



Santa Cruz County  
Civil Grand Jury

Grand Jury <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>

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## 19-20 Grand Jury Report Responses

1 message

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**David Brown** <David.Brown@santacruzcounty.us>  
To: "grandjury@scgrandjury.org" <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>

Tue, Oct 20, 2020 at 9:42 AM

Greetings Grand Jury,

Please find the County responses to the 19-20 Grand Jury Reports attached for your records.

Thank you,

Dave

David Brown

Senior Administrative Analyst

County Administrative Office

County of Santa Cruz

O: (831) 454-3490

C: (831) 227-1661

My pronouns are: he/him/his

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### 13 attachments

 **Fail in the Jail \_BoS\_Packet.pdf**  
181K

 **Fail\_in\_the\_Jail\_CAO\_Packet.pdf**  
184K

 **BOS FireInspection BOS Response Packet.pdf**  
181K

 **GSD FireInspection Response Packet.pdf**  
174K

 **BOS Response - Homelessness - Big Problem Little Progress - It's Time to Think Outside The Box.pdf**  
289K

 **CAO Response - Homelessness - Big Problem Little Progress - It's Time to Think Outside The Box.pdf**  
207K

 **CAO Response - Ready Aim Fire!.pdf**  
258K


 **SCCFD Response - Ready Aim Fire!.pdf**  
239K

 **BOS Response - Ready Aim Fire!.pdf**  
256K

 **2020.08.26 TangledWeb\_BoS\_Packet.pdf**  
222K

 **2020.08.26 TangledWeb\_CAO\_Packet.pdf**  
222K

 **Voter Data Clerk Response.pdf**  
179K

 **VoterData\_BoS\_Packet.pdf**  
180K



**The 2019–2020 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury  
Requests that the  
Santa Cruz County Administrative Officer  
Respond to the Findings and Recommendations  
Specified in the Report Titled  
Homelessness: Big Problem, Little Progress  
It's Time To Think Outside The Box  
by September 28, 2020**

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When the response is complete, please

1. Email the completed Response Packet as a file attachment to [grandjury@scgrandjury.org](mailto:grandjury@scgrandjury.org), and
2. Print and send a hard copy of the completed Response Packet to

The Honorable Judge John Gallagher  
Santa Cruz Courthouse  
701 Ocean St.  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

## **Instructions for Respondents**

California law PC §933.05 (included [below](#)) requires the respondent to a Grand Jury report to comment on each finding and recommendation within a report. Explanations for disagreements and timeframes for further implementation or analysis must be provided. Please follow the format below when preparing the responses.

### ***Response Format***

1. For the Findings included in this Response Packet, select one of the following responses and provide the required additional information:
  - a. **AGREE** with the Finding, or
  - b. **PARTIALLY DISAGREE** with the Finding and specify the portion of the Finding that is disputed and include an explanation of the reasons therefor, or
  - c. **DISAGREE** with the Finding and provide an explanation of the reasons therefor.
2. For the Recommendations included in this Response Packet, select one of the following actions and provide the required additional information:
  - a. **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED**, with a summary regarding the implemented action, or
  - b. **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE**, with a timeframe or expected date for implementation, or
  - c. **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS**, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for that analysis or study; this timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report, or
  - d. **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation therefor.

If you have questions about this response form, please contact the Grand Jury by calling 831-454-2099 or by sending an email to [grandjury@scgrandjury.org](mailto:grandjury@scgrandjury.org).

**Findings**

**F7.** An insufficient number of treatment facilities in Santa Cruz County for mental health and substance use disorders leaves homeless individuals without necessary treatment options.

**AGREE**

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE** – explain the disputed portion

**DISAGREE** – explain why

**Response explanation** (required for a response other than **Agree**):

**F8.** Because Santa Cruz County lacks adequate prevention and diversion programs, individuals who could remain in their homes with minimal cash assistance are ending up homeless.

**AGREE**

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE** – explain the disputed portion

**DISAGREE** – explain why

**Response explanation** (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The County of Santa Cruz is one of the most expensive places to live in the world, and even substantially funded cash assistance programs would have limited overall impact. The county also has an inadequate supply of affordable housing, and what housing is available is not sufficient to meet the demand for individuals who are very difficult to house. And the community needs far more structured and staff-supported living arrangements to assist high-needs individuals.

