

Santa Cruz County Probation Department

Juvenile
Hall
Annual
Report

2023

*Our **MISSION** is to contribute to community well-being through positive engagement, connection to services, and support for those impacted by crime.*

Authored by Division
Director Sara A.
Berman

Table of Contents

Introduction, Detention Utilization.....	2
Bookings.....	3-4
Detention Alternatives.....	4-5
Dual Status, CSEC.....	5-6
Impacts of COVID-19, Staffing, Security and Safety.....	/// 6
Positive Youth Development, Evidence Based & Culturally Responsive Programming.....	7
Physical and Behavioral Health Services.....	8
Educational Opportunities.....	8-9
Grant Projects.....	9
Impacts of State Bill 823 and 92.....	10
CalAIM, Line of Sight for the Future of the Work.....	10

Introduction:

Juvenile Hall was established pursuant to Article 14, Section 850 of the State Welfare, and Institutions Code, which requires the Board of Supervisors to provide and maintain a temporary secure place for individuals between the ages of 12 and 25 under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court and deemed a public safety concern.

Detention Utilization

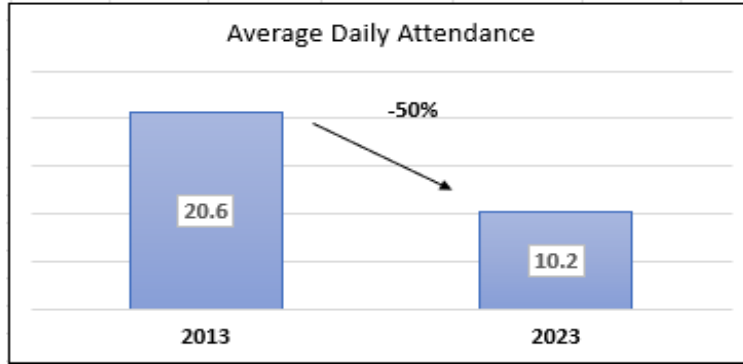
Our facility prioritizes providing detained youth with optimal conditions, ensuring a safe, secure, and trauma-informed environment where both physical and behavioral health needs are diligently addressed. We deliver supportive interventions, educational programs, and rehabilitative services with a commitment to equity and cultural sensitivity. Moreover, we facilitate connections with families and support networks through both in-person and virtual visitations. Additionally, our Alternative to Detention program offers a constructive alternative for young individuals, ensuring they fulfill their court obligations and avoid reoffending while awaiting their court hearings.

Santa Cruz County Probation boasts a distinguished legacy as one of the inaugural national model sites for the Annie E. Casey Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) in 2000. Since then, we have seamlessly integrated the core values, principles, and practices of JDAI into our operations and policies. Over nearly a quarter-century, our commitment to advancing our work with young people, their families, and the community has remained steadfast. We strive to establish a sustainable model of juvenile justice that not only safely diverts youth from the justice system but also fosters community capacity, recognizing the boundless potential of our young people. Our goal is to provide safe and nurturing pathways for them into adulthood, ensuring they have every opportunity to thrive.

Core Principles:

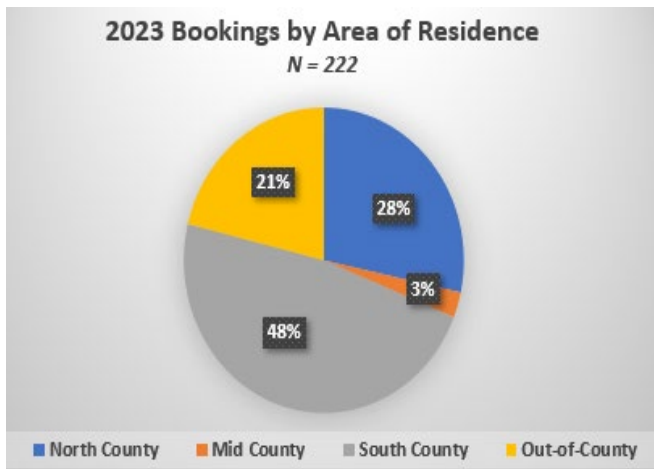
- Detain only young people pending court who pose a public safety or flight risk.
- All young people brought to Juvenile Hall are evaluated with an objective Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI) detention screening tool.
- RAI links with a continuum of alternatives to detention (ATD), without impacting public safety. ATD program supports, successfully and safely keep youth in their community.
- Address racial and ethnic disparities of those who are confined, and address inequities and needs of special populations
- Family-focused interventions that create equitable opportunities for positive youth development.

