

County of Santa Cruz



JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COMMISSION AGENDA

October 9, 2025
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Regular Meeting

Probation Success Center
303 Water St, 1st Floor
Santa Cruz, CA 95060 /
Hybrid (see link below)

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL: Meeting called to order at 6:01 p.m.

Present: Bernie Gomez, Beverly Brook, Cynthia Druley, David Brody, Deutron Kebebew, Elias Gonzales, Jeri Limon, Julia Feldman, Reyna Ruiz, Stephanie Sonnenshine

Excused: Sierra Thompson

Ex Officio: Judge Vinluan, Jennifer Martinez **Staff:** Gerardo Leon

II. CONSENT AGENDA:

Approval of the October 9, 2025, Agenda

Approval of the September 11, 2025, Minutes

Monthly Statistical Information from Probation and Juvenile Hall (Accept & File).

Motion: Kebebew **Second:** Book

Yes: Gomez, Brook, Druley, Brody, Kebebew, Gonzales, Limon, Feldman, Ruiz

No: None

Abstain: Sonnenshine

Motion Passed

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS: None

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS (Including items via email on file)

Kelvin Nivens, founder and executive director of Project Daraja, Inc. introduced himself.

Vice-Chair Feldman spoke about AB60. See attached flyer.

New Commissioner Stephanie Sonnenshine introduced herself.

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Por favor haga arreglos anticipadamente por teléfono al número (831) 454-3800.

Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission Agenda

August 14, 2025

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Commissioner Kebebew attended an effective board training for Pajaro Valley Unified School District.

Commissioners Druley and Brook attend the first Office of Youth and Community Restoration (OYCR) ad hoc group call. They also spoke about the Op Ed in the Santa Cruz Sentinel critical of Juvenile Justice Reform.

Please see Secretary Ruiz's notes for details.

V. ACTION ITEMS:

1. Establish and approve the Jail SYTF Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Motion: Kebebew **Second:** Brook

Yes: Gomez, Brook, Druley, Brody, Kebebew, Gonzales, Limon, Feldman, Ruiz, Sonnenshine

No: None

Abstain: None

Motion Passed

Jail SYTF Subcommittee membership: Commissioners Brook, Druley, Gonzales, and Ruiz.

Please see Secretary Ruiz's notes for details.

2. Approve the Juvenile Hall Inspection Report

Motion: Brody **Second:** Ruiz

Yes: Gomez, Brook, Druley, Brody, Kebebew, Gonzales, Limon, Feldman, Ruiz,

No: None

Abstain: Sonnenshine

Motion Passed

Juvenile Hall Inspection Report to be on the December Board of Supervisors Agenda.

Please see Secretary Ruiz's notes for details.

VI INFORMATION ITEMS:

1. Delinquency Prevention

Please see Secretary Ruiz's notes for details.

2. JJDPC input for Commissioners on the Chief Probation Officer Oral Board

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Please see Secretary Ruiz's notes for details.

3. Grand Jury Sex Trafficking Report

Please see Secretary Ruiz's notes for details.

4. March 2024 Retreat outcomes and progress assessment and plans for moving forward with goals.

Please see Secretary Ruiz's notes for details.

- VII. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

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County of Santa Cruz



JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COMMISSION AGENDA

October 9, 2025
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Regular Meeting

Probation Success Center
303 Water St, 1st Floor
Santa Cruz, CA 95060 /
Hybrid (see link below)

For questions regarding the meeting process, please contact Gerardo Leon, staff for the JJRPC, at 831-454-3312 or PRB1150@santacruzcountyca.gov

To join the meeting virtually click the link or copy the URL and paste it on your browser:

URL: https://teams.microsoft.com/join/19%3ameeting_Y2ExYTI3MzctZGQ4Mi00ZWY2LTliMjctZDIwYWMyYmUyZDFh%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2252044d34-04cb-41a4-a0cd-54ae6eeffb9f%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2241b46ee2-5ab0-444e-9250-c9b059bfc85b%22%7d

Meeting ID: 225 049 498 106 7
Passcode: Zc3Tk9bw

Dial in by Phone: [+1 831-454-2222, 941715719#](tel:+18314542222941715719)
Phone Conference ID: 941 715 719#

- I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:
- II. CONSENT AGENDA:
Approval of the October 9, 2025, Agenda
Approval of the September 11, 2025, Minutes
Monthly Statistical Information from Probation and Juvenile Hall (Accept & File).
- III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS: Any member of the public will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes each to address the Commission on any item listed on today's Agenda and/or any other topic within the scope of the responsibility of the Commission. If the issue or matter is not listed on today's agenda, Commissioners will not take actions or respond immediately to any public comment, but may follow up later, either individually or at a subsequent meeting.
- IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS (Including items via email on file)

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Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission Agenda

August 14, 2025

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V. ACTION ITEMS:

1. Establish and approve the Jail SYTF Ad Hoc Subcommittee
2. Approve the Juvenile Hall Inspection Report

VI INFORMATION ITEMS:

1. Delinquency Prevention
2. JJDPCC input for Commissioners on the Chief Probation Officer Oral Board
3. Grand Jury Sex Trafficking Report
4. March 2024 Retreat outcomes and progress assessment and plans for moving forward with goals.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

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County of Santa Cruz



JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COMMISSION AGENDA

September 11, 2025
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Regular Meeting

MILPA
315 Main St, STE 206
Watsonville, CA 95076

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL: Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Bernie Gomez, Beverly Brook, Cynthia Druley, David Brody, Deutron Kebebew, Julia Feldman, Sierra Thompson, Reyna Ruiz

Excused: Elias Gonzales, Jeri Limon

Ex Officio: Judge Vinluan, Jennifer Martinez **Staff:** Gerardo Leon

II. CONSENT AGENDA: Commissioner Kebebew moved to approve the September 11, 2025, Meeting Agenda and the August 14, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes; to pull the July 10, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes for corrections and approval; and to pull the Monthly Statistical Information for further discussion and approval.

Motion: Kebebew **Second:** Book

Yes: Gomez, Brook, Druley, Brody, Kebebew, Feldman, Thompson, Ruiz

No: None

Abstain: None

Motion Passed

Approval of the corrected July 10, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes:

Motion: Druley **Second:** Brody

Yes: Gomez, Brook, Druley, Brody, Kebebew, Feldman, Ruiz

No: None

Abstain: Thompson

Motion Passed

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Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission Minutes

September 11, 2025

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Monthly Statistical Information from Probation and Juvenile Hall (Accept & File):

Motion: Druley

Second: Brody

Yes: Gomez, Brook, Druley, Brody, Kebebew, Feldman, Thompson, Ruiz

No: None

Abstain: None

Motion Passed

The Juvenile Division Monthly Statistics will be added to the Minutes Packet. Please see attached.

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS: A couple members of the public introduced themselves.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS (Including items via email on file): Commissioner Brook introduced a member of the public who applied for the JJDP Youth at Large position.

Commissioner Gomez shared that the County is working on their 2032 Strategic Plan and that there is a community survey that can be completed. He encouraged the commissioners to participate. Link to the County Strategic Plan:

<https://www.santacruzcountyca.gov/VisionSantaCruz/StrategicPlanandEquityFramework/StrategicPlan2032.aspx>

Commissioner Druley shared that the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) is looking for individuals interested in serving on the Executive Steering Committee (ESC) to develop a new Request for Proposals (RFP) to provide local assistance grants funded by Proposition 64 Cohort 4 Grant Program. See attached.

V. ACTION ITEMS:

1. Set timeframe and Commission membership of Jail Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) inspection team: The Jail SYTF Inspection Team was created with further direction.

Motion: Druley

Second: Kebebew

Further Direction: Create Ad Hoc Subcommittee and set the inspection timeframe

Yes: Gomez, Brook, Druley, Brody, Kebebew, Feldman, Thompson, Ruiz

No: None

Abstain: None

Motion Passed

Commissioners Kebebew, Brooks, Ruiz, and Druley are the Jail SYTF Inspection Team.

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Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission Minutes

September 11, 2025

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2. Meeting locations/times: The commission agreed to hold regular meetings alternating between Watsonville and Santa Cruz. The meetings will also have a hybrid option for the public.

Watsonville location: MILPA Offices, 315 Main St, Ste 206, Watsonville, CA 95076

Santa Cruz location: Probation Success Center, 303 Water St, 1st Floor, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Motion: Brook

Second: Druley

Yes: Gomez, Brook, Druley, Brody, Kebebew, Feldman, Ruiz

No: None

Abstain: Thompson

Motion Passed

VI INFORMATION ITEMS:

1. Discuss recent adult transfers from Juvenile Hall:

The Commission discussed the two recent adult transfers from Juvenile Hall. Commissioner Druley noted that there were 5 adult transfers in California in 2024 and that we already have two adult transfers in Santa Cruz County this year; the Commission noted concern within the state of this trend.

The commission also discussed the lack of Least Restrictive Programming and facilities in the community.

Commissioner Brook shared that San Mateo County had a Resolution about not sending youth to adult court and stated that she would share the Resolution.

Please see Secretary Ruiz's notes for details.

2. Report out and discuss Juvenile Hall inspection and upcoming report:

Commissioner Druley reported out on the Juvenile Hall Inspection, thanked the commissioners and Juvenile Hall staff, and noted that the report will be completed and sent to Juvenile Hall for review and clarifications on September 19, 2025. The Report will be ready for Commission approval at the October 9 meeting.

Please see Secretary Ruiz's notes for details.

3. JJDPC's participation in the Hiring of the new Chief of Probation:

Commissioners Kebebew and Brody were selected to be part of the Oral Boards in the selection process of the Probation Chief position – the Oral Board will be held on October 17, 2025. The Commission believes that the Chair of the JJDPC should have been on the Oral Board and will ask for clarification from County Human Resources in how the Commissioners were selected.

The Commission is glad to have a voice in this process and will provide input to Commissioners Kebebew and Brody at the October 9 meeting.

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Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission Minutes

September 11, 2025

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Please see Vice Chair Feldman's follow-up with County Human Resources.
Please see Secretary Ruiz's notes for details.

4. New Commissioner appointments - Hold ups at Board of Supervisors:
The Commission discussed the delays some of the JJDPC applicants have faced and what may be the reasons. They had questions regarding who the applicants can contact to inquire on the status of their application, and which Supervisor recommends At Large/Youth at Large positions. Staff provide provided clarification on the process and will follow up with Clerk of the Board on who applicants can contact and the process for At Large positions Supervisor recommendations.

Please see Secretary Ruiz's notes for details.

5. Grand Jury Sex Trafficking Report:
The Commission briefly discussed the report and discussed if this is within the JJDPC's purview. This item will be on the October 9 meeting agenda to further discuss.

