of inmates that could be held. CAL can hold over 4,000 inmates, if needed. Currently on the date of inspection, there were 2,695 inmates.

Inmate security ranges from Level One, the lowest level, to Level Four, the highest. Several Level One inmates are assigned as the institutional firefighters. Approximately 60% of the inmates are serving life sentences, while the remaining 40% will be eventually released, of those released nearly one percent of the released inmates will eventually return.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The Imperial County Civil Grand Jury (ICGJ) conducted an inspection of CAL that included a tour of the major areas of the prison facility. They used a checklist developed by the previous Grand Jury members to guide their inspection. The areas of interest to the Grand Jury included the general safety and security of the facility, fire safety, food service, medical service, job training requirement for staff, law library, inmate treatment, investigations, housing units and staff morale. As part of the inspection, the ICGJ toured major areas within the prison, including Prison Perimeter, Medical Care Center, Receiving and Release Center, Inmate Housing, Educational Departments, Vocational Training Areas, and Kitchens.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***Prison Perimeter***

The Prison Perimeter is the perimeter of the main areas within the prison. The Prison Perimeter includes two layers of thirty foot tall chain-linked fencing, topped with concertina razor wire. Between the two fences, there is a third, which is a lethal electric fence. The lethal fence is electronically charged at all times, to prevent prison escape attempts. In addition each Inmate Housing Yard has its own tall chain-linked concertina topped fence to keep the inmates contained. There are also twelve guard towers along the Prison Perimeter, normally they are not used, due to the lethal electrical fences, however, should the need arise, all towers may be and can be used and armed.

# 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

## ***Medical Care***

The Outpatient Housing Unit is located at the center of the prison and is designed to meet all immediate medical needs of the inmates. It has a short term housing for inmates who need medical attention not currently available in the housing areas. The ICGJ observed a complete pharmacy, dental room, complete X-ray unit, and rooms for examining inmates. While there the ICGJ also observed "sick call" for the inmates being seen by a doctor to diagnose any ailments they might have. Some inmates have to be transferred to Pioneer Memorial Hospital, sometimes by REACH Helicopter Ambulance service.

## ***Receiving and Release***

The Receiving and Release area is located next to the Outpatient Housing Unit. It is where inmates are processed for release and where new inmates are processed receiving. CAL has a low dose X-ray machine, which speeds up the receiving process. The X-ray has aided the Staff in detecting attempted smuggling of contraband, drugs and make shift weapons have been discovered with new arrival inmates.

## ***Inmate Housing***

At CAL, each of the four housing facilities contain five housing units, each with a capacity of two hundred inmates. The ICGJ visited Housing Facility A, which currently four of the five units were occupied. A5 is currently designed as a quarantine housing, for those testing positive of COVID 19 (on the day of inspection no cases of COVID 19). Each Housing area has educational classrooms, a satellite kitchen, small medical area and vocational training area.

## ***Educational Departments***

The State of California mandates that every inmate receives a General Educational Development (GED) while incarcerated. Inmates at CAL have access to in house classes that help them with their GED. There is also a path to a High School diploma, college courses for undergraduate up to Associate Degree. In addition there is a general and Legal Library for inmates. At the time of the ICGJ inspection, inmates were observed in both GED and College classes.

## ***Main CAL Kitchen and Satellite Kitchens***

All food for the CAL inmates is prepared in the central main kitchen, after being baked or cooked, it is quick chilled to 32 degrees, stored for up to 72 hours before reheated at one of the housing satellite kitchens. A state nutritionist/dietician determines what food is prepared and served. This is on a 13 week revolving schedule. Varied meals are provided for inmates on medical diets, such as inmates with diabetes, plus those on a religious diet and or vegetarian diets. All food from outside vendors is received at the central kitchen. The central kitchen maintains a 14 day (Two Weeks) supply of food to feed inmates properly prepared meals. For each meal a random meal is stored known as the "Deadman's meal" for up to 72 hours for testing examining purposes, in the

## 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

event possible food poisoning.

The ICGJ also inspected the satellite kitchen in the 'A' Housing unit. Each satellite kitchen will provide a minor meal preparation and serving.

