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Yuba County Jail

Summary:

The Yuba County Jail, located at 215 5th Street, Marysville, California, is operated under the supervision of the Yuba County Sheriff. California Penal Code (PC) Section 919(b) requires that the “Grand Jury shall inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the county.” The Grand Jury conducted one scheduled inspection and one unannounced inspection of the County Jail, interviews with the Sheriff’s Department staff, and inmates. The scheduled tour of the jail included inspections of detainee housing areas, laundry facilities, the kitchen areas, medical facilities, commissary, as well as a small law library. The unscheduled visit focused on the roof top exercise area, elevator, backup generator maintenance logs, court holding cells and basement garage area. The Grand Jury has concluded that the jail operates very efficiently.

Introduction and background:

Both the Marysville Police Department and the Wheatland Police Department, each with its own chain of command, operate in Yuba County. Both agencies, as well as the California Highway Patrol, utilize the Yuba County Jail for detention purposes. The Yuba County Jail is also a detention center for Federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainees. All persons booked into the jail receive an inmate handbook which details individual rights and grievance procedures. The last prisoner escape from the Yuba County Jail was recorded in 1989.

The Yuba County Jail is a coed facility with males and females separated at all times. At the time of our visit there were 416 inmates in custody, 221 of which were ICE detainees and 195 were county prisoners. Of those 416 prisoners, 362 were male and 54 were female. Through contracts with the Federal Government the jail receives \$75.16 per each ICE detainee, per day. These funds constitute a large part of the jails operating budget.

For religious needs, non-denominational services are conducted by different church groups through outreach programs, bible study on Wednesday, church services on Sunday, and pastoral/clerical visits as desired.

Methodology and Approach:

An overview of the operations and management of the jail was provided to the Grand Jury followed by a guided inspection of the jail facilities. After the scheduled visit, Grand Jurors elected to visit areas within the jail that had not been previously inspected, with an unannounced visit.

Documents:

- Yuba County Jail Intake Medical/Classification Screening Form
- Commissary Order Form
- Yuba County Jail Daily Population

- Inmate handbook
- Electronic records

Site visits:

One scheduled visit, one unscheduled visit and two separate inmate interviews were conducted by the Grand Jury.

Discussion and Narrative:

In October of 2013, the Grand Jury met with jail staff for a scheduled visit. The facility was well cleaned with various inmate work crews going about their chores. Video surveillance cameras are located at strategic points throughout the facility and monitoring is on-going by deputies. The tour included the booking-intake area, visiting area, control rooms, solitary confinement cells, general population cells, court holding cells, law library, and medical areas. There is also a small commissary, where inmates may make purchases for needs such as hygiene, food and personal items, at a small profit for the jail.

In November of 2013, an unscheduled visit was conducted by the Grand Jury. This inspection focused on areas not normally viewed during scheduled visits; roof top exercise area, elevator and backup generator maintenance logs, court holding cells, basement garage areas, and facility maintenance shop.

All inmates are provided with any necessary treatment from medical staff in a timely manner. It was reported to the Grand Jury that a Registered Nurse position is requested to meet additional medical needs. Prescription medications are purchased in individual bubble packs, so unused medication can be returned for refund, instead of being wasted. A fulltime drug and alcohol counselor, and grievance counselor is available to meet the needs of all inmates. A voluntary tattoo removal program is available to inmates who qualify. Sutter North Medical provides the necessary equipment and technicians for five hours on the last Friday of the month.

The Grand Jury visited two educational class rooms, one of which was in use by detainees to study for a General Equivalency Diploma (GED), and was taught by a professional instructor. The second classroom visited is used by female inmates, yet was not in use at the time of our visit. There are Alcoholics Anonymous /Narcotics Anonymous classes available for low level offenders.

California Penal Code (PC) 4024 establishes the guidelines for the work release of inmates. The jail staff follows guidelines consistent with inmates qualified for work release. An example of this program is Sheriff's Work Alternative Program (SWAP), PC 4024.2. SWAP inmates report to a separate day facility. A female SWAP inmate was interviewed while performing her duties in the garage area.

At the time visited, the jail was clean and functional. There were obvious exceptions where the age of the facility was apparent or repairs were in progress; ceiling tiles in the library need to be replaced. The laundry facility was clean, well ventilated and appeared to operate efficiently. There are two commercial washers and dryers in operation. All inmates receive clean clothes every three days. Staff reported to the Grand Jury that up to four female inmates at a time are assigned to work in the laundry room. The Grand Jury noted no workers were present at the time of the inspection. A communications device is available in case of an emergency. All chemicals used are concentrated and added to the wash with the push of a button, no inmates touch the chemicals. Jail staff indicated that the laundry provides services to Yuba Sutter Mental Health.

The current state of prisoner realignment [Assembly Bill (AB) 109, dated October 1, 2011] which mandates the transfer of some prisoners from State prisons to the local jurisdictions has minimal impact on the operations of the jail. Additional funding to meet AB 109 is being provided by the State of California. It is noted that the Yuba County Jail meets or exceeds all current State and Federal standards for such facilities.

Findings:

The Yuba County Grand Jury finds the following:

- F1. The Yuba County Jail is operating efficiently with well trained staff.
- F2. Additional funding is being provided for AB 109 requirements by the State of California.
- F3. The addition of a Registered Nurse is needed to meet additional medical needs.
- F4. The jail staffing levels are currently increasing for active duty and reserve deputies.

Recommendations:

- R1. The Grand Jury recommends the Yuba County Jail be funded for the addition of a Registered Nurse to meet medical needs.

Commendations:

- C1. The Grand Jury commends the Yuba County Sheriff, the Jail Commander, and jail staff for their dedication to the citizens of Yuba County.

Request for Responses:

Pursuant to California Penal Code (PC) section 933.05, the Grand Jury requests responses as follows:

From the following individual:

- Yuba County Sheriff

The governing bodies indicated above should be aware that the comment or response of the governing body must be conducted in accordance with Penal Code 933(c) and subject to the notice, agenda and open meeting requirements of the Brown Act.