VII. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

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From: [Beverly Brook](#)
To: [Gerardo Leon Garcia](#)
Subject: Please include in this month's packet
Date: Thursday, October 2, 2025 3:16:54 PM
Attachments: [kix-favicon-2023q4.ico](#)

******CAUTION:**This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.****

Thank you.

*Resolution: Opposing Juvenile Transfers to Adult Court
docs.google.com 

in community,

Beverly Brook
revbevbrook@gmail.com



**JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-02
RESOLUTION ON TRYING YOUTHS AS ADULTS**

WHEREAS, the Mission of the San Mateo County Juvenile Justice Commission is to serve as the public conscience in the best interest of juveniles, advocate for programs and services that prevent youth incarceration, and uphold respect for the human dignity of all minors who enter the San Mateo County Juvenile Justice System.

WHEREAS, the San Mateo County Juvenile Justice Commission is dedicated to evidence-based juvenile and criminal justice reform measures that improve public safety and reduce recidivism.

WHEREAS, decades of research and the U.S. Supreme Court have confirmed that youth are neurologically, socially, and developmentally different from adults, and therefore are more likely to be rehabilitated by developmentally appropriate treatment and intervention.

WHEREAS, the juvenile justice system was developed to address the specific behavioral, developmental, and mental health needs of youth and are therefore better equipped to hold and treat them after an offense has been committed.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the San Mateo County Juvenile Justice Commission endorses efforts to confer original and exclusive jurisdiction upon juvenile courts over all criminal matters involving individuals who were under the age of eighteen at the time of the alleged offense.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the San Mateo County Juvenile Justice Commission supports housing all youth adjudicated in juvenile court in juvenile detention facilities rather than in adult jails or state prisons.

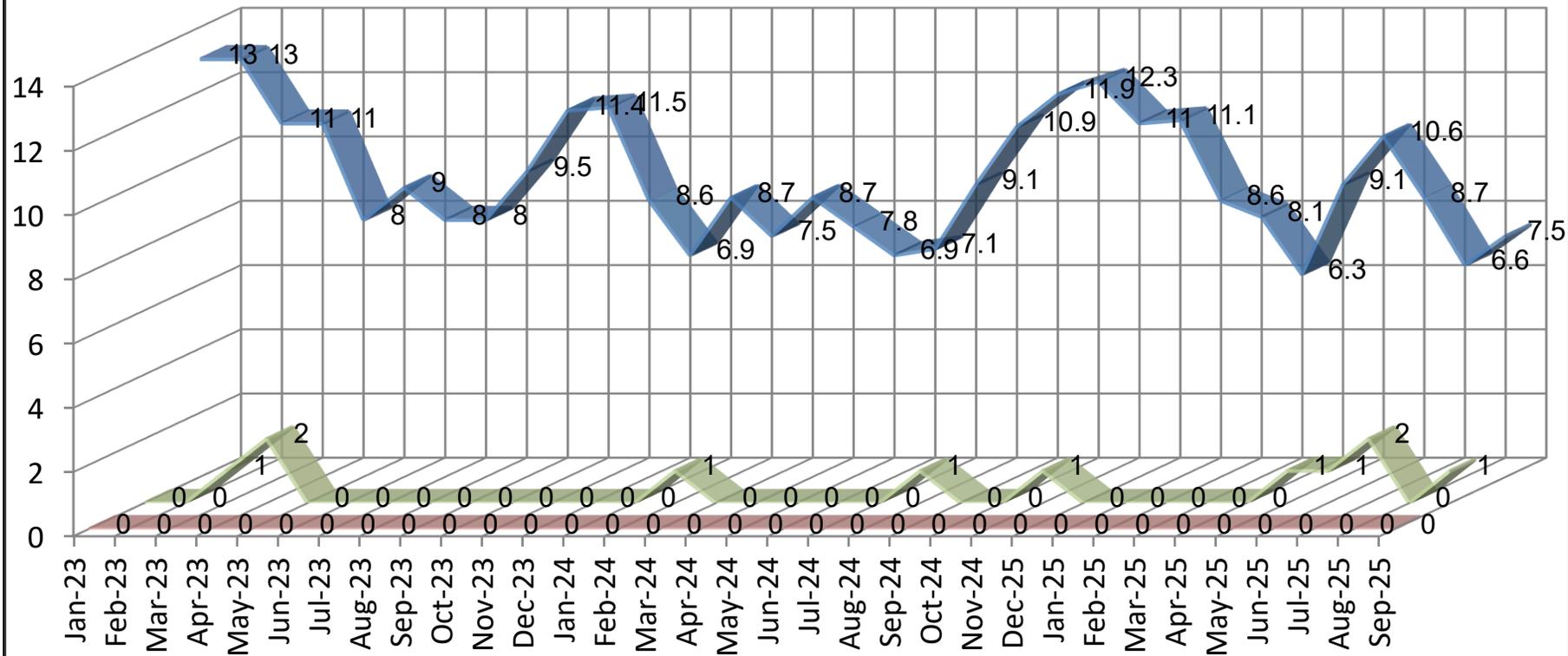
There were no firearm related bookings in September.

Youth on Probation by area of residence:

Count	Area
4	Aptos Total
4	Ben Lomond Total
1	Campbell Total
2	Capitola Total
2	Castroville Total
1	Boulder Creek Total
4	Felton Total
1	Freedom Total
1	Fresno Total
1	Hayward Total
1	Marysville Total
1	Redwood City Total
1	Roseville Total
1	Salinas Total
1	San Jose Total
17	Santa Cruz Total
3	Scotts Valley Total
1	Spanawau, WA Total
1	Stockton Total
45	Watsonville Total
93	Grand Total

Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall Physical Altercations: Overview

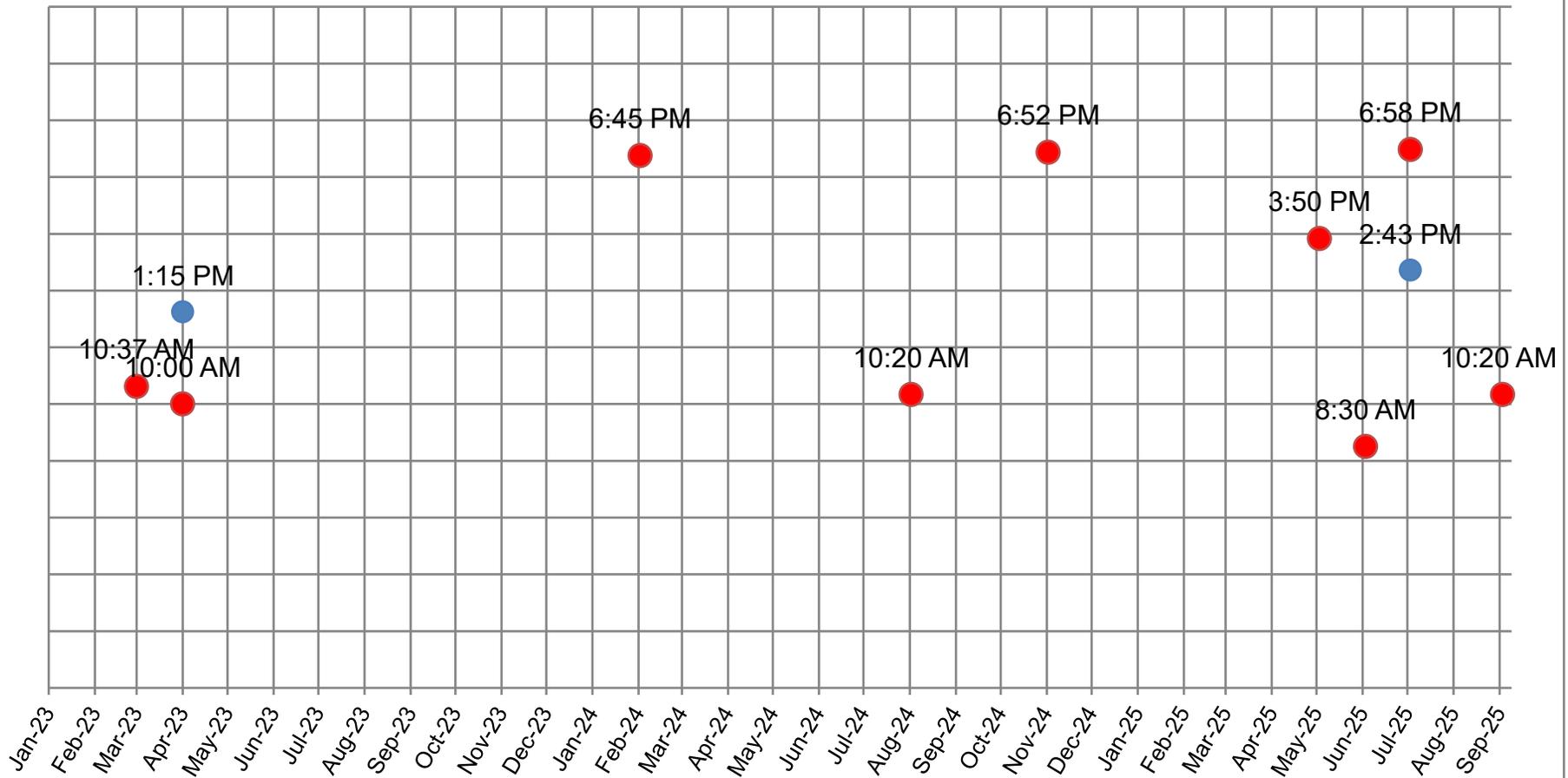
- Serious Injury
- # Altercations
- ADP



January 2023 - September 2025

Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall Physical Altercations: Time of Day