### **FINDINGS**

**F1.** During the inspection it was noted several cracked windows in the A block.

**F2.** The updated Medical Facilities located within each "yard" allows for speedier care, vice having to transport the inmates to the central Medical facility.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**R1.** Replace and repair with updated glass material to stand up to the Imperial Valley heat.

### **REQUIRED RESPONSES**

No response is required, as CAL is part of a California State Agency.



Imperial County  
2021-2022 Civil Grand Jury  
Centinela State Prison  
ANNUAL INSPECTION

**JUSTIFICATION**

California State Law mandates that the Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) will inspect all prison and jail facilities on a yearly basis.

# 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

## **BACKGROUND:**

Centinela Prison (CEN) is operated by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. The prison was opened in October 1993 and began receiving inmates immediately thereafter. The prison was originally designed to house 2,208 inmates. At the time of the Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) inspection, the prison reported that it held an average of 2,900 inmates.

CEN is currently operating under the following capacities: Facilities A and B are Level III, Facility C is Level 4 and Facility D is Level III. In addition, CEN has a Level III "sensitive needs" facility, which houses inmates who are believed to be unable to successfully integrate into the general inmate population facility, for both safety and security reasons. CEN also operates a smaller, Level I facility which is the Non-Designated Programming facility (NDPF) which means they are not General Population (GP) or SNY and in which the inmates all live together.

The CEN mission statement is as follows:

The mission of the Centinela State Prison is to provide long-term confinement to men who have been convicted of felonious crimes and remanded to the State of California for incarceration. Inmate productivity and self-improvement are considered integral components to Centinela's overall objective to reduce recidivism among those inmates incarcerated at our institute.

Prior Civil Grand Jury Reports advised CEN was associated with the American Correctional Association (ACA) for auditing purposes. They are no longer associated with ACA and all audits and reviews are conducted directly through the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

## **METHODOLOGY:**

The Grand Jury conducted an inspection of CEN that included a tour of major areas of the prison. The Grand Jury was provided a tour of various areas of the facility by Administrative Assistant/Public Information Officer Lt. Dustin Loop. The members of the Grand Jury were able to meet with Warden Sean Moore and various members of his executive staff, in which we were free to ask relevant questions. The Grand Jury members were able to attend a "Zoom" executive meeting in which they were free to ask questions of the attending staff members. We were encouraged to visit or inspect any department or area so desired.

The Grand Jury inspected the following areas of CEN: Administration Building, Staff Entrance, Central Health Treatment Center, Complex-1 Control, Visitation, Inmate Housing, Dining/Culinary, Satellite Medical Unit, Gymnasium, Vocational Education, Recreation Yard, Administrative Segregation Unit (ASU), and Family Visitation.

# 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

## **DISCUSSION:**

### ***Staff Entrance***

Every person entering the fenced perimeter must present a valid Centinela Prison ID. Approved visitors are issued a visitor pass and must register in/out.

### ***Central Health***

Central Health Treatment Center is centrally located in the prison grounds and has an ambulance for emergencies. Correctional personnel provides escorts, security, and transportation of inmate patients to and from the Health Center. The Health Center maintains an Infirmary, on-duty physician, R.N's, Pharmacy, Nutritionists.

Effective Jan. 3, 2022, incarcerated persons must be fully vaccinated, or have an approved medical or religious exemption, prior to participating in the in-person and family visiting programs. Inmate general visitation has been restricted and currently is open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. In-person visitors who are unvaccinated must provide proof of a negative Covid-19 test taken no longer than 72 hours prior to the visit. Fully vaccinated visitors must present their valid vaccination card indicating they are at least two weeks past the final vaccination series in lieu of a negative Covid-19 test result.

### ***Inmate Vocational Programs***

The CGJ visited the Vocational and Educational area. Numerous inmate students were in attendance for Maintenance, Small Engine Repair, Auto Body, Electronics, Roofing, and Welding. These trades will be useful for the inmate population to integrate, be employed, and remain successful in their perspective communities.

### ***Academic Programs***

Adult Basic Education (ABE I, ABE II, ABE III) GED, Voluntary Education Program (VEP), Independent Study, and Literacy Lab.