The county's cost-of-living issues are exacerbated when measured against household income and other employment metrics, with a lack of sufficient income and economic opportunities, and the PIT County shows job loss (followed by evictions) as the most common self-reported cause of homelessness.

In a highly competitive housing market impacted by wildfire and an influx of homebuyers from neighboring Bay Area cities during the COVID-19 pandemic, housing prices have remained unchanged, if not increased. We also need more landlords willing accept homeless tenants with housing vouchers and offer opportunities even to those with past eviction histories.

Additionally, there are significant prevention dollars at work in the community which serve to keep people who are "at imminent risk of homelessness" housed. The County contracts with numerous community-based organizations for provision of eviction prevention services and administration of rental assistance funds. A diversion program is in the process of implementation, in coordination with the SmartPath Coordinated Entry System.

**F9.** The lack of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) results in the significant compounding of the homeless issue.

**AGREE**

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE** – explain the disputed portion

**DISAGREE** – explain why

**Response explanation** (required for a response other than **Agree**):

**F10.** Supportive services are limited to one year; this limitation can contribute to instability, a loss of housing, and a return to homelessness.

**AGREE**

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE** – explain the disputed portion

**DISAGREE** – explain why

**Response explanation** (required for a response other than **Agree**):

Limitations such as these are the function of certain funding sources, but not all, and this finding does not reflect local policy. In fact, most funding sources utilized for County services do not have such limitations. For example, the County of Santa Cruz Health Services Agency (HSA) Behavioral Health programs do not place limitations on the support services offered to clients. HSA Behavioral Health provides rental assistance through housing vouchers, case management and other behavioral health services based on the needs of the individual and not a set time period.

The length of time that persons receive supportive services differs by housing or service program, funding source, and the needs, situation, and preferences of the participant. For example, there is no limit on the length of time that participants in Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) programs can receive housing subsidies or supportive services. The Disabled and Medically Vulnerable (DMV) Voucher program requires that participants receive a minimum of one year of case management but has no maximum service provision. Rapid Re-Housing Programs vary their provision of services and financial subsidies based on the individual needs and situation of participants. Regardless of the specific program, to facilitate housing retention, if a participant needs services longer than a housing program can provide, most programs identify alternative supports for the participant, rather than having them return to homelessness.



**F11.** A lack of case managers and outreach results in homeless individuals not having timely access to necessary supportive services.

**AGREE**

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE** – explain the disputed portion

**DISAGREE** – explain why

**Response explanation** (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The County of Santa Cruz Health Services Agency (HSA) manages over half of all HUD funded permanent supportive housing programs within our Continuum of Care. The collaborative efforts of outreach workers across all of HSA's departments, and the inclusion of community-based agencies in these efforts, contributed to a three-fold increase in \clinic visits by the highest utilizers of hospital services in 2019, according to recent data shared by the Central California Alliance for Health. That level of coordination between outreach workers and case managers ultimately leads to improved health outcomes while reducing unnecessary emergency room visits and hospital admissions, critically important during the COVID-19 pandemic.

HSA Behavioral Health provides a broad range of targeted services and programs for the homeless including the HOPES Program (Homeless Outreach and Proactive Engagement), the FIT Team (Focused Intervention Team), and our specialty mental health and substance use disorder programs, as well as housing navigation services in the community which are peer staff assisting with connecting to housing in the community. These services were not reflected in this Grand Jury report.

The issue of connecting to services goes beyond capacity- there are always going to be a group of homeless individuals averse to ongoing treatment, and while we work with them using harm reduction interventions, we often cannot meet the legal standards required to force an individual into treatment.

Further complicating this is the fact that the County does not have enough supportive infrastructure systems to adequately address the behavioral and physical health needs of the number of people experiencing homelessness (such as medical respite beds, a medical detoxification facility, and board and care facilities able to provide 24/7 nursing support). There is also a need for more medical providers trained and deployed to provide street medicine in the field.

Without these critical infrastructure pieces available for clients, any crisis response system of case managers and outreach workers, not matter how coordinated, Will be unable to improve outcomes because there are not adequate systems in place to which case workers may refer this population.