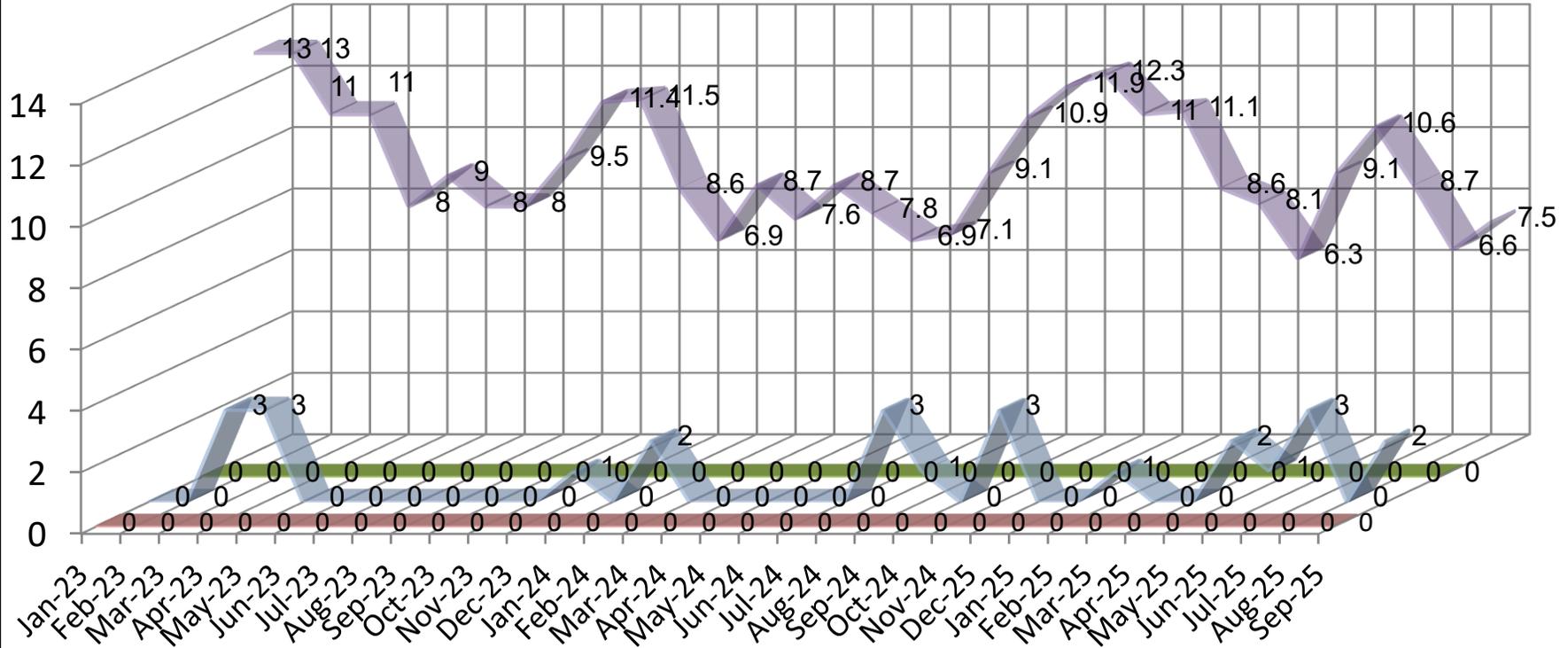
- Time of Altercation
- Time of 2nd Altercation
- ▲ Time of 3rd Altercation



January 2023 - September 2025

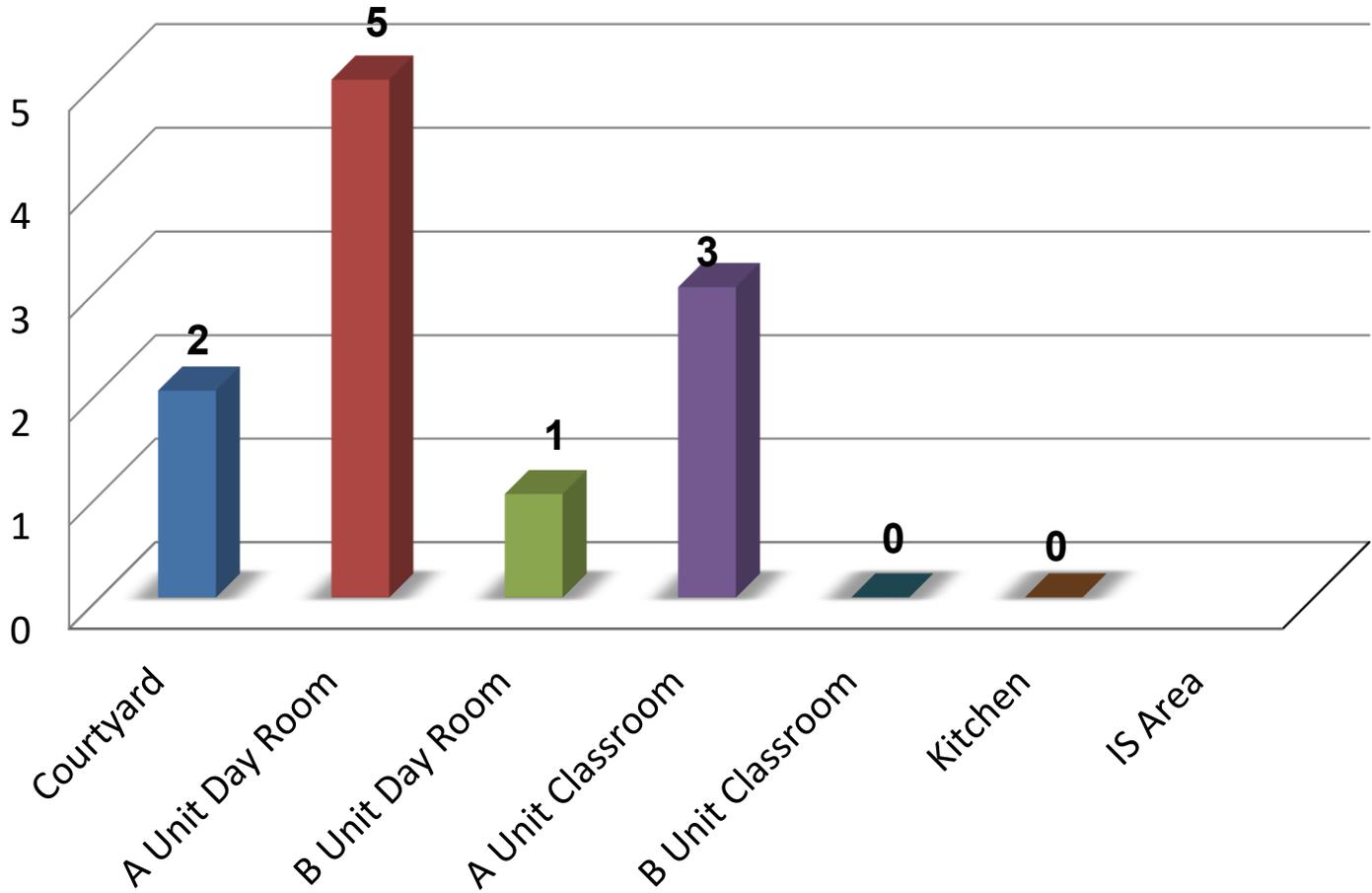
Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall Use of Force: Overview

- Injuries to Minors
- # Control Holds
- Injuries to Staff
- ADP



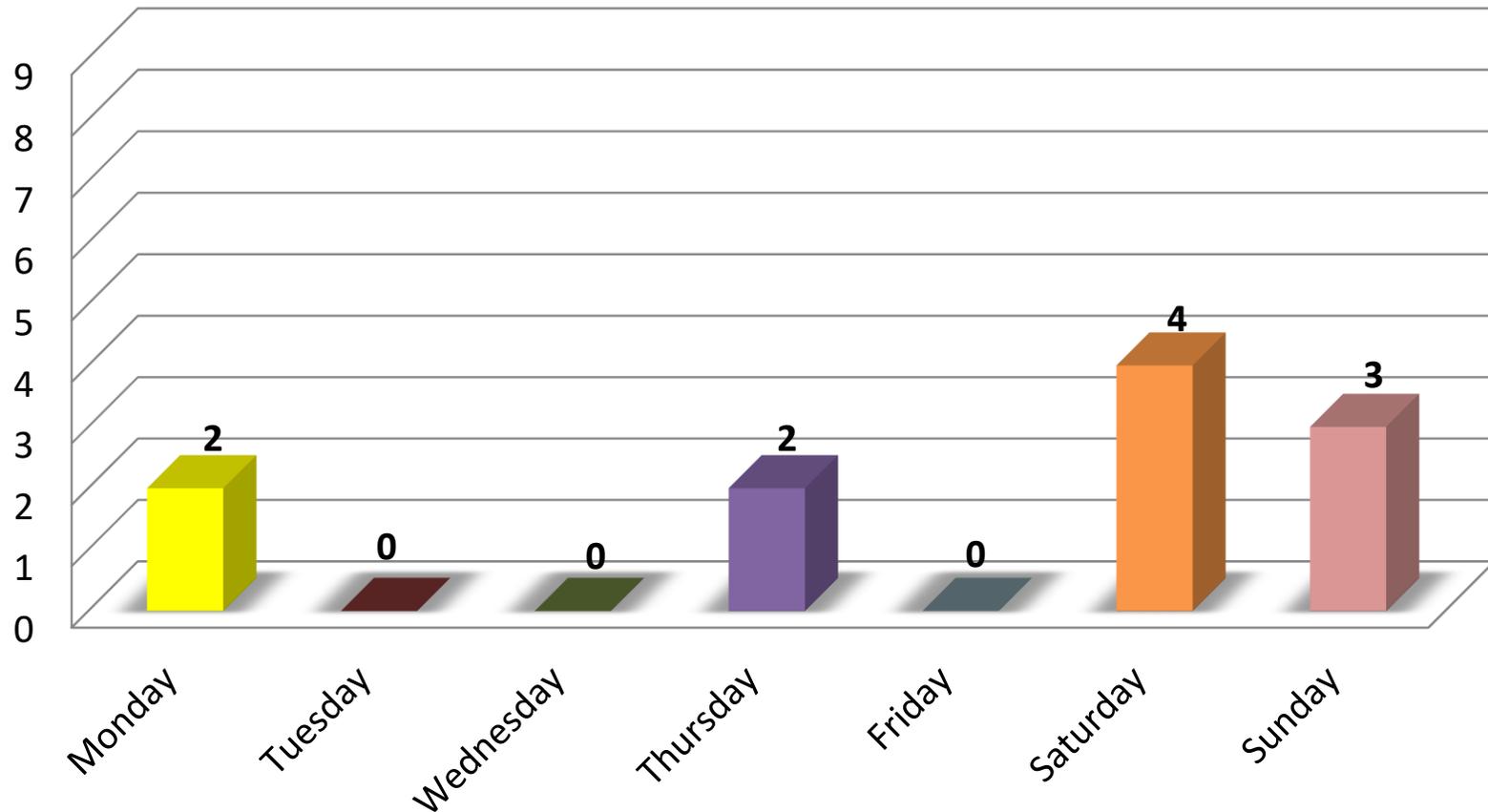
January 2023 - September 2025

Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall Physical Altercations: Location