### ***Other***

Service Crews, Religious Programs for all faiths, Alternative to Violence Programs, Alcoholic/Narcotics Anonymous, Creative Conflict Resolution Workshops, Life Without a Crutch, Cage your Rage.

### ***Inmate Housing Unit***

The CGJ visited a housing unit that was running in safe order. There were two Correctional Officers supervising the floor and a third Correctional Officer operating the elevated control booth with a full view of the dayroom program. The Control Booth Officer operates all building doors. The officers were in total control of their building.

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### ***Administrative Segregation Unit***

The CGJ visited the Administrative Segregation Unit (ASU). Before entering every person is required to produce proper identification. It is required to sign in the Visitor Log Book and provided protective stab vests for safety. Inmates placed in the ASU require more restricted control, due to the safety concerns of other inmates if they were placed within the general population. There are up to two inmates per cell. Inmates in ASU are placed in restraints any time they leave their cell. The ASU has a capacity of 200 inmates. They are allowed the same rights to the law library, religious meetings with the clergy, or meetings with their lawyers for legal purposes or mail correspondence. A medical clinic is adjacent to the ASU with full medical access and treatment. The cells, shower, and corridors were cleaned and sanitized. The recreation yards are fenced to provide safety and the inmate population receives up to 10 hours of recreation each per week.

### ***Satellite Medical Unit***

The CGJ visited one of the Satellite Clinics and observed the medical staff administering services. A Correctional Officer was providing security as we observed an inmate being provided dental services and another being interviewed by an RN. Inmates are provided pill-line services and daily diabetic insulin injections with complete medical examinations for sick call purposes.

### ***Gymnasium and Recreation***

The CGJ visited a gymnasium and at the time it was being cleaned by an inmate worker. The gym is equipped to handle a variety of services, including basketball, volleyball, and handball. A Correctional Officer on the floor and another Officer on an elevated platform provided security. The football field size recreation yard and the track were being utilized by the inmate population. Handball and basketball games could be observed while others were utilizing exercise bars. The baseball field and horseshoe pit were not being utilized at the time.

### ***Family Visitation***

The CGJ was allowed to visit the family visitation units. One of the units visited was currently being utilized as an office. The unit contains a full kitchen, bedroom, family area, and restroom. Any inmate may apply and fill out a family visitation packet which is received and processed by the Family Visiting Coordinator. There are family visiting guidelines that need to be followed. There is a criterion for both the eligible and ineligible inmates depending on their current status or commitment offense. It is the responsibility of the inmate to convey the Family Visiting information, rules, and regulations to the visitors. All food consumed by the inmate and family is purchased by the inmate.

## 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

When an inmate or visitor has canceled a scheduled visit, the inmate must reapply. All approved inmates must submit to an unclothed search prior to and after the visit and provide a urine sample prior to and after the visit for testing.

### **FINDINGS**

- F1.** CEN Staff in leadership positions are very well-informed and knowledgeable about laws and regulations for the State of California.
- F2.** The Correctional Treatment Center is well-staffed and ready to treat inmates. It is well-equipped to handle emergencies.
- F3.** The Grand Jury was able to inspect CEN with no restrictions. Staff was very open to answering questions.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- R1.** It is recommended that administrative staff continue to value and provide appropriate training and professional development to prison staff.
- R2.** It is recommended that the same level of staffing and training be maintained, to ensure the same quality of treatment and supervision is provided for inmates.

### **REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

No response is required as Centinela State Prison is a State Agency.

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Imperial County  
2021-2022 Civil Grand Jury  
Imperial County Jail  
ANNUAL INSPECTION

**JUSTIFICATION**

California State Law mandates that the Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) will inspect all prison and jail facilities on a yearly basis.

# 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

## **BACKGROUND**

The Imperial County Jail is operated by the Corrections Division of the Imperial County Sheriff's Office (ICSO). The Imperial County Jail is made up of three main facilities to include Herbert Hughes Correction Center (HHCC), built in the 1960s and currently has 314 beds, full kitchen, the Regional Adult Detention Facility (RADF), built in the 1970s, currently has 288 beds and the Oren Fox Detention Center (OFDF), which became operational in 2018 and it has 274 beds.