The capacity of the Juvenile Hall is 42. In 2023, there were 222 intakes, and the average daily population (ADP) was 10.2; as compared to an ADP of 20.6 in the year 2013. In 2022 there were 191 intakes and ADP was 13.2. This past year there was an increase in bookings; yet our intentional work to safely reduce the use of unnecessary detention and increase community capacity continues to have a positive impact on the average daily population (ADP) of the Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall, as illustrated in the following chart.



Bookings

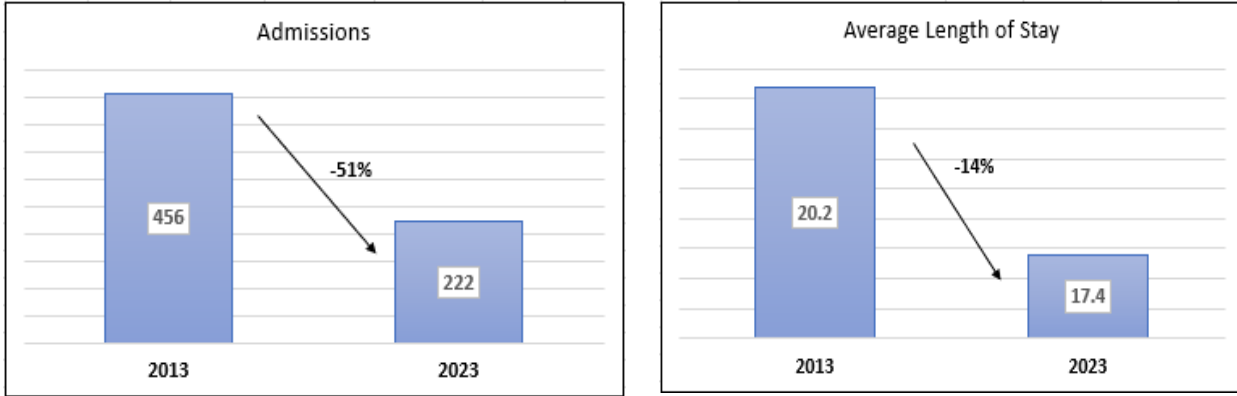
The charts below illustrate the bookings to Juvenile Hall by race and ethnic demographics, and area of residence. Latinx youth made up 72% of intakes to Juvenile Hall and comprised 55% of the youth population. 48% of the young people booked into the facility reside in South County.