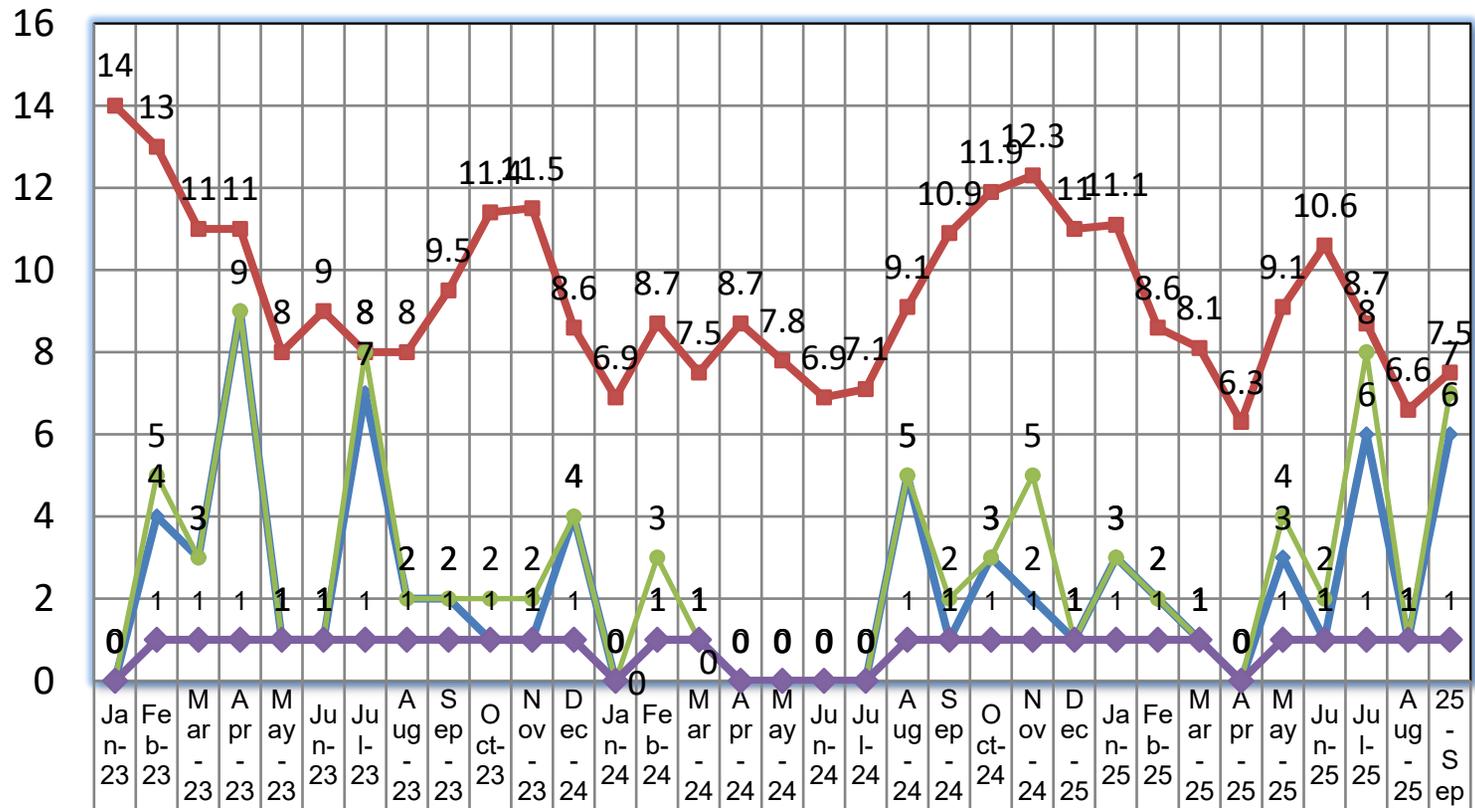


January 2023 - September 2025

Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall Physical Altercations: Day of the Week



January 2023 - September 2025

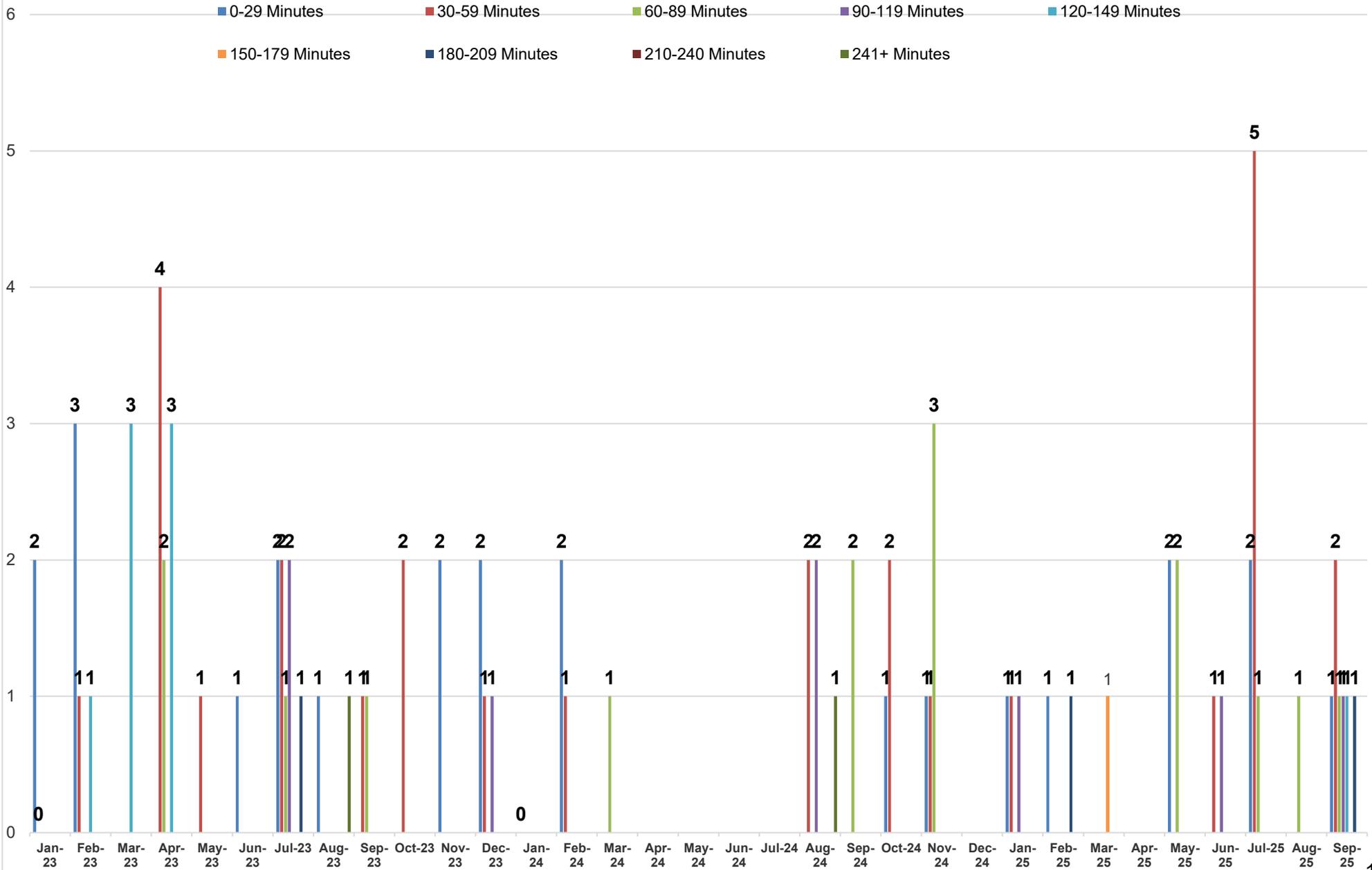


	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-24	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-25	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	25-Sep
ADP	14	13	11	11	8	9	8	8	10	11	12	9	7	9	8	9	8	7	7	9	11	12	12	11	11	9	8	6	9	11	9	7	8
# Youth Incidents	0	4	3	9	1	1	7	2	2	1	1	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	5	1	3	2	1	3	2	1	0	3	1	6	1	6
Total # R/C Days for Month	0	5	3	9	1	1	8	2	2	2	2	4	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	5	2	3	5	1	3	2	1	0	4	2	8	1	7
Avg # R/C Days per Youth/Incident	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1

**Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall
Room Confinement: Overview
January 2023 - September 2025**

Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall Room Confinement by Minute