### **Herbert Hughes Correctional Center (HHCC)**

The HHCC contains two dormitories and a multipurpose room, which were added to the facility in 1989. The dormitories are divided into six separate dormitories and have a total capacity to incarcerate up to 314 inmates. In the multipurpose room is a low power x-ray machine that has aided the Staff in detecting attempted smuggling of contraband, drugs and make shift weapons which have been discovered with new arrival inmates. There is also located in the HHCC a Chapel and Classrooms. The kitchen for the entire jail is also housed here in the HHCC.

### **Regional Adult Detention Facility (RADF)**

Incarceration admissions occur at the RADF. The process is as follows: First, individuals are booked and given a brief medical screening; then, they are put into a temporary holding cell; next, they are sent to a dressing room and issued clothing. Then, if needed, inmates are sent to the medical treatment center; finally, the inmates are placed in an incarceration cell. At the RADF, there are twelve separate cell modules, each consisting of ten to twenty separate cells. These modules are known as pods. The RADF has a total capacity of 288 inmates, both male and female. The general population is made up of those who are un-sentenced. There are also a group of sentenced inmates, including those under administrative segregation, those with special needs and those who are high risk. At the time of the Imperial County Grand Jury (ICGJ) the longest servicing inmate was just over 20 years of incarceration.

### **Oren Fox Detention Facility (OFDF)**

The OFDF is an 8,000 square foot medium security facility named after late Imperial County Sheriff Oren R. Fox, who served as Sheriff for 23 years and who dedicated his life in protecting this community for over 40 years in Law enforcement. He also rose to the rank of Brigadier General in the National Guard, serving his Country. OFDF features six housing pods, which can house 45 inmates. There are also four additional medical beds designed for treating inmates. The OFDF has a total capacity of 274 inmates. The OFDF can provide healthcare, rehabilitative programs, educational programs, intake and release and is the site of administrative and support service offices.

# 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

## **METHODOLOGY**

The Grand Jury conducted an inspection of the Imperial County Jail that included a tour of all the major areas of the facilities. Prior to the inspection, the Grand Jury was given a presentation outlining the history, the present and the future goals of the Imperial County Jail. The ICSO staff encouraged questions and answered them fully, providing statistics and a power point brief of the facility.

The ICGJ used a checklist, developed by the previous grand jury to guide the 2022 inspection. The checklist included, but was not limited to, the general safety and security of the facility, food services, medical services, as well as key and tool control. The ICGJ inspected various areas of all three facilities.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***Medical Care***

***Physical health*** – The Imperial County Jail medical staff is on duty twenty-four hours daily for inmate injuries and illnesses. Imperial County contracts with outside medical care services to evaluate the physical health needs of the inmates. Medical services are part of the admission process, where a pre-medical questionnaire is filled out during the booking process. If the questionnaire indicates possible medical problems, after receiving their clothing, new inmates are sent to the medical treatment center for evaluation and screening.

***Mental health*** – The Imperial County Jail contracts with an outside mental health service to help aid the evaluation of the mental health needs of its inmates.

### ***Safety and Security***

In each part of the jail, cameras have been installed so staff can monitor the incarcerated inmates. Some of the cameras can zoom and pan-in to help increase safety and security of the facilities. In the OFDF they have an assigned Officer working in the command center located above the pods, which allows them to monitor and ensure safety of both the Correctional Officers and the inmates.

### ***Transportation Department***

Responsible to transport prisoners to other facilities, to mental health appointments, California State Hospitals, and Court appearances.

### ***Recidivism***

As stated earlier the ICGJ was given a brief presentation outlining the current and future goals of the Imperial County Jail. One of the key focus areas is related to assisting inmates in not returning to jail once released, (recidivism). This program is targeted to helping inmates developing life skills through counseling and various issues, including drug and alcohol dependency, as well as

## 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

family relationship counseling.