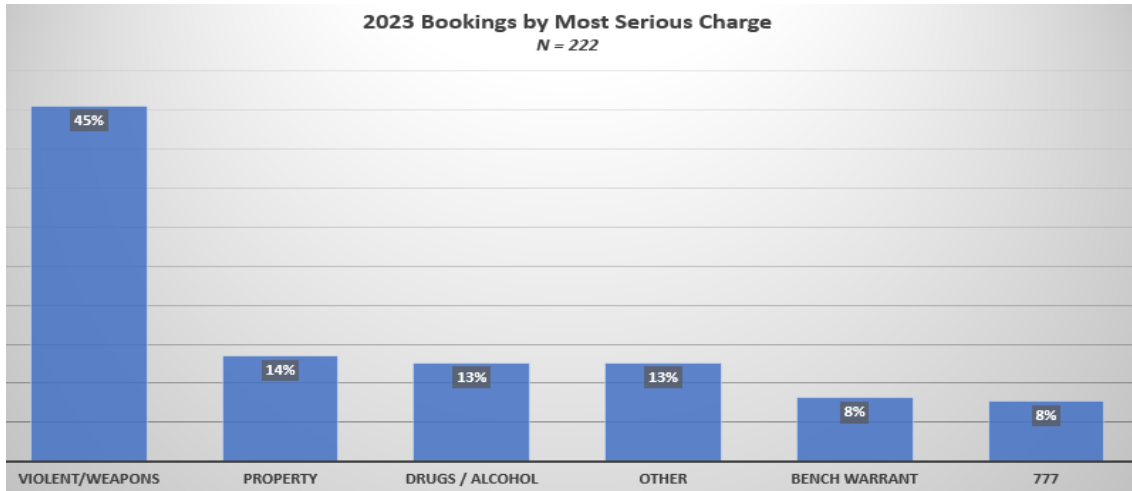
Probation continues to hold a strong prevention lens, engaging with community partners to provide programming and services to address racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system to include a focus on the geographical areas of need.

- Alternative to Detention Program (ATD)
- Luna Y Sol Familia Center
- Teen / Parent Mediation – Conflict Resolution Program (CRC)
- Victim Offender Dialogue Program – (CRC)
- Title II Stable Transition After Reentry (STAR) Grant – (Encompass, CRC & Positive Discipline)
- Parent Project – Community Bridges
- Azteca’s Soccer – South County
- Victim Awareness Education – (CRC)
- Employment Skill Building (CAB)

Since 2013, admissions to Juvenile Hall have decreased by 50% and the average length of stay has decreased by 14%.



Although detention admissions have decreased, the youths currently held tend to face serious felony violence charges, leading to longer stays. This discrepancy means that the reduction in admissions does not align with the decrease in length of stay. Additional factors contributing to longer stays include legislative changes, transfer cases, companion cases involving adult co-participants (which often prolong the process), the impact of SB 823 DJJ realignment requiring youth formally committed at state level to be committed locally, as well as the lengthy process of securing a placement in a Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP) for detained youths. See chart below:



Detention Alternatives Outcome Data

In-lieu of detention, the Alternative to Detention program emphasis is to ensure young people make their court appearance and do not reoffend while remaining in the community pending their court hearing. The following chart illustrates the use of alternatives to detention upon contact with the juvenile system. In 2023, 98% of all youth that were placed in an alternative to detention program made their next court appearance and did not recidivate pending court.

2023 Detention Alternative Success Rate



98% Successful Completions

The Department remains committed to employing the least restrictive interventions whenever feasible, opting for alternatives to detention as appropriate. Significant changes over the past year include a 12% rise in the number of young people enrolled in the Home Supervision program and a 15% increase in those placed on the Electronic Monitoring program. Additionally, there was an 18% increase in diversion and informal contracts compared to the previous year.

Referrals	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	% Change
Diversion and Informal Contracts	242	151	131	88	68	61	72	+18%
Home Supervision	50	58	76	59	73	76	85	+12%
Electronic Monitoring	114	115	114	73	117	101	116	+15%

The Stable Transition After Reentry (STAR) Program, a Title II state funded grant, provides individualized services to youth and families to support youth transitioning back to the community from Juvenile Hall, Short-Term Therapeutic Residential Treatment Program (STRTP), Ranch or returning from DJJ.

The goal is to decrease the chance of a young person returning to Juvenile Hall or further involvement with the Juvenile Justice System. Probation partnered with Encompass, Positive Discipline Community Resources, and Conflict Resolution Center on this diversion program. We remain steadfast in our efforts with our collaborative partners and probation staff to collectively engage youth and increase support for a successful transition from custody back to their community.