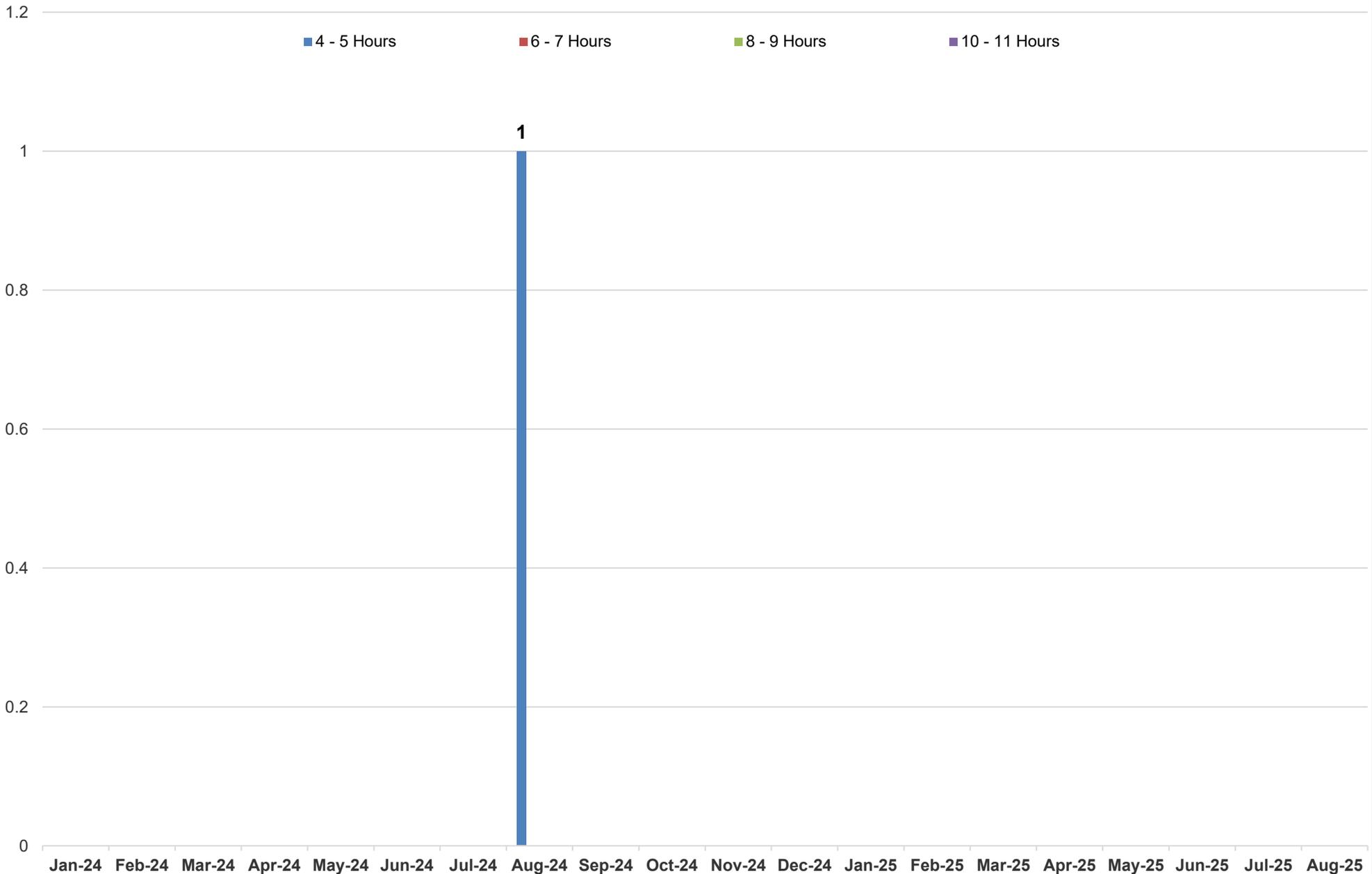
January 2023 - September 2025



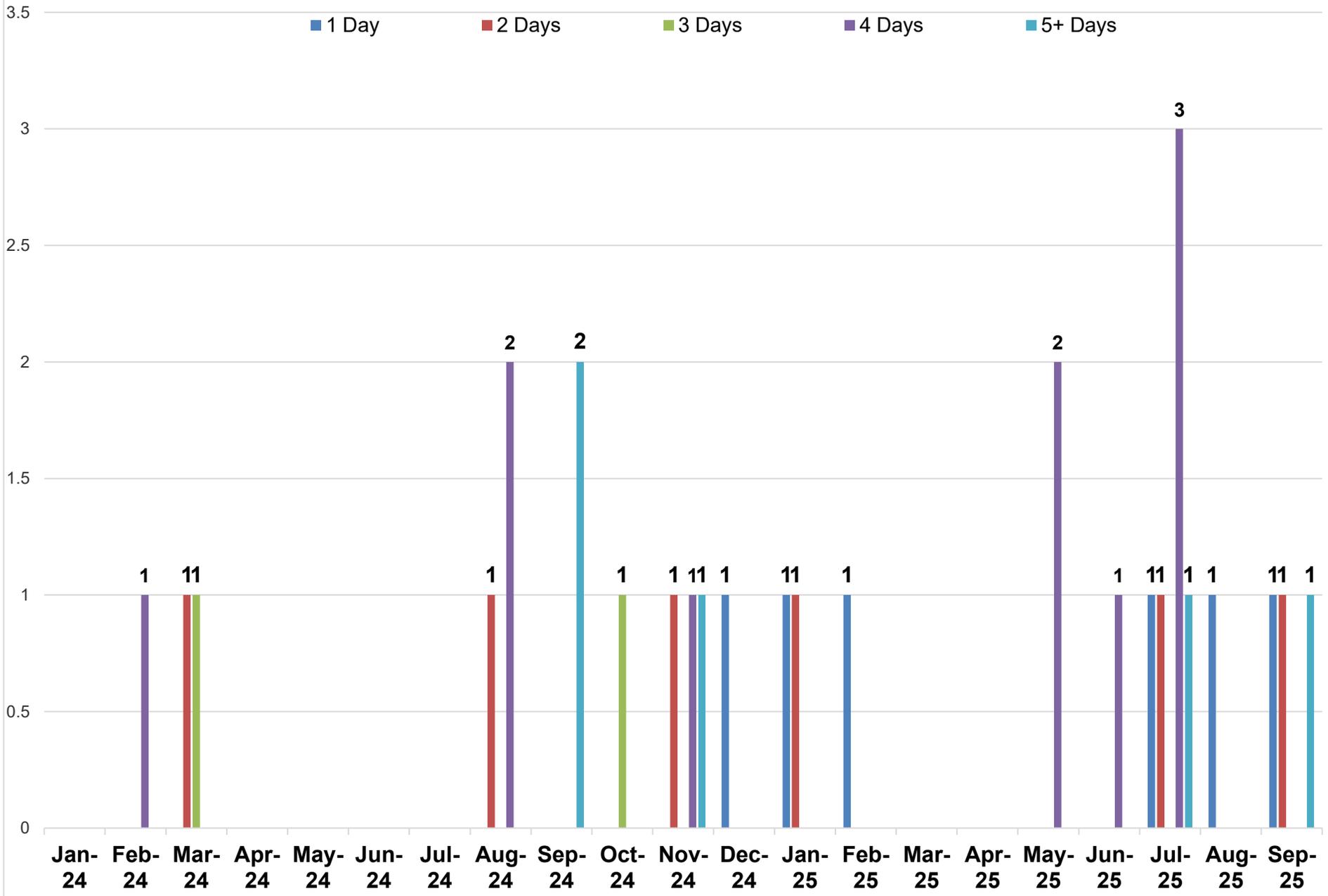
Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall Room Confinement Over 4 Hours

January 2024 - September 2025

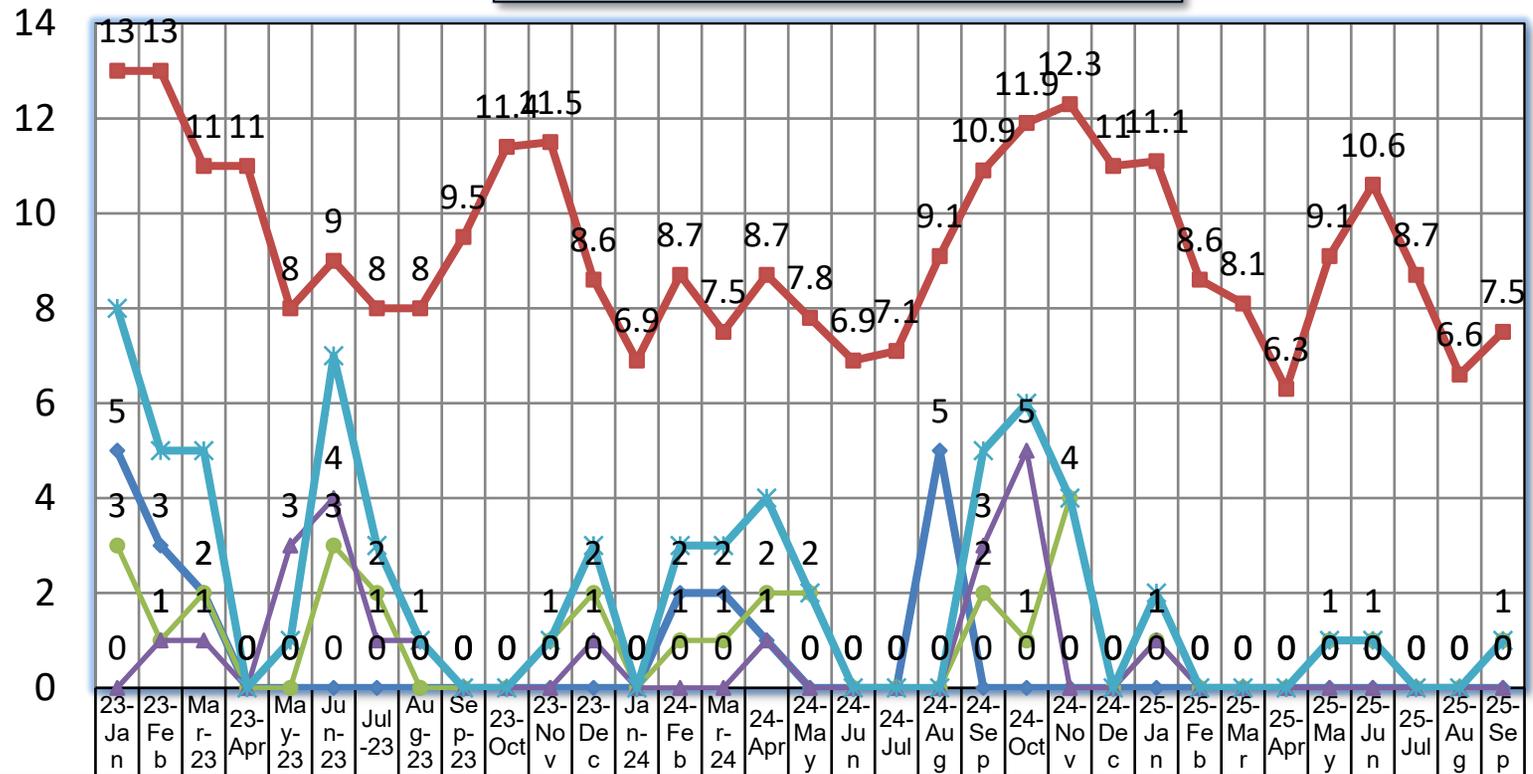
■ 4 - 5 Hours ■ 6 - 7 Hours ■ 8 - 9 Hours ■ 10 - 11 Hours



Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall Separate Program by Days January 2024 - September 2025



Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall Grievances: Overview



Series2	13	13	11	11	8	9	8	8	9.5	11	12	8.6	6.9	8.7	7.5	8.7	7.8	6.9	7.1	9.1	11	12	12	11	11	8.6	8.1	6.3	9.1	11	8.7	6.6	7.5	
Series1	5	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Series3	3	1	2	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	2	1	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
Series4	0	1	1	0	3	4	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Series5	8	5	5	0	1	7	3	1	0	0	1	3	0	3	3	4	2	0	0	0	5	6	4	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	

January 2023 - September 2025



County of Santa Cruz

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COMMISSION

October 11, 2025

Felipe Hernandez, Chair and
The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Inspection Report for 2025 Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall Detention Facility and the Secure Youth Treatment Facility

Dear Chair Hernandez and Supervisors,

Pursuant to the California Welfare and Institutions Code, Division 2, Part 1, Chapter 2, Article 2, Section 229, the Santa Cruz County Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission (JJJPC) was established by the Board of Supervisors and is required to conduct an annual inspection of any facility in the county that detains and holds youth for more than 24 hours.

This report presents the findings of the Commission's 2025 inspection of the Juvenile Hall Detention Facility and the Secure Youth Treatment Facility that was established at the Juvenile Hall in January 2025. The inspection was conducted on August 27 and 28, 2025, and was additionally informed by interviews conducted subsequent to that visit. There were six youths in the facility on the days of the inspection. The number of youth detained in the Facility has continued to decline from year to year, primarily due to the implementation of diversion and detention alternative programs used by the Probation Department, in conjunction with city and county schools and police and sheriff departments.

The JJJPC's annual Juvenile Hall facility inspection has consistently used the nation's highest standards — the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) self-inspection tool established by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. These comprehensive standards reflect national "best practices" and exceed the mandates from the Board of State Community Corrections (BSCC) and California's Title 15 minimum standards. As a department, Probation supports holding the facility to the highest standards, ensuring the best level of care for young people detained in the Juvenile Hall, and voluntarily submits to this high level of national practice, recognizing that court-involved youth should be served in the least restrictive environment possible.