**F14.** There is a lack of leadership from County and City officials to engage the business community in exploring potential solutions to homelessness.

**AGREE**

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE** – explain the disputed portion

**DISAGREE** – explain why

**Response explanation** (required for a response other than **Agree**):

County Homeless Services Coordination Office has engaged with Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Association, and Business Council of Santa Cruz County to discuss the issue of homelessness, understand impacts to businesses, and explore potential for collaboration. The Downtown Streets Team is an example of a successful government-business collaboration that has included City and County leadership.

**F16.** Santa Cruz County and Cities, despite owning numerous parking lots, choose not to utilize their parking lots for safe parking programs, which results in an underutilization of resources that could help reduce homeless parking in neighborhoods and business districts.

**AGREE**

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE** – explain the disputed portion

**DISAGREE** – explain why

**Response explanation** (required for a response other than **Agree**):

City as already utilizing City-owned parking lot(s) for safe parking and County leadership is actively engaged with AFC to identify County lot(s) for FY 2020-21 expansion of the safe parking program.

**F17.** Faith-Based Organizations are an underutilized resource in the effort to end homelessness.

**AGREE**

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE** – explain the disputed portion

**DISAGREE** – explain why

**Response explanation** (required for a response other than **Agree**):

While the Faith-Based community may have more to offer, they have been exemplary partners to date. The Association of Faith Communities operate the Faith Community Shelter and Safe Spaces Parking programs, both of which utilize multiple church sites around the County. The Seventh Day Adventist site is currently hosting a Transition Age Youth shelter-in-place program. Mid-County Homeless Coalition operates the mid-county hygiene program.

**F18.** Due to the inconsistent collection of Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data, the accuracy of funding decisions for service providers is negatively impacted.

**AGREE**

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE** – explain the disputed portion

**DISAGREE** – explain why

**Response explanation** (required for a response other than **Agree**):

To date, HMIS data has not been a factor in funding decisions, however that is already in the process of changing. There has been a tremendous effort over the past year to engage with each homeless services provider to review their HMIS data, including quality of the data, and to understand how their individual project's performance impacts the overall homeless response system performance. Agencies have invested significant time and effort to review and correct data quality issues. HAP and County leadership are committed to using data as part of funding decision-making processes. To this end, effective October 1, 2020, the County Human Services Department is assuming responsibility as the HAP's HMIS Lead Agency in order to utilize the department's existing data evaluation team, strengthen homeless system data analysis, and better inform decision-making.

**F20.** There are tools available, such as Santa Clara County's "Silicon Valley Triage Tool," that could be applied to Santa Cruz County to allow the County to better understand the true cost of homelessness enabling the County to use public resources more efficiently.

**AGREE**

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE** – explain the disputed portion

**DISAGREE** – explain why

**Response explanation** (required for a response other than **Agree**):

**F21.** If underutilized parcels of land throughout Santa Cruz County were identified, such as the area near Coral Street in Santa Cruz, and the parcel adjacent to the County Government Mental Health Building in Watsonville, these parcels could potentially be used to increase the number of beds and services to support the homeless.

**AGREE**

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE** – explain the disputed portion

**DISAGREE** – explain why

**Response explanation** (required for a response other than **Agree**):

## **Recommendations**

**R5.** The Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency should expand relationships with regional psychiatric hospitals to identify more beds and treatment options when they are unavailable in Santa Cruz County by December 31, 2020. (F7)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

### **Response explanation, summary, and timeframe:**

The County of Santa Cruz Health Services Agency (HSA) recently expanded the number of contracted beds in other Counties through a contract with San Jose Behavioral Health. HSA anticipates collaborating with Valley Regional Hospital to utilize new psychiatric beds as they become available and has also recently initiated discussions with Sutter Health to have access to their network on inpatient facilities.



**R6.** The Santa Cruz County Administrative Officer (CAO) and the County's City Managers should identify parcels of land within their jurisdictions that could be utilized to supply homeless services and/or temporary or permanent housing, and report such sites to their governing bodies by December 31, 2020. (F9, F21)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

**Response explanation, summary, and timeframe:**

Staff would need to conduct further analysis to determine feasibility of timeline.