Dual Status

Santa Cruz County Human Services Department’s Division of Family and Children’s Services (“FCS”), the Probation Department, and the Juvenile Division of the Superior Court uses a team approach to maintain a young person/family centered focus and cement practices that offer equitable responses to dually-involve youth and families being served across two systems. The Dual Status MOU aligns with the principles of Continuum of Care Reform; and maintains the values and philosophy of each agency while improving the coordination of services for the overall benefit of youth and families. The following are highlights for our Dual Status protocol:

- Fewer crossover youth entering our Juvenile Hall and juvenile justice system.
- Paradigm shifts have reduced overreliance on use of detention and formal sanctions.
- Partners examined how data elements, such as case coordination, programming, placement types, recidivism, and successful transitions have impacted intermediate and long-term outcomes for dually involved young people and families in our county.
- Both agencies continue to examine opportunities to increase family engagement efforts, gaps in services and opportunities for quality improvement standards.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)

Young people are screened for Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC). Multidisciplinary teams from our partner systems assess and provide supportive services to CSEC youth in our community. Probation remains a critical member of our tri-county model and local response team. Probation, FCS, and several key county and community organizations continue to expand services and responses that utilize a victim-centered and harm-reduction approach for all young people who are identified with any level of risk for commercial sexual exploitation. CSEC coordinators lead training, convenings, and coaching for county and community staff, which has resulted in a culture shift to respond to young people based on their social emotional responses rather than punitive court reactions.

Impacts Of COVID-19

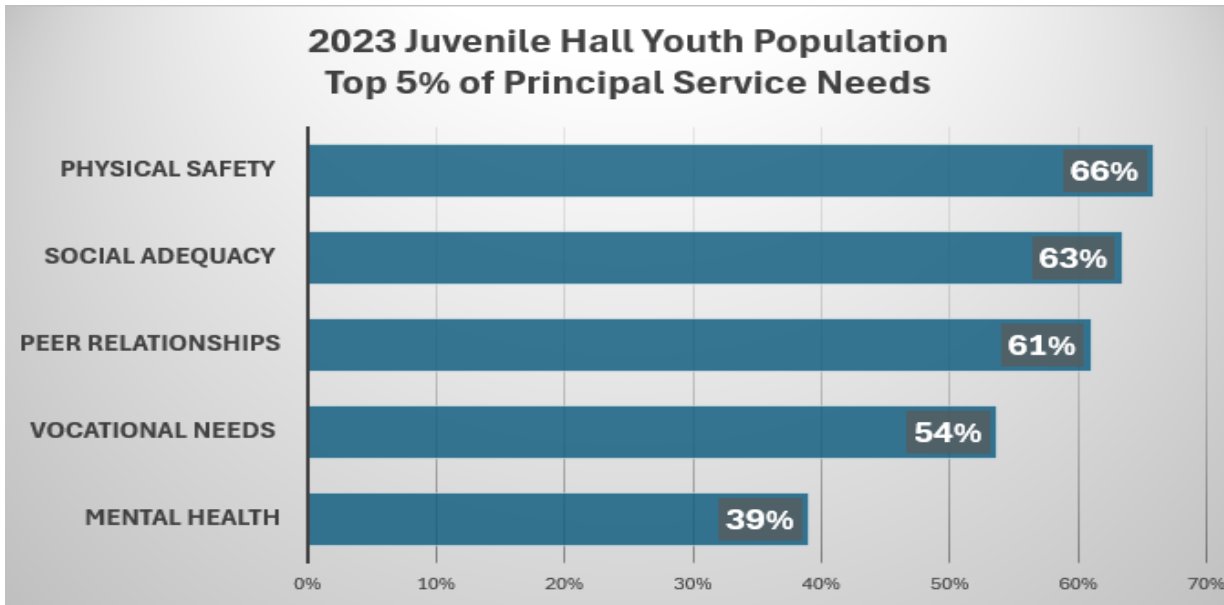
Virtual platforms are now a staple in the facility, for young people to foster connectedness and support successful reentry to the community. Equitable access for detained young people to meet through virtual platforms with family, attorneys, counselors, natural supports, and for participation in programs. Remote access is available to all young people and visitors, when health or safety necessitates or is preferred by the visitor; and increases access for young people to programs and support.