The Annie E. Casey standards were also used for the inspection of the Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF). While most youth in the Juvenile Hall are held there temporarily until their case is adjudicated, youth in the SYTF are serving sentences and could be there until they turn 25 years of age. The Annie E. Casey standards have not yet been updated to incorporate additional best practices for long-term detention facilities such as SYTFs. Also, the state's Title 15 minimum standards are being revised by the state to reflect the needs of SYTF youth, but the revisions are not yet available. Therefore, the JJDPC utilized the available recommendations of the state's Office of Youth and Community Restoration (OYCR) for SYTF youth. These included the *OYCR Standards of Excellence for Stepping Home Practices* and the *OYCR Youth Dignity Guide*.

The JJDPC's use of the Annie E. Casey's inspection tool for the Juvenile Hall ensures that the benchmarks used from year to year are consistent and reflect best practices. It also enables the Commission to use the staff and volunteer inspection team resources more effectively.

The core strategies of JDAI are the following:

- Interagency collaboration to improve problem solving and coordination.
- Reliance on data to guide programs and policy.
- Use of objective instruments to guide detention admissions decisions.
- Increased or enhanced community-based alternatives to secure detention.
- Expedited case processing to reduce the length of stay and accelerate case resolutions.
- Innovations to reduce the use of secure detention for probation violations, warrants, and cases in which youth are awaiting placement.
- Use of best practices to reduce racial disparities in the detention population.
- Routine facility inspections to improve conditions of confinement.

The inspections are conducted by JJDPC Commissioners. This year's inspection team comprised the following JJDPC Commissioners: Elias Gonzales, Cynthia Druley, Sierra Thompson, David Brody, Julia Feldman, Beverly Brook, Reyna Ruiz, Bernard Gomez, and Jeri Limon.

The Commission performed a full inspection last year and found that the Juvenile Hall met or exceeded standards in eight separate categories. This year, because of their pertinence to the operations of the Juvenile Hall and the newly established SYTF, the Commission looked closely at the following areas: 1) Training and Supervision of Employees and 2) Programming (including Education). In addition, we reviewed the progress or completion of the recommendations that were included in our 2024 report.

The inspection team also had limited discussions with Juvenile Hall staff about the planning for upcoming changes—namely, adding a Ranch Camp program to the Juvenile Hall facility and transitioning SYTF youth to outside Less Restrictive Programs (LRPs)—that might entail daytime

furloughs for youth or outside placements. These will continue to be areas of interest to the Commission in discussions with Probation in the coming year.

Inspection Specifics

Team members participated by doing the following activities:

- Conducting an inspection of the facility and in-person interviews with the Juvenile Hall Detention Facility administrators and line staff, Hartman School teachers and Santa Cruz County Office of Education managers, youths in the facility and some of their families/natural supports, and community-based organizations working within the facility.
- Reviewing SB823, BSCC, and OYCR standards for SYTF youth.
- Reviewing Facility policy and procedures documentation.
- Reviewing Facility data.

The Commission would like to thank Division Director Sara Berman; Assistant Division Director Jennifer Martinez; the County Office of Education; the staff members, teachers, and community-based partners working at the facility who assisted us in conducting the inspection; and the youth who freely shared their time and perspectives with us. We appreciated Juvenile Hall staff's prompt responses to requests for information and for arranging logistics of visits, youth interviews, and follow-up communications.

We are pleased to report that the Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall Detention Facility meets or exceeds the vast majority of standards that represent "best practices" established by JDAI.

OVERVIEW OF FACILITY INSPECTION

Juvenile Hall staff clearly care about offering a safe, positive, and supportive environment for youth and families. They demonstrate a commitment to continuously improving both the available programming and the physical facility.

The facility held six (6) male youths on the days of the inspection: two in the A unit and four in the B unit. The Facility has implemented a differentiation of the A and B units. Youth are assigned to the A or B unit based upon a number of criteria including, but not limited to, age, maturity, the type of offense they were charged with, the amount of time that they have been or are expected to remain in the Facility, and their educational level. Generally, the A unit held the more transient and younger population, and the B unit held the one SYTF youth and three youth who had been in the Juvenile Hall for a longer time.

The SYTF youth and the three pretrial youth who have been there for extended periods are all being afforded goals and privileges normally provided to SYTF youth. This includes the environment, their cell accommodations, and education and programming. This flexibility ensures that the SYTF youth is

not held in what might be a type of solitary confinement and has created a cohesive unit of youth who demonstrate greater maturity and commitment to their futures.

Several positive changes in the Facility have been made this year, including the use of monitored internet for youth, as well as the provision of computers for youth taking college courses. All four youth in the B unit were taking one to three Cabrillo College courses. The self-perception of these youths as “scholars” was evident.

The Facility is currently undergoing renovations. The original B unit’s cells and dayroom are under construction, as are the kitchen and the eating area. B unit youth are housed in cells in one part of the A unit and move back and forth to their classroom and the library; the A unit youth also move in and out of their unit to use the library. B unit youth eat in the library, and A unit youth eat in the dayroom. This will somewhat reverse when the A unit undergoes construction. The timeline for the construction is about 18 months. Although the construction creates logistical difficulties, the youth and staff appear to be dealing with it well.

Because of the Facility’s age, much of the infrastructure reflects a punitive era, standing in contrast to the intent outlined in Welf. & Inst. Code § 851, which states that a juvenile hall “shall be a safe and supportive homelike environment.” We are hopeful that the renovations bring the physical environment of the Facility in line with this goal.

JUVENILE HALL COMMENDATIONS

Programming

1. As recognized in prior-year reports, staff clearly care about offering a safe, positive, and supportive environment for youth and families. They also continue to demonstrate a commitment to continuously improving both the available programming and the physical facility.
2. Probation staff and educators are committed to serving the youth and offer a robust educational program that meets federal mandates requiring support for students with special education needs, as well as support for college preparation and enrollment.
3. Cabrillo College’s Rising Scholars program has flourished in the Facility. It was a pleasure to observe all eligible youth fully engaged in online Cabrillo courses, taking advantage of newly available laptops provided by Rising Scholars and secure Internet access in the Facility.
4. Staff are implementing the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system school- and facility-wide, to help create an environment of consistency and fairness that supports the social and emotional wellbeing of the youth.
5. Staff have implemented an incentive program that applies to the SYTF and other B unit youth. This system, called “Phases,” consists of privileges and tangible rewards that the youth can earn as they move through successive phases and is meant to encourage constructive behavior through positive reinforcement. It achieves this goal for the eligible youth.
6. The CORE Cash program provides points or credits for good behavior that youth can use to “purchase” snacks and comfort items. This program is well-liked by youth and staff.

7. Staff have implemented a new quarterly youth survey to solicit input on existing and future programming in the facility.
8. All staff and partners should be commended for maintaining program continuity, quality, and safety in light of ongoing construction.

Training and Supervision of Employees

1. Through the exemplary leadership of Division Director Sara Berman and her team, the Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall facility's work environment is distinguished by collaboration, mutual respect, and professional growth. Staff members consistently report feeling supported in their roles and empowered to propose ideas and solutions.
2. The commitment and professionalism of the staff are highly regarded and deserve commendation. The work culture of mutual respect starts at the top, and Division Director Sara Berman and Assistant Division Director Jennifer Martinez demonstrate how employees can be held accountable in a supportive manner that strengthens relationships and perpetuates an open environment where staff feel free to share ideas and honestly debrief after challenging situations.
3. A remarkable testament to the facility's supportive culture is its high employee retention rate. Many veteran staff members return after retirement, underscoring the sense of belonging and professional fulfillment fostered by the leadership. This continuity enhances the facility's institutional knowledge and contributes significantly to its ongoing success.
4. The supportive climate benefits not only employees but also the youth served by the Facility. Staff who feel respected and empowered are better prepared to provide guidance, mentorship, and support to incarcerated youth. This creates a more hopeful and constructive atmosphere.

JUVENILE HALL RECOMMENDATIONS

Programming

1. Youth and education partners continue to request access to synchronous online college courses. As noted above, the Rising Scholars program has flourished in the facility and all involved should be commended for its success. With that said, the program is still only able to offer asynchronous courses without the opportunity to experience real-time lecture, interaction, and discussion (core to the college experience). Lack of access to synchronous online courses also limits the course offerings available to youth; we feel that safety and confidentiality concerns can be adequately addressed.

Other areas of improvement for higher education that should be explored include the following:

- It was reported that youth needed more independence to schedule their own virtual appointments with tutors and academic counselors (not just professor office hours); it currently is limited and deemed difficult in part to the inflexibility of programming.
- Supporting field trips to local colleges and universities.

2. Access to more vocational training in areas including, but not limited to, barbering, construction, welding, and forklift certification would greatly benefit youth success.
3. With respect to exercise and recreation, we recommend the following:
 - Provide a fitness coach or trainer to support youth in meeting their fitness and nutrition goals.
 - Multiple male youth reported that they are hungry at times. There should be increased independent access to more healthy snacks, especially after working out.
4. With respect to positive behavior interventions and supports:
 - The CORE Cash behavior incentive program is well-liked by staff and youth. We recommend increasing the number of days the CORE Cash store is open per week (we understand this is in process now).
 - Because youth can only benefit from the Phases program (providing additional comfort items to their rooms for good behavior) after four months, the program is in effect unavailable to youth in the A unit, which has resulted in a perception of disparity: the A unit youth are aware of rewards that are available in theory but that, given their short time stays, they may never be able to earn, no matter how well they perform. We recommend that the Phases program be revised to allow youth to earn rewards at earlier timeframes e.g, one or two months.
 - While the daily points system is based on points gained for good behavior, youth often experience the system as points lost for bad behavior when points that are usually granted are not. We recommend soliciting input from youth and refining the points system to ensure that it continues to be a strength-based positive behavior reinforcement system. The Facility states that the future implementation of PBIS should accomplish this.

Training and Supervision of Employees

1. Multiple youth reported a lack of confidence in the Grievance Reporting System. They felt that staff expressed a level of cynicism of it. Youth felt that if they reported a grievance, either “nothing would be done” or there might be negative repercussions. We recommend that staff be retrained to better communicate the grievance procedure, and that the administration ensure that youth understand that their grievances will be treated respectfully and acknowledged promptly. We also recommend that the administration create clear feedback loops to youth who file grievances, so the process feels more meaningful to them.
2. While staff currently receive training, youth feedback suggests gaps in how communication, de-escalation, and respect are applied in practice. In addition, access to more in-person training was requested by almost all employees during inspection interviews. For example, while all staff receive training on how to conduct searches respectfully and consistently, when trainings are conducted online, staff do not have the opportunity to engage, practice, and receive feedback on their technique. We recommend that staff training should include less reliance on online modules and move toward more in-person, hands-on, and scenario-based learning.
3. A youth reported that his belongings were not returned after their release from Juvenile Hall. We recommend that the Facility should provide refresher training for staff, emphasizing respect for youth’s property, such as schoolwork and personal items, and their appropriate return.