### ***Main Kitchen – Food Preparation/Service***

The Imperial County Jail serves approximately Fifty-Seven thousand meals per year. Correctional staff serve the meals in the pods directly, where the inmates are housed. The ICGJ observed the food preparation area which were in all appearances clean and sanitary. The meals have a balanced calorie count and meal temperatures are recorded before serving.

### ***Fire Crew***

Some of the Imperial County Inmates are fully trained Fire Fighters to aide in the County's fire response.

## **FINDINGS**

**F1.** The Imperial County Jail is well-run. The Corrections Officers and Staff appear to be well trained and equipped to handle emergencies.

**F2.** There were numerous programs on hold because of the COVID 19 issue. During the ICGJ some of the programs were being restarted.

**F3.** Medical limitations at the time of the inspection, due to staffing shortage.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**R1.** Continue to search for and hire qualified Medical personnel to address these shortages.

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Imperial County  
2021-2022 Civil Grand Jury  
Imperial County Juvenile Hall  
ANNUAL INSPECTION

**JUSTIFICATION**

California State Law mandates that the Civil Grand Jury investigate and report on the state prisons and jail facilities each year, this mandate includes the Imperial County Juvenile Hall.

# 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

## **BACKGROUND:**

The Civil Grand Jury is required by the Penal Code section 919(b) to “inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the county.”

The California Attorney General issued an opinion (No. 18-103, dated March 10, 2022) stating that the term “public prisons” includes “local detention facilities,” defined as facilities that confine people for more than 24 hours.

Regardless of this recent clarification, the Civil Grand Jury has historically conducted site inspections as part of their investigations on local detention facilities, including the County Jail and Juvenile Hall. The last inspection of Juvenile Hall was conducted by the 2018-2019 Civil Grand Jury. Due to COVID-19 safety protocols, inspections had not been able to be conducted.

## **METHODOLOGY:**

A committee of the Civil Grand Jury toured and inspected the facility, interviewed various staff members, reviewed the Probation Department website, reviewed past Grand Jury investigations, and reviewed external documents by other government agencies to satisfy the legal requirement to independently verify all information which may be published in the Final Report.

At the time of the Grand Jury inspection, there were 47 Wards in residence.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **FACILITY ADMINISTRATOR**

We were greeted by and met with Dan Prince, Chief Probation Officer, in his office and were able to ask questions. Juvenile Hall is overseen by the Imperial County Probation Department and Mr. Prince, as department head, also serves as the facility’s administrator. We were able to see the administrative offices in passing and they appeared adequate and orderly.

### **FACILITY MANAGER**

We were then introduced to the Juvenile Hall Facility Manager, who is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the facility. He escorted us around, provided extensive information, and was able to answer our questions throughout the entirety of our tour. He appeared to be an extremely competent administrator, compassionate about the wards under his charge, and was forthcoming with us.

# 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

## **INTAKE**

We inspected the intake room, which consists of a padded chair at a desk along with adequate equipment such as a desktop computer and a live-scan fingerprint scanner. There, new ward arrivals undergo screening and classification depending on their risk and background, including their past victimization, potential to victimize other youth in custody, and any prior offenses, among other considerations. It was noted that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as long-term changes in juvenile justice disfavoring institutionalization, only wards accused of committing felonies are generally kept in custody. Misdemeanor offenders are usually released to their homes to await juvenile proceedings and other interventions.

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

We then inspected a field office of Imperial County Behavioral Health Services located across from intake. There is no permanent Behavioral Health staff stationed there and many services have been occurring remotely due to the pandemic. However, when circumstances require, an on-call Behavioral Health employee will promptly arrive to provide appropriate treatment or services. Behavioral Health's Youth and Young Adults program and its Substance Use Disorder program provide well-rounded treatment for the mental and behavioral health issues of the wards confined there.

## **GARDEN**

We then met with the facility Garden Coordinator, who oversees and personally teaches the gardening and nutrition program that takes place in the "Garden of Dreams," a modestly-sized outdoor secure area with dirt plots for flowers and vegetables. Through this program, the wards can experience planting, caring for, and eventually harvesting and eating their own crops. This program serves to teach them useful hands-on life skills, promotes good nutrition habits, and often acts as a relaxing outlet for stress relief. We also spoke with the Community Education Specialist with the local UC Cooperative Extension, as well as the Nutrition Coordinator for the facility. All three were extremely informative and passionate about their respective roles in helping provide a positive environment for the youthful offenders to hopefully turn their lives around.