Staffing, Security and Safety

The Juvenile Hall operates two independent units. Upon admission, staff make housing and programming assignments in accordance with written classification policies. Young people are assigned to a housing unit taking into consideration the person's developmental status, sophistication, social skills, behavioral history, age, size, intensity of their alleged offense, background, and other factors that might influence their adjustment in the facility. Operational practices reinforce our commitment to respect the dignity of all individuals, including transgender and gender non-conforming young persons, to create a safe environment for all and ensure everyone has equal access to all available services, care, and treatment.

Our facility is dedicated to fostering robust relationships, demonstrating compassion, and fostering collaboration among our team members, resulting in optimal conditions of confinement. We are one of only a few counties in California that does not use chemical restraints/OC Spray; and has a considerably low use of force and restraints when compared to others. The facility has significantly few physical altercations and almost no injuries to staff or youth. During 2023 there were only 3 physical altercations, with no serious injury to young people in our care or staff. This significantly low level of incidents and injuries is a stark contrast to what other juvenile detention facilities experience.

Hiring and staffing for the Juvenile Hall is challenging. The Board of State and Community Correction Standards (BSCC) Title 15 mandates imposes minimum staffing numbers, gender of, and training of staff on duty which resulted in an increase reliance on Extra Help staff to ensure 24/7 coverage. Staffing level requires not only meeting the mandated staff/youth ratio for safety and security; but also allows program, unit duties, and the ability to meet the individual service needs of young people who are detained.



Positive Youth Development Through Evidence Based and Culturally Responsive Programming

The array of program opportunities combined with an individualized engagement approach supports positive development for young people and humane conditions of confinement. Our professional youth supervision staff are trained in trauma informed care and bring dedication and compassion to meet the needs of the young people in their care. The Juvenile Hall is dependent upon state funding to sustain programs that meet the assessed needs of young people. To provide a rich curriculum of services and programs which meet complex needs, we are supported by community partners and volunteers.

Services offered at the facility promote young peoples’ well-being by investing in the development and use of programs that help a young person reach critical milestones on the path through adolescence and towards behavior change. The variety of enrichment and competency building programs are intended to meet the needs of those we serve. Programs offered in the facility provide education and life skills along with opportunities for teens to build self-worth, emotional regulation, learn empathy and respect for themselves and others. We are committed to evidence-based and culturally responsive probation practices; and to ensure public safety through a decrease in recidivism, reduction in victimization, and maximizing successful completion of probation terms. Staff work with young people to assess their strengths and needs, supporting the development of individual reentry goals and outcomes of wellbeing. Staff build relationships to motivate young people and teach behavioral modification skills through cognitive behavioral interventions.

During 2023, contracted services continued to provide weekly writing workshops through The Beat Within and Barrios Unidos provided culturally responsive individual and group counseling. Yoga was taught weekly to all youth during PE class and a variety of music classes were provided during the school day. Hope Church’s FLOW program offered youth a place to belong, mentorship, and the positive power of play. We were also fortunate to continue to bring local live chamber music concerts and education to the facility, thanks to Rebecca Jackson and other world-renowned musicians from Music in May. The Canine Teaching Compassion Program brought in shelter dogs to provide animal training and humane education curriculum. Santa Cruz Credit Union began an 8-week Financial Literacy program.

Physical and Behavioral Health Services

Medical and behavioral health services are provided to all young people through the Health Services Agency. On-site staffing consists of daily Registered Nursing services from 8a-8:30p and 6 hours per week of Nurse Practitioner services. The facility partners with Dientes, who provides high-quality dental care to those detained. Young people are seen by a dentist for an assessment, cleaning, and the completion of necessary dental work. The majority of the young people's medical needs are addressed within the facility. However, there were 43 instances where it was necessary to transport youth out of the facility to access specialized medical services, such as optometry, x-rays, or consultations with specialists.