SECURE YOUTH TREATMENT FACILITY (SYTF)

Overview

When the Division of Juvenile Justice closed youth prisons and shifted the paradigm for juvenile justice in 2023 via SB823, young people housed in youth prisons were moved to Secure Youth Treatment Facilities (SYTFs). Youth and young adults serve much longer terms in SYTFs and can be in a facility for many years — up to the age of 25. The goal of this realignment is to reduce recidivism, encourage accountability, and provide treatment, educational, and vocational opportunities to prepare youth for success upon their release.

Santa Cruz County youth who were in prison or had been sentenced by the Juvenile Court at that time were sent to a SYTF in Sonoma that is under contract with our Probation Department. Three Santa Cruz youths are currently incarcerated in that facility.

The Santa Cruz County SYTF was established at the existing Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall Facility in January 2025. This is the JJDP's first inspection of this Facility.

As in the Juvenile Hall inspection, the Commission used the Annie E. Casey detention center standards in the inspection of the SYTF. However, the Annie E. Casey standards do not yet reflect “best practices” for long-term detention facilities like SYTFs. Also, California’s Title 15 minimum standards for detention centers are being revised by the state to reflect the needs of SYTF youth; however, they are not yet available. Therefore, the JJDP utilized the available recommendations of the state’s Office of Youth and Community Restoration (OYCR) for SYTF youth, which included the *OYCR Standards of Excellence for Stepping Home Practices* and the *OYCR Youth Dignity Guide*.

At the time of the inspection, the Facility held one youth who was sentenced to the SYTF by the Court. Therefore, the SYTF-specific inspection often included reviewing the programming and environment for both the SYTF youth and the three other “pre-disposition” detainees who have been there for extended periods. These young adults were all assigned to the B unit in the facility, and were all being afforded most of the positive attributes and privileges usually provided only to those in SYTF (with two specific exceptions). Hereafter, unless otherwise noted, we are referring to all youth in the B unit as “SYTF” youth.

Commendations of SYTF

1. The implementation of a separate unit where both SYTF and Juvenile Hall youth are being held for longer terms has created a cohesive unit of young adults who demonstrate a greater level of maturity and commitment to their futures. It provides a differentiation in treatment, including its culture, environment, cell accommodations, privileges, and differentiated education and programming. The creation of this unit ensures that the one SYTF youth is not held in isolation from all other youth.
2. A new staff position has been created to work specifically with youth in the SYTF program and other long-term youth. Currently, this case manager is reviewing current policies for possible modifications, in addition to creating and implementing new programs and activities to enhance the youths’ success. Additionally, she will be instrumental in developing Less Restrictive

Programs (LRPs), community furloughs, and reentry planning for the SYTF youth. The Commission encourages her to continue to cultivate and implement age- and culturally appropriate programs and resources, both in the community and in the SYTF. We also recommend that she reach out to CBOs and the Commission to identify resources and programs to specifically address the needs of youth held for up to seven years.

3. The Facility is providing greater support of higher education through coordination with Cabrillo College's Rising Scholars Program, by providing each youth with a computer and monitored internet access, and supporting each individual's educational needs. The shift to these young adults' view of themselves as scholars was evident, which is a significant change from last year's inspection.
4. A monthly cooking program called "Stirring Up Success" has been instituted on the B unit. Cooking is a wonderful life skill to develop. It started with simple things like protein shakes, and in September they will make a full entree of a stir fry. Youth also asked that the program be held more often and include additional information about nutrition. While we understand that the Facility will partner with a CBO to provide a full culinary program once kitchen construction is complete, we encourage expansion of "Stirring Up Success" until that happens.
5. The Probation Department purchased a van to transport SYTF youth's families to Sonoma to ensure their access to familial support. We commend the Facility for determining the family's transportation needs to the Felton facility and using the van to transport SYTF families to the Felton SYTF.

Recommendations for SYTF

We recognize that the SYTF is a new program and will be evolving over the next few years. We are aware that some of the recommendations we are making may already be evident to the administration and staff but want to ensure that the needs expressed by youth and staff are recorded and shared.

1. The Facility is commended for its work to implement a shift in the atmosphere, culture, and policies that is appropriate to SYTF and the young adults in the B unit. It is understood that this program is very new, and we recommend that the administration's monitoring of the "trickle down" of this cultural and policy shift to line staff be periodically reviewed and that the SYTF-specific staff training be made mandatory rather than voluntary.
2. Higher education is clearly evident in the SYTF. Most students are older; they are young adults and are learning to navigate their coursework and its communication requirements as any college student needs to do. This includes the need for self-motivation, organization, study skills, scaffolding, and time management. This is a challenge in any environment, but will be even more challenging in an environment where every minute is scheduled. We recommend that these young scholars have more flexibility and independence in scheduling their time; this will help ensure equity and access to their full educational success. Who hasn't failed to manage their time and need to spend more time outside of allotted school hours to finish an assignment or cram for an exam? This is a positive part of the maturing and learning experience.

3. The youth in B unit are really young adults who need to be able to self-regulate and take increasing levels of responsibility for their lives and their actions. We recommend that they be provided additional levels of autonomy and decision-making to mature and grow. Requiring that they seek permission to get a glass of water or a book or get up from a table does not encourage or reflect that.
4. Many SYTF and long-stay youth have long-term partners. We recommend expanding the list of approved in-person visitors for these youth to include their boyfriends or girlfriends who are part of their support system. Currently the policy only allows virtual visits.
5. Youth commended the quality of the food but felt that the quantity was insufficient. The caloric recommendations from Title 15 address the needs of youth under the age of 18. SYTF youth are really young adults up to age 25. They are working out, doing activities and school work, and need more calories. such as fruit or protein bars. Although we recognize that the Facility follows a nutritionist-approved menu which provides the legally required calories and nutrients for youth, youth still requested that more food be provided at meals and that they have access to healthy snacks, protein bars or packaged protein drinks, on the unit, where they could just take them whenever they are hungry.
6. We recommend the the Facility continue to work on and share their plans and have dialog with the Commission regarding the following:
 - a. Plans for the Ranch Camp.
 - b. Plans for outside options for LRPs for youth to continue their full transition home.
 - c. Plans for meaningful vocational programs that will make the youth job-ready upon release.
 - d. Reentry planning that includes the youths' family and community supports.
 - e. Opportunities for fulfilling community service hours and paying restitution. (We are aware that one youth is doing community service with mural painting.)
7. In last year's recommendations, the Commission suggested that wording in the policies that refer to Group Supervisors and Institutional Supervisors as "counselors" be changed or eliminated in order to more accurately reflect their role, which balances safety and support; we again recommend that the word counselor be removed from the policies. We recommended this because these staff members occupy positions of power over the youth; they are responsible for supervising the youths' behavior on the units. They report behavioral issues and can withhold points that grant privileges. The youth reported this year that they do not see Group Supervisor or Institutional Supervisors as counselors; they see these staff as supervisors. A true counselor should not be in a position of power and while being responsible for providing a safe environment for sharing confidential information and seeking emotional support.

While the Commission continues to encourage stakeholders in the juvenile justice system to minimize youth incarceration, our findings confirm that Probation continues to provide an excellent level of care within the Facility. The Facility far exceeds the minimum standards of Title 15 and is doing an exemplary job of meeting the aspirational “best practices” of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative and the holistic needs of incarcerated youth. We observed that one of the key strengths of the Facility is their commitment to continuous improvement.

Sincerely,

Elias Gonzales, Chair

Santa Cruz County Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission

cc: Valerie Thompson, Interim Probation Chief

Honorable Jerry Vinluan, Superior Court Judge – Juvenile Court

Sara Berman, Superintendent, Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall and Secure Youth Treatment Facility



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
Civil Grand Jury

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Human Trafficking in Santa Cruz County

Voices Unheard, Signs Unseen

Summary

Human trafficking is defined by the U.S. Department of Justice as a crime involving the exploitation of a person for labor, services, or commercial sex. The Grand Jury concluded that human trafficking goes largely unrecognized and unreported in Santa Cruz County. This report will show that there is a lack of training and prevention activities provided to youth, school administrators, teachers, and law enforcement. State and local mandates meant to curtail trafficking are often not enforced. Additionally, there is insufficient coordination among stakeholders to address the issue of human trafficking.

The Grand Jury recommends actions that will increase collaboration among responsible agencies to better recognize and respond to human trafficking, coordinate handling of cases to support prosecutions, and secure additional funding while providing more effective support for prevention and increasing public awareness of the problem.

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Background

Human trafficking is poorly understood, difficult to define, and therefore, acquiring solid data is scattered and fractured. Though the common perception is that human trafficking happens primarily in other countries, it is indeed a significant problem in the United States. California consistently reports a high volume of human trafficking calls in the US, according to data from the National Human Trafficking Hotline (National Hotline). California also ranks #8 per capita at 28.88 victims per 100,000 residents.^[1]

In 2023, California had approximately 1,128 reported cases involving 2,045 victims. Roughly 62% of these cases involved sex trafficking.^[2] It is estimated by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) that 85% of human trafficking cases go unreported. However, the NIJ also states that this 85% rate of underreporting is a minimum.^{[3][4]} This translates into potentially 5,000-10,000 cases per year in California. Young girls between the ages of 12-14 years old and boys between the ages of 11 and 13 years of age are especially vulnerable.^{[5][6]}

- One local service provider states that it gets 5-7 calls on average per week from victims and estimates that in any given week, there are 200 sex trafficking victims in Santa Cruz County.
- A different local service provider representative states that in the past three years, it has served approximately 20 human trafficking victims who were minors between the ages of 12 to 18. This is a significant number of cases considering that the agency serves victims of multiple types of crimes.
- Public presentations made by a third local service provider generate 8-10 human trafficking cases annually.
- The County Office of Education (COE) administration is aware of two reported cases of sex trafficking among their 800 at-risk students in the 2024-2025 school year and is aware of at least four other suspected cases within the past three to four years.^{[7][8]} However, other COE staff working with at-risk students reported being unaware of any cases of student human trafficking.

The California Department of Justice determined that human trafficking, both sex and labor trafficking, is the fastest-growing criminal enterprise globally and is increasing in California. This is because human trafficking is a very lucrative business. Unlike drug sales, the commodity (sex or forced labor) can be sold over and over.^[9]

Scope and Methodology

In its investigation of human trafficking in the County, the Grand Jury (**the Jury**) set out to determine the following:

- The prevalence of human trafficking in the County of Santa Cruz.
- The level of education and outreach to youth and other vulnerable populations for the prevention of human trafficking.
- Law enforcement challenges in the prosecution of traffickers.
- Resources available to provide services to victims of human trafficking.