## **MULTIPURPOSE ROOM**

We inspected their multipurpose room adjacent to the garden, where food is served to the youth. However, the food itself is prepared in another facility in the Sheriff/Probation complex. The room, which appeared in good condition, is also used for family visitation as well as religious services due to its ample seating.

## **SECURITY**

We then proceeded to the central reception area, where a guard is stationed and where they can view monitors displaying various camera feeds. Generally, one supervisor, one roving patrol, and one guard for each of the three dormitories in use—for a total of five guards—ensure

## **2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT**

security and the safety of the wards and staff. This facility's staffing ratio exceeds the minimum standards of one staff member per ten confined youth required by Title 15 of the California Code of Regulations. At the time of the inspection, only seven wards were in custody. Given that the facility's average daily population for the present fiscal year is six, we are satisfied that Juvenile Hall's staffing levels are sufficient to provide reasonable security. The facility has secure, locked doors as well as perimeter fencing with concertina wire. Guards must visually confirm each youth is okay periodically, even if some dorms have alert buttons.

### **SCHEDULE**

Near the central reception area, we were shown a large whiteboard showing the week's schedule. For the wards, their day generally begins at 6AM, followed by 6:30AM physical education to avoid the Valley's heat, hygiene time, recreation time, mealtime, classes broken up into two parts, and varying programming and visitation opportunities spread throughout the week. Bedtime is at 8:30PM. That is the only time the youth are confined to their rooms, barring exceptional circumstances.

### **DORMITORIES**

We then toured a regular dorm as well as the "Honor" dorm, where well behaved wards can earn additional privileges such as a video game console, access to a commissary, and less stringent supervision. Both dorms appeared in good condition, with sufficient seating, working toilets, sinks, and semi-private showers. Both dorms had bilingual PRA notices, complaint forms, and boxes to submit them. There was an emergency box containing a cutting tool for any ligature-based suicide attempts, which thankfully are very rare.

### **EDUCATION**

We then visited one of two classrooms available, where most if not all the wards were present and seated in what was typical classroom desks. A video was playing for them, but some chose to continue on their schoolwork. They all appeared in good condition and were respectful to us. We met the teacher, who provides both physical education and classroom instruction tailored to each youth's unique learning level and age. He was extremely passionate about what he does despite the challenges of this teaching environment, and it was evident to us that the wards were in good hands. The instructor has been successful in getting several youth to earn their high school diplomas while in custody. He is employed by the County Office of Education, a partner agency. Earlier that day, the Imperial Valley Desert Museum visited, as they do occasionally along with other outside organizations, to provide a special educational activity.

# 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

## **MEDICAL**

There is a medical room, which appeared hygienic and is furnished with a medical exam bed, an x-ray machine, and other essential equipment. A nurse is stationed in that room for a limited number of hours a day, provided by third-party company Wellpath. They are capable of drawing blood for testing and doing COVID-19 testing there. COVID-19 precautions such as masking are still in effect at the facility, in accordance with state guidelines, as it is a congregate facility. New arrivals are quarantined for ten days in one of the dormitory wings.

## **FINDINGS**

- F1.** Members of staff expressed concern with the amount of hours the staff nurse is at their facility. Her duties are shared with the Sheriff's Office Jail.
- F2.** Staff also requested a negative air pressure room within the facility for medical isolation and contagious disease control purposes.
- F3.** Several computers were visible in the classroom, but according to staff only one was operational at the time of the site visit.
- F4.** Due to the age of building and budget priorities, some areas were not as deinstitutionalized as staff would prefer. A less-dreary paint job, decorations, and furnishings that do not compromise security would improve the morale of the residents and staff.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- R1.** Maintain proper documentation of the time spent by the nurse at the facility and provide a comparison with the times a nurse was needed and outside medical attention was required for a detainee.
- R2.** Research the feasibility of a negative air pressure room in the facility. Prepare a well detailed presentation to the County, including the fiscal impact for the construction and long term costs of the request.
- R3.** Submit a budget request for the repair or replacement of the non-operable computers in the classroom. With distance learning becoming more common, this is a necessity for the juveniles to continue their education.
- R4.** Facility maintenance for the county should be consulted to look into making the necessary requested changes to the facility which fall within the allocated building maintenance budget.