The Children's Behavioral Health Division provides daily mental health coverage and 2.5 hours each week of psychiatric services. Behavioral Health services include crisis intervention and assessment, behavioral health assessment, individual therapy, rehab counseling services, case management, advocacy, referrals, and linkage services for consenting young people in Juvenile Hall. Children's Behavioral Health staff provides referrals and linkage for substance use disorders treatment when necessary. Children's Behavioral Health staff provide safety planning in preparation for transitions out of the facility and court support for youth when needed, as resources allow.

Of the young people booked during 2023 there was a monthly average of:

- 14 youth with an open behavioral health case.
- 5 youth receiving psychotropic medication and being seen by the psychiatrist.
- 7 youth who reported drug and alcohol issues.

This past year Probation and Health Services collaborated to enhance medical and behavioral health services in the facility. The proactive approach enhanced staffing, workflow, updating medical equipment, need for electronic medical records, best practices in the field, and evidence-based practices with the goal to improve the healthcare system that serves our justice involved youth. The enhanced partnership supported the ability for Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) to be provided for the first time for those detained youth in need.

Educational Opportunities

The educational program of the Robert A. Hartman School in Juvenile Hall, operated by the County Office of Education, is reviewed annually by an outside representative, and meets the California Educational Code Requirements. We have a collaborative goal to enhance educational and vocational services for detained young people. Culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches are applied when providing education. Secure tablet technology supports educational achievements in and outside of the classroom, towards high school diploma, college credit earning courses, and behavior modification courses. Curriculum is available in a variety of subjects, languages, and levels.

The lead teacher is a certified special education instructor, who completes IEP assessments, along with serving students on 504's and IEP's. In 2023 there was a monthly average of:

- 6 students with an IEP
- 1 student with a 504 plan

The school program has a second teacher and project coordinator, who specializes in job, career, and college mentorship. Students are provided with a rigorous, quality educational program that responds to the different learning styles and abilities of students and prepares them for high school graduation, career entry, and/or post-secondary education. Dual enrollment in junior college is a focus for students, when appropriate. Hartman School operates year-round and holds graduations for young people and their families when students complete their high school credits. COE staff facilitate re-enrollment in school and transition young people to student services upon release back to community or placement.

Probation collaborated with the County Office of Education and Cabrillo College to apply and were awarded The Rising Scholars grant. In early 2024 we will be hiring a program coordinator to support justice involved youth and their attendance at Cabrillo College.

Grant Funding: Title II

Since 2019, Santa Cruz Probation along with partners Encompass, Positive Discipline Community Resource, and Conflict Resolution Center successfully had been implementing reentry and whole family services in the community through the Stable Transitions After Reentry (STAR) Program, a 3-year BSCC Title II grant funded program. At the end of 2022 the Department was awarded Title II grant funding for a second round of the STAR Program. This second grant proposal reflects changes to the original strategy based on successes and lessons learned. Namely, increasing support earlier on to young people with higher risk factors; engaging families directly, prioritizing the needs of families with youth assessed with high-risk factors; and providing flexible hours and methods of engagement.

STAR provides individualized services to youth and families to support youth transitioning back to the community from Juvenile Hall, Short-Term Therapeutic Residential Treatment Program (STRTP), Ranch or returning from DJJ. The STAR program supports reentry and early intervention services for young people in dosage increments to match level of need. Encompass Reentry Specialist provides in-custody case planning along with linkages to community-based services for family and parenting services. The Reentry Specialists are bilingual, bicultural, local, and have extensive knowledge of our community needs, culture, and resources thus providing equitable access to those we serve.

