

El Dorado County Placerville Jail

May 9, 2017

GJ 2016-013 El Dorado County Placerville Jail

SUMMARY

The 2016/2017 Civil Grand Jury conducted its annual inspection of the El Dorado County Jail located in Placerville on October 5, 2016. The inspection included both a physical inspection of the facility as well as interviews with facility staff and inmates.

The Civil Grand Jury members noted the lack of a full body scan metal detector in the entry, which poses a safety risk for staff and visitors. There is a need for more safety cells for at-risk inmates. There are opportunities to expand the vocational training program. These findings and recommendations for correction are detailed at the end of the report.

BACKGROUND

California Penal Code Section 919(b) mandates an annual inspection of all county jail facilities by the Civil Grand Jury. Additionally, the jury must inquire into the condition and management of “public prisons” within the county, and any credible evidence of willful or corrupt misconduct of any public officer, but need not write a report on either type of inquiry.

METHODOLOGY

- Interviewed the facility staff and inmates
- Followed the guidelines for the inspection from the Detention Facility Inspection Form
- Reviewed the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) Jails Inspection Handbook
- Reviewed latest documentation of the Fire Marshal inspection
- Reviewed the Maintenance Log

DISCUSSION

Members of the 2016-2017 Civil Grand Jury inspected the El Dorado County jail located in Placerville on October 5, 2016. The visit began with an overview of the day to day operations followed by an inspection of the facility and interviews with some of the inmates.

Overview of Operations

The jail is a 303 bed facility with current occupancy of 225 male and 45 female inmates. There are four classifications for housing inmates (male and female) which consist of General Population Unit, Administrative Segregation Unit, Protective Custody Unit and Maximum Security Unit. Some gang members that are incarcerated in the facility require special housing.

Twenty-five percent of the inmates are there as a result of Assembly Bill (AB)-109 which is the Public Safety Realignment Bill. This resulted in some inmates who had been incarcerated within California's State Prison system serving their time in county jails throughout the state. Inmates received under AB-109 pose a hardship for the general population of the jail. These inmates are often hardened offenders, gang members, and/or more violent, and are housed in county jail for longer than the 12 month maximum prior to AB-109. Many inmates contained within the jail system have mental health problems but they are not segregated unless a safety or behavioral issue arises.

The last Civil Grand Jury's inspection was November, 2015. Since that last inspection of the Placerville Jail one inmate has committed suicide. There have been six attempted suicides and no deaths from other causes. There was one escape by an inmate who had been taken to Marshall Hospital.

Smoking is not allowed, but unauthorized inmate smoking frequently sets off fire alarms. These alarms demand an immediate response which in turn interrupts day to day activities. The repetitive nature of these alarms could diminish their importance.

Visitors' space is not adequate. There are too many inmates for the existing visitation space. There are no accommodations for family visitation. Supervision of visits is through cameras or staff working nearby. All inmates are allowed two visits per week. There are provisions for special visits with attorney/clergy. Clergy is available upon request as well as religious services.

Inmates have access to telephones. They can make collect calls or inmates can purchase phone time. Anyone can set up a prepaid program for an inmate. Free postage is available for up to two letters per week. Correspondence is opened in the inmate's presence and outgoing mail is checked by a Correctional Officer.

Medical services are contracted out to California Forensic Medical Group (CFMG). A Registered Nurse is on duty at the jail during the day and a Licensed Vocational Nurse at night. Psychiatric/Psychologist are also available through CFMG.

There is a contracted Registered Dietician who manages both El Dorado County jails.

Inspection of the Facility

The entry room is quite large with a seating area where visitors can fill out forms or watch TV. Public restrooms are available and there are lockers on the wall to store the items visitors are not allowed to bring into the jail. A receptionist sits behind bullet resistant glass. There is no metal detector at the main entrance. There is an inside metal detector for any inmate leaving and/or

returning to the jail.

The jail in Placerville is newer than the jail located in South Lake Tahoe. Visually, the interior of this building appears to be in good condition. The paint looks fresh with no scuff marks or signs of aging. Graffiti is not visible anywhere and there were no cracks noticed in the walls, ceiling or floors. The lighting is adequate.

There are two safety cells in the Placerville Jail. There is a concern that with the rising amount of drug and alcohol usage in the county, the need for at least one more safety cell is becoming a priority. When individuals under the influence are picked up and brought to the jail they are placed in the safety cells while they come off the drugs/alcohol in their system.

The control room has a view of all the housing areas, other indoor areas, the outside entrance and parking area of the jail.