## 2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

### REQUIRED RESPONSES:

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the grand jury requests responses from the following governing bodies within 90 days:

Imperial Valley Juvenile Hall: R1, R2, R3, R4

Please submit an official response to the Civil Grand Jury Foreperson, P.O. Box 296, El Centro, CA, 92244

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**Imperial County Civil Grand Jury  
CITIZEN COMPLAINT FORM**

See the instructions and FAQs for information about how and whether you should complete this form.

**SECTION A: COMPLAINANT CONTACT INFORMATION**

All information you provide, including your identity, will be kept confidential. This part is optional if you wish to make an anonymous complaint. However, please keep in mind that the Civil Grand Jury will not be able to contact you, among other factors you should consider. Please see Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) #5 in the instructions to learn more.

YOUR FULL NAME:

ADDRESS:

CITY, STATE, AND ZIP CODE:

PHONE NUMBER(S) / OTHER CONTACT:

**SECTION B: SUBJECT OF MY COMPLAINT**

Please be clear if your complaint is against an entity/agency, a specific individual, or both. The Civil Grand Jury only has jurisdiction over certain entities and officials within Imperial County. See FAQ #3 to learn more.

NAME(S) / TITLE(S) /  
ENTITY OR AGENCY NAME:

ADDRESS OF ENTITY OR  
FACILITY / LOCATION INVOLVED:

PHONE NUMBER / EXTENSION, IF KNOWN:

**SECTION C: MY COMPLAINT**

Describe the facts and circumstances of your complaint in your own words. Please be specific rather than making broad or vague statements. Include important details such as dates, times, locations, witnesses, names, etc. Your complaint can be in any format you prefer, as long as it can be understood by the Civil Grand Jury. There is no word limit.

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**All communications to the Civil Grand Jury are CONFIDENTIAL under state law**  
**SECTION C: MY COMPLAINT (CONTINUED)**

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My complaint is continued on \_\_\_\_\_ attached sheet(s)

**SECTION D: DESIRED ACTION/OUTCOME (OPTIONAL)**

Please briefly explain what action you would like the entity/individual(s) involved and/or the Civil Grand Jury to take to resolve or address your complaint. Please see FAQ #2 to learn about the limits of the Civil Grand Jury's authority.

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**SECTION E: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

- I am currently involved in or aware of active litigation (court proceedings) regarding the subject matter of my complaint
- I believe that my complaint involves a crime that was committed (Notice: Your complaint may be referred to the District Attorney if a criminal matter; it is a misdemeanor under Pen. Code §148.5(d) to knowingly file a false report of a crime)
- I fear that I may be subjected to:  physical harm - and/or -  retaliation if my identity is revealed as the complainant

IF YES TO ANY ABOVE, EXPLAIN:

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I have included or attached supporting documentation with this complaint (Do not submit original documents)

**SECTION F: CERTIFICATION AND SIGNATURE**

This part is optional if you are submitting an anonymous complaint, but please indicate today's date below. Checking the box below is optional. To learn more about the legal consequences of lying on this form, see FAQ #4.

**By checking this box, I certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing and any submitted documentation is true and correct.**

<b>X:</b>	DATE:
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<b>U.S. Mail:</b>	Civil Grand Jury PO Box 296 El Centro, CA 92244	<i>DO NOT WRITE HERE / FOR CIVIL GRAND JURY USE ONLY</i>
<b>Drop Box:</b>	940 Main St, El Centro, CA 92243	VIA: <input type="checkbox"/> US MAIL <input type="checkbox"/> DROP BOX <input type="checkbox"/> EMAIL <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____
:		REC.: _____ / _____ / 20 _____ BY: <input type="checkbox"/> FOREPERSON <input type="checkbox"/> SECRETARY
		NOTES:



# Imperial County Civil Grand Jury

## INSTRUCTIONS / FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### For the Citizen Complaint Form

Communications from the public can provide valuable information to the Civil Grand Jury. Any person may submit a completed complaint form to request that the Civil Grand Jury conduct an investigation or inquiry. A complaint must be in writing and is treated as confidential. The use of this form is optional but recommended by the Civil Grand Jury.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Complete the form **clearly** so that it can be understood by others. Keep a copy for your records. Any documentation submitted will not be returned. Attach additional sheets of paper if you run out of space in a section.