During 2023, STAR provided reentry and early intervention services to:

- 52 young people and their families.
- support expedited releases from Juvenile Hall to sustain keeping the population low.
- help minimize exposure to detention.

Grant Funding: SB81 Round 1 Multipurpose Recreation Facility and Round 2 Seed to Table Program and Facility Renovations

The over fifty-year-old facility has had minimal improvements over the years. Through our aggressive ability to secure state grants, grant funding county match dollars has been secured to assist in improving the facility.

The enclosed gymnasium will enhance access to physical activity for those detained in Juvenile Hall. The Round 2 funding will provide significant renovation to the facility and expansion of programming space to accommodate a horticulture and culinary program. Facility renovations include upgrades to seismic; fire and life safety; electrical; mechanical; security- cameras, lighting, doors, locks, fencing, the Institutional Supervisor control area, and sally port entrance. The project plan also includes major renovations and upgrades to the outdated kitchen, food storage, and dining areas, along with a new outdoor garden with greenhouse and teaching space. The most significant program addition will be the creation of a garden, horticulture, and culinary vocational programs and rehabilitation support with a new Seed to Table program.

Delays to these projects has resulted in a need to respond to repairs and replacement of equipment and facility infrastructure which was intended to be addressed in the renovations. The grants have transitioned to a Capital Project and are being led by Community Development and Infrastructure. The SB-81 Grant Funded Renovation project received State Fire Marshall approval in late 2023. The Multipurpose Recreation Facility is in the final review stages with the State Fire Marshall with approval expected in early 2024. The projects are expected to be bid on in early summer with construction beginning before the end of 2024.

Impact of State Bill 823 and SB 92:

Any young person whose case originates in juvenile court (up to age 18 at the time of the offense), may also be held in secure detention in a county facility until the person attains 25 years of age (see SB 823 and SB 92 below for details).

SB 823 transfers responsibility to local jurisdictions for managing custody, supervision, and services to young people. This juvenile justice reform puts the responsibility of young peoples’ rehabilitative services on individual counties, impacting the population we serve, and program needs. Realignment is resulting in a Juvenile Hall population that will be older and have a longer length of stay. Managing an increase in the length of stay is complicated by our antiquated facility and program capacity. To increase safe program space in the facility, we sought and were awarded SB 823 grant funds and renovated the former court room in the facility to create a safe and secure location for detained youth to meet with providers.

CalAIM Initiative

CalAIM will provide awareness to detained youth and their families of Medi-Cal and their eligibility. Detained youth can be enrolled in Medi-Cal and begin to utilize their health benefits while detained and have facilitated ongoing and direct connections to enhanced care management in the community upon their release from detention.

The county is taking a collaborative approach with Probation, Health Services Agency, Human Services Department, Sheriff’s, and local Community Based Organization to plan, implement, and operationalize CalAIM. It will provide an opportunity for screening, pre-release planning, linkages to enhanced care management and reimbursement for some of the medical and behavioral health services. CalAIM funding was awarded \$250,000 in Round 2 for screening and implementation and \$1.5 million in Round 3 for prerelease planning and implementation. The new CalAIM framework presents an opportunity for revenue depending on reimbursement.

Line of Sight for the Future of the Work

The Department values a strong collaboration between juvenile justice and community-based organizations and program providers to support young people who are reentering their community after confinement. Probation is dedicated to creating a safer, more rehabilitative, and humane environment to facilitate positive outcomes/measurable results.

The department has a deep commitment to reform efforts that have been designed to center equity, reduce unnecessary detention, and address the overrepresentation of youth of color, primarily Latinx, to create equitable opportunities for success.

The Juvenile Hall will focus on increasing successful transitions from detention to the community through Alternative to Detention, the STAR program, and CalAIM. We will coordinate with service providers to ensure youth and their families are connected to support and prosocial programs/opportunities. This approach will support collective impact work geared to increasing the success of community transitions specifically for Latinx youth and all young people we serve.