Cells in the Maximum Security section of the jail are small and equipped with the barest of necessities. The door to the cell has a small window where inmates can only see what is directly in front of them. If an inmate is on lockdown, a dark shade is placed over the window until the punishment has been met. Due to the violent nature of these inmates, they are only allowed to be in the Maximum Security common area by themselves one hour per day.

The less violent and non-threatening inmates have more conveniences in their common areas. These inmates can be in the common room with other inmates on a daily basis and for a longer period of time. An outdoor and indoor exercise program is available to the incarcerated men and women for one hour every other day.

The range of discipline options includes lockdown, cleaning the dayroom, loss of commissary, loss of good conduct time and work time.

The jail has a culinary program which trains inmates in the culinary field. The culinary program has received awards for the food preparation and culinary skills of its members. Inmates must obtain a Safe Serve Certificate and a medical clearance before being assigned to kitchen duty. Knives not in use are locked in a cabinet. An inventory system is in place and knives are checked in and out and counted regularly. Kitchen workers are trained to take cooking equipment apart for cleaning.

Inmates are permitted to converse during meals. Most meals are served in the dayroom. Inmates are allowed 15 minutes to eat, which is the State minimum standard, but 25 minutes can be permitted if more time is requested by an inmate.

Grand Jurors were given a tour of the sally port where individuals are brought in from the community. The booking process includes fingerprinting, photos, completing forms, and issuance of an identification card. Once the booking process is completed, inmates are taken to an area where they can take a shower before dressing in required jail clothing.

The GED program with the Department of Education has just been restarted. The classroom on the General Population floor has eight computers with limited web access and a library. The number of inmates in the program varies between the morning and afternoon program, with a

maximum of 16 students per day meeting 4 times per week. Currently there is one instructor with an 8 to 1 student to instructor ratio. The atmosphere of the classroom is reported to be good. The Class Syllabus states: “The purpose of this class is to advance the understanding of the basic principles and skills needed to prepare and succeed in the following: General Educational Development (GED) Test, English as a Second Language, Adult Basic Education, High School Diploma, Adult Enrichment and Career Awareness.”

Anger Management and other programs are available.

The Court can order a Work Program. The Work Program is managed by the Sheriff.

Interviews with Inmates

A combination of female and male inmates were interviewed. The inmates interviewed had positive remarks to say about the facility and the Correctional Officers. They said the food is outstanding.

FINDINGS

- F 1. The main entrance area of the Placerville Jail is not equipped with a full body metal detector which creates a safety issue for staff, inmates and visitors at the jail.
- F 2. There are only two safety cells at this time, limiting the placement of at-risk individuals.
- F 3. Lack of vocational programs does not serve the rehabilitation needs of the inmates. Availability of additional vocational training programs could lessen the chances that an inmate will reoffend upon release.
- F 4. Tobacco controls are not effective and result in inmates setting off fire alarms when they illegally smoke.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R 1. Installation of a full body metal detector in the main entrance of the Placerville Jail. Hand wand detectors should also be made available for screening of visitors.
- R 2. Develop a plan to expand the number of safety cells and present it to the Board of Supervisors for approval.
- R 3. Expand the culinary program and add more vocational training opportunities for the inmates.
- R 4. Implement an effective plan to prevent unauthorized smoking by inmates.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

Responses to findings and recommendations in this report are required by law in accordance with California Penal Code §933 and §933.05

From the following individuals:

- El Dorado County Sheriff on or before August 15, 2017

From the following governing bodies:

- El Dorado County Board of Supervisors on or before August 15, 2017

Address response to:

The Honorable Suzanne N. Kingsbury
Presiding Judge of the El Dorado County Superior Court
1354 Johnson Blvd.
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

The Presiding Judge of the El Dorado County Superior Court additionally requests that responses be sent electronically as a **Word or PDF** file to facilitate the economical and timely distribution of such responses. Please email responses to El Dorado County Grand Jury reports to:

courtadmin@eldoradocourt.org

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.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Inspection Form can be found on the California Civil Grand Jury website:

[Detention Facilities Inspection Forms](#)

Go to Section: Documents Related to Investigations

<http://cgja.org/grand-jury-sample-documents>

APPENDIX

El Dorado County Fire Protection District

P.O. Box 807 • 4040 Carson Road Camino, California 95709 • (530) 644-9630 Fax (530) 644-9636

FIRE SAFETY INSPECTION REPORT

Business Address: 2950 FAIR LANE CT Suite: 120 Inspection Date: 6.15.2016
 Business Name: E.D.C. SHERIFF JAIL HOLDING Business Phone: 621-6008
 Owner/Property Management: E.D.C. SHERIFF JAIL / SHERIFF OFFICE Phone: SAME
 Address: 300 FORD RA City: PLACERVILLE State: CA Zip: 95667