**Section A:** Provide sufficient information for the Civil Grand Jury to be able identify and contact you.

**Section B:** Identify the entity, agency, individual, etc. which your complaint is about. See FAQ #3.

**Section C:** Write out your complaint in full, with as many details as possible, such as dates, places, and witnesses.

**Section D:** Briefly state what you would like done about your complaint. This question is optional.

**Section E:** If any of the statements in this section apply to you or your complaint, check the appropriate box(es). If you have additional information or context, briefly explain or elaborate in the space provided.

**Section F:** Sign and date your form. Checking the box to submit the form under penalty of perjury is optional but is suggested if you are making a truthful complaint. See FAQ #4. Return the completed form using any method listed.

**To make an anonymous complaint:** Skip Section A and do not sign in Section F. See FAQ #5.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

#### FAQ #1: What is the Civil Grand Jury?

- A body of 19 Imperial County citizens appointed by the superior court to provide oversight as an independent watchdog for a term of one year.
- The California Constitution requires a grand jury to be empaneled for each county in the state.
- This grand jury only deals with civil local/county matters and not criminal prosecutions.
- The Civil Grand Jurors collectively determine what they will look into and must issue a final report at the end of their term with findings and recommendations based on their investigations.

#### FAQ #2: What authority does the Civil Grand Jury have?

- Conducts investigations (findings published in the final report) and smaller inquiries (findings not published) into matters within its jurisdiction:
  - Corrupt or willful misconduct by public officials
  - Condition/management of jails and prisons
  - Operations, accounts, records, and equipment of the agencies/officials of county government
  - Books and records of any incorporated city or joint powers agency in the county
- Agencies must respond to recommendations made by the Civil Grand Jury in its final report.
- Has the legal right to inspect public records in the county and can obtain subpoenas for evidence or testimony under oath.
- Can perform inspections as well as confidential interviews to protect the identity of complainants.
- Can initiate legal proceedings to remove certain government officers from office for misconduct.
- The Civil Grand Jury has no authority to question or force agencies/officials to do discretionary acts.

#### FAQ #3: Who/what can the Civil Grand Jury investigate?

- The subject of your complaint must be an agency/official/institution within Imperial County.
- The Civil Grand Jury has no jurisdiction over any federal agency, official, program, or decision.
- The Civil Grand Jury has no jurisdiction over any court, judge, or state agency/official, with the sole exception of the State Prisons within the county.

#### FAQ #4: What are the legal consequences of submitting a complaint?

- If you check the box in Section F, your complaint will be under oath and subject to the criminal penalties for perjury (a felony) should you knowingly lie.
- Other laws exist regarding false statements to the jury. If interviewed, you may be put under oath.
- Consult sections 888 through 939 of the Penal Code and/or a licensed attorney for legal advice.

#### FAQ #5: Can I make a complaint anonymously?

- Yes, but do consider that your identity will be protected by state law if you make a complaint. The Civil Grand Jury can admonish people to maintain confidentiality under penalty of contempt of court.
- Anonymous complaints may be viewed as less credible, depending on the circumstances.

#### FAQ #6: Will I receive a response?

- You will be contacted only if the Civil Grand Jury requests more information from you.
- Due to confidentiality, the Civil Grand Jury does not comment on pending investigations. You may have to wait until the final report is published to see if your complaint was investigated and any outcome.

See past final reports and learn more at: [www.imperial.courts.ca.gov/general-information/grand-jury](http://www.imperial.courts.ca.gov/general-information/grand-jury)

**2021-2022 IMPERIAL COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT**

//END OF REPORT//