**R7.** In the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 budget, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors should direct the agencies that provide grant funding for homeless services to prioritize more funding for case managers, diversion and prevention programs, and the extension of supportive services to more than one year when appropriate. (F8, F10, F11)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

**Response explanation, summary, and timeframe:**

This is not within the County’s authority. However, the recently published Six-Month Work Plan reflects the County’s priorities, including an emphasis on housing-focused case management, diversion, and more. County and City representatives on the HAP will champion these prioritized activities for allocations of State and Federal funds.

**R13.** Santa Cruz County and Cities should coordinate a retreat for all Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) in the County to collaborate on how to work cohesively on the issue of homelessness. (F17)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

**Response explanation, summary, and timeframe:**

A Faith Based Organization retreat should be organized by the Faith Community.

**R14.** Effective with fiscal year 2021-2022, the Santa Cruz County Administrative Office should work with the Homeless Action Partnership (HAP) to ensure that grants awarded to homeless service providers require a contract that mandates the use of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). (F18)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

**Response explanation, summary, and timeframe:**

This is an existing requirement.

**R15.** By the beginning of fiscal year 2021-2022, Santa Cruz County Administrative Officer should develop and implement a system for tracking the cost of homeless, fashioned after the Silicon Valley Triage Tool, and require it be utilized by all agencies receiving funding for homeless services of any kind. (F20)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

**Response explanation, summary, and timeframe:**

The County will be focused on the priorities outlined in the soon-to-be-published three year strategic action plan, emphasizing service improvements in shelters, housing-focused case management and housing navigation, new governance, implementation of diversion and targeted prevention, adding rapid rehousing inventory, and robustly utilizing HMIS data to inform decisions.

**R16.** Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors should request the Santa Cruz County Administrative Officer investigate and report on the viability of converting the underutilized County Juvenile Hall campus, located at 3650 Graham Hill Rd, Felton, CA into a facility focused on fulfilling crucial homeless, mental health and substance abuse needs by December 31, 2020. (F7)

- HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

**Response explanation, summary, and timeframe:**

The Welfare and Institutions Code Section 850 requires each county to operate a secure detention facility. The Probation Department and the CAO surveyed the county for another facility that would be BSCC compliant and was unsuccessful, and the opportunity to build a new smaller facility was not feasible. There are no other options available for secure detention for youth in our county.

Furthermore, the Division of Juvenile Justice realignment required by SB823 will result in an increased number of youth in the facility.

## **Penal Code §933.05**

1. For Purposes of subdivision (b) of §933, as to each Grand Jury finding, the responding person or entity shall indicate one of the following:
  - a. the respondent agrees with the finding,
  - b. the respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the finding, in which case the response shall specify the portion of the finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons therefor.
2. For purpose of subdivision (b) of §933, as to each Grand Jury recommendation, the responding person shall report one of the following actions:
  - a. the recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action,
  - b. the recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future, with a timeframe for implementation,
  - c. the recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of the publication of the Grand Jury report, or
  - d. the recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation therefor.
3. However, if a finding or recommendation of the Grand Jury addresses budgetary or personnel matters of a County department headed by an elected officer, both the department head and the Board of Supervisors shall respond if requested by the Grand Jury, but the response of the Board of Supervisors shall address only those budgetary or personnel matters over which it has some decision-making authority. The response of the elected department head shall address all aspects of the findings or recommendations affecting his or her department.
4. A Grand Jury may request a subject person or entity to come before the Grand Jury for the purpose of reading and discussing the findings of the Grand Jury report that relates to that person or entity in order to verify the accuracy of the findings prior to their release.
5. During an investigation, the Grand Jury shall meet with the subject of that investigation regarding that investigation unless the court, either on its own determination or upon request of the foreperson of the Grand Jury, determines that such a meeting would be detrimental.
6. A Grand Jury shall provide to the affected agency a copy of the portion of the Grand Jury report relating to that person or entity two working days prior to its public release and after the approval of the presiding judge. **No officer, agency, department, or governing body of a public agency shall disclose any contents of the report prior to the public release of the final report.**