NO	✓	VIOLATIONS	NO.	LOCATION / REMARKS	CLEARED	
ACCESS						
1		Maintain fire lane free of obstructions.		AT TIME OF INSPECTION	11	
2		Provide fire lane identification.		NO HAZARD NOTED		
3		Provide address numbers/building I.D. visible from street.				
4		Provide approved key box/lock/switch and/or keys for fire dept. access.				
EXITING						
5		Remove obstructions at exits, doors, aisles, corridors, stairways, etc.		[Large handwritten mark]		
6		Exit door to open without a key or any special knowledge/effort.				
7		Provide "THIS DOOR TO REMAIN UNLOCKED WHEN BUSINESS IS OCCUPIED".				
8		Repair non-operable exit door hardware.			11	
9		Remove obstructions from door required to be closed.				
10		Remove locks/latches from doors with panic hardware.				
11		Remove storage from unprotected stairway.				
12		Provide/maintain exit sign/emergency lighting.				11
FIRE EXTINGUISHERS						
13		Have fire extinguisher(s) serviced and tagged.				
14		Provide/mount fire extinguisher as indicated.				
15		Provide clear access to fire extinguisher.				11
16		Post a sign indicating fire extinguisher location.				
FIRE PROTECTION EQUIPMENT						
17		Maintain, repair, paint, inspect, and/or test sprinkler/standpipe system/hydrant/FDC/PIV.				
18		Maintain 3 ft. minimum clearance for access/use of fire appliances/equipment.			11	
19		Secure all system control valves in the open position.				
20		Replace damaged/painted/missing sprinkler heads/FDC caps.				
21		Provide 5 year certification test for sprinkler/standpipe system.				
22		Provide sprinkler coverage in unprotected areas.			11	
23		Provide spare sprinkler heads (min. 6) and/or compatible wrench.				
24		Hood and duct extinguishing system to be serviced and tagged.				
25		Remove grease from hood, duct, and filters. (KEEP CLEAN)				
FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS						
26		Maintain, repair, inspect, and/or test fire alarm system.				
27		Provide/maintain operable smoke detectors in each dwelling unit.			11	
FIRE SEPARATIONS						
28		Repair holes in required fire resistive construction.			11	
29		Provide/repair self or automatic closing fire rated assemblies.				
30		Keep attic access and scuttle openings closed.				
ELECTRICAL						
31		Discontinue use of extension cords.				
32		Install permanent wiring for fixed and stationary appliances.	1st	11		
33		Provide cover plates for all junction boxes. Provide spacers for electrical panel.				
34		Remove exposed wiring or protect in approved conduit.	2nd	11		
35		Provide a 30 inch clear space to and in front of electrical panel.				
36		Maintain wiring in good condition and protect from damage.	Refer to FPB	11		
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS						
37		Provide a flammable liquid storage cabinet or reduce storage to 10 gallons or less.				
38		Remove all flammable liquids not used for maintenance purposes.				
39		Store flammable liquids away from exits, stairs, or corridors.				
40		Maintain equipment, machinery and required detection equipment.				
41		Obtain a hazardous materials permit.				
42		Secure compressed gas cylinders. Identify product name.				
STORAGE - HOUSEKEEPING						
43		Arrange storage in an orderly manner.				
44		Remove combustible storage from boiler, mechanical, and electrical room.				
45		Reduce storage to 24 inches below ceiling or 18 inches below sprinkler heads.				
46		Provide listed container for oily rag storage.				
47		Provide metal trash can with lid.				
48		Remove waste/rubbish materials from the premises.				
49		Keep dumpsters 5 feet away from combustible walls, eaves, or openings.				
50		Provide minimum 30 foot clearance between building and combustible vegetation.				
MISCELLANEOUS						
51		Post room capacity.				
52		Other violations and comments.				
NO VIOLATIONS NOTED THIS DATE - THANK YOU FOR BEING FIRE SAFE!						

RE-INSPECTION DATES	INSPECTOR
1st	11
2nd	11
Refer to FPB	11

CITATION WARNING

You are hereby notified to correct all violations immediately or show cause why you should not be required to do so. A re-inspection will be conducted on _____ failure to correct violations by the re-inspection date may result in issuance of a citation. Thank you for your assistance and cooperation in minimizing the fire and life loss in your community.

BY ORDER OF THE FIRE CHIEF

Signature of Recipient: Sgt. M. K. X500
 Owner Manager Employee Other
 Inspecting Officer: LEWANDOLSKA

FPB: _____ Company: 25 Shift: C Page 1 of 1
 Yellow - Station Rev 02/07/08