The Jury's investigation consisted of 19 interviews with County and various City law enforcement officers, non-profit agencies focusing on serving human trafficking victims, actual human trafficking survivors, school administrators, County administrators, administrators from a neighboring county, farmworker advocates, and homeless outreach workers.

In addition, the Jury researched State and local laws and ordinances related to the prevention and monitoring of human trafficking and the funding for these activities. The Jury also surveyed a random selection of businesses in each of the County's five supervisorial districts for compliance with signage requirements. Finally, Jurors did extensive research on websites related to human trafficking, attended local public events intended to raise public awareness, and obtained supporting documentation from interviewees as well as filed Public Records Act requests.

Investigation

What is Human Trafficking?

The simplified US legal definition of human trafficking is:

The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery. Or, for commercial sex acts in which the person induced to perform such acts is under 18 years of age or is forced, defrauded, or coerced.^[10] The coercion can be subtle or overt, physical or psychological. Exploitation of a minor for commercial sex is human trafficking, regardless of whether any form of force, fraud, or coercion was used.^[11]

In Santa Cruz County, recruitment, harboring, and coercion are consistently reported in human trafficking cases.

The Scope and Nature of the Problem

Human trafficking victims are often recruited via manipulation or coercion. They may be promised shelter, drugs, money, or romantic attention. Once lured in, they are commonly subjected to sexual exploitation, forced labor, coerced recruitment of others, violence, and trauma.

Local survivors and frontline workers interviewed report that victims often do not recognize themselves as being trafficked. The result is a population that remains largely hidden and underserved.

Human trafficking is a growing criminal enterprise nationwide and one of the most underreported crimes in California. Santa Cruz County is not immune. [12] [13]

The Super Bowl and World Cup events scheduled for 2026 in Santa Clara County will impact the County of Santa Cruz directly with an influx of tourism and money, both of which increase the likelihood of human trafficking activity. [14] [15] Closer to home, the future development of a large year-round event center in the City of Santa Cruz Downtown Expansion Plan will potentially bring a heightened need for public awareness regarding human trafficking in our area. [16] [17] [18]

Vulnerable Populations in Santa Cruz County

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, women and girls make up 71% of all detected trafficking victims worldwide. About 51% of all trafficked victims are adult women, and 20% are girls under the age of 18, typically between the ages of 12 and 14. Men make up 29% of victims, 21% of whom are adult men, and 8% are boys, typically between the ages of 11 and 13. [19]

The illustration below shows some of the factors that leave victims vulnerable to traffickers’ seductive tactics.

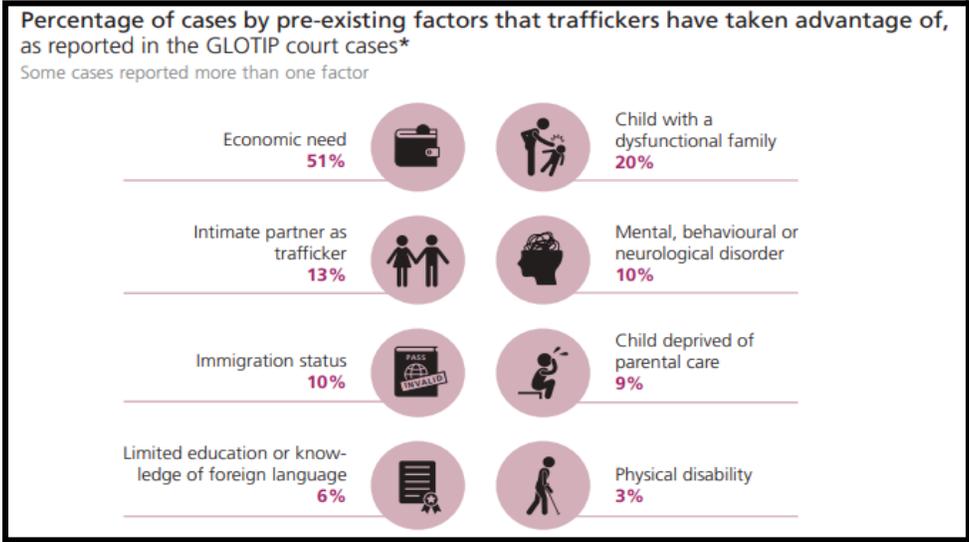


Figure 1: Pre-existing Factors Traffickers Take Advantage of [20]

Source: Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, 2020

In interviews with various service providers, law enforcement officers, and County administrators, several categories of vulnerable people who are disproportionately targeted by traffickers emerged.

- Youth in Foster Care: These minors are particularly vulnerable because most have come from dysfunctional homes. Many have suffered familial neglect and/or abuse. Traffickers target these youths, initially offering them the attention and nurturing they crave. They may be offered expensive gifts, drugs, or money. These youths may have been friended and groomed on social media - a medium traffickers are skilled at using to build trust with their contacts. Youths may be led to believe they are in a romantic relationship with their captors, making victims more likely to be compliant.
- School-aged Children: Young children are among the most vulnerable due to their age and dependency on adults for their care. Sexual exploitation of these young children is most commonly perpetrated by a family member or a close, trusted friend of the family. Being victimized by adults who are responsible for their care leaves them with fewer options to speak out. They also lack the resources, know-how, or courage to reach out for help and may have experienced sexual exploitation for so long that it has become normalized.
- Homeless and Runaway Youth: These youths lack shelter, food, and money. Traffickers can immediately fulfill these unmet needs. In exchange, youths are asked to repay their traffickers by submitting to acts of sexual exploitation and/or engaging in criminal activities on behalf of their traffickers. Homeless and runaway youths will often choose to stay in abusive trafficking situations because the dangers are known, and they believe they are better off than they were in the situation from which they came.
- Young Adults Aged 18-25 Experiencing Poverty, Addiction, or Homelessness: As with minors, traffickers are able to offer these adults housing, food, and relative safety from the dangers of living on the streets. Addicts are lured by the prospect of access to the source of drugs they need to feed their addiction or forestall withdrawals.
- Undocumented Agricultural Workers: Undocumented workers, including unaccompanied minors, often come into the US with only the items they carry with them, leaving them vulnerable to offers of assistance meant to lure them into servitude. They likely do not speak English well, and many will have a limited education. Complaining about their abuse can result in being blacklisted by employers. Reporting abuse can also bring them to the attention of law enforcement, with the subsequent risk of being deported, especially in the current political environment.

Another factor not shown above is the use of social media. All youth who are on social media are vulnerable to traffickers. Known as “sexploitation”, youth are increasingly coerced into posting nude photos of themselves on social media only to be later exploited and coerced by traffickers. Social media has created a platform for clever traffickers to lure and recruit youth of all socio-economic backgrounds. This practice continues to increase, and the nature of social media makes it difficult to detect and prevent.

The three composite examples below demonstrate how vulnerable youth can be exploited. All three have elements of recruitment, harboring, and coercion. Details have been provided by local service providers and are taken from actual local trafficking cases.

Sarah is a 15-year-old high school freshman who recently started dating John, a 17-year-old junior. Sarah believes she is in love with John and that their relationship is reciprocal. After two months of dating, John takes Sarah to a get-together with friends. He then asks her to have sex with his friend Mike. Sarah says, “But I don’t want to have sex with your friend. I love you.” John responds by saying, “If you loved me, you would do this for me.” Reluctantly, Sarah agrees to have sex with Mike. John has made an arrangement with Mike to pay John to have sex with Sarah. Sarah has unwittingly become a human trafficking victim. After hooking Sarah in, John goes on to traffic her to other boys and men at parties in exchange for money, drugs, or alcohol. He has nude pictures of Sarah that he posts online to solicit customers.

Kathy is an 18-year-old who is invited to a party hosted by John, a trafficker. At the party, Kathy and her friends are provided alcohol and drugs. John offers Kathy what sounds like a great opportunity to make good money. He claims to be a professional photographer and offers her work as a model. He tells her a time and day to meet. After this meeting, Kathy decides to run away from home and drop out of school. John takes her on a shopping spree for the designer clothes she “needs” for modeling work. In exchange, she hands over her phone and identification. Kathy is now isolated, making it difficult for her to seek help. She is told that she now “owes” him for his gifts, and she must work off the debt. Soon, he is taking her from city to city, where she is forced into sex trafficking.

Mary was six years old when her uncle Bill first took her for an outing that resulted in him sodomizing her. He warned her not to tell her parents, and that he would hurt her little brother if she did. Uncle Bill began to take her to parties at his friend’s house that always resulted in coerced sex acts she did not like, sometimes causing injury, and always involved other men who paid her uncle Bill with money, drugs, or alcohol. Sometimes, Uncle Bill would make videos of what she was forced to do with these men. She was afraid of her uncle’s continued threats and did not want to upset her parents. Over time, she began to regard his sexual demands as normal. Even though Mary did not like what her uncle demanded she do, she focused on the reward of good food and nice clothes she would not have otherwise.

Indicators of Trafficking Activity

Signs of human trafficking are often masked by the presenting issues that bring victims to the attention of law enforcement or service providers. This means that most cases of human trafficking are unidentified, as many law enforcement officers are not properly trained to recognize cases of trafficking.

While not an exhaustive list, these are some key red flags indicating a potential trafficking situation:^{[21] [22]}

Living conditions:

- Living with an employer
- Poor living conditions
- Multiple people in a cramped space

Physical appearance:

- Signs of physical abuse
- Malnourishment or extreme hunger
- Suspicious tattoos or skin branding that is unexplained

Working/school conditions:

- Employer is holding identity documents,
- Unpaid or paid very little
- Under 18 and in prostitution
- Truancy

Suspicious Behavior:

- Inability to speak to the individual alone
- Answers appear to be scripted and rehearsed
- Submissive or fearful behavior

What Resources are Available to Human Trafficking Victims?

Below is a description of local providers of direct services to victims and their prevention activities. There are currently five such nonprofit service providers in the county. Links are provided for researching additional details on services provided by these organizations.

[Arukah Project](#): Arukah provides direct services to human trafficking victims who contact Arukah through their 24/7 hotline. Arukah supports survivors of sex trafficking and also provides survivor-led trainings to schools.

[Rising Worldwide](#): Rising is a Santa Cruz-based nonprofit dedicated to empowering survivors of human trafficking, gender-based violence, and extreme poverty. Rising provides free survivor-led training, mentorship, access to resources, and emergency financial support.

[Monarch Services](#): Monarch is a County nonprofit that provides emergency shelter to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and sexual trafficking. Other services include a 24-hour bilingual crisis line, legal advocacy, counseling, and support groups. Monarch also provides training. However, their trainers do not necessarily have any actual lived experience in human trafficking.

[The Coalition to End Human Trafficking in Santa Cruz and Monterey County](#): The Coalition has grown a collaboration of organizations, businesses, and individuals working to end human trafficking in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties through education, advocacy, policy change, services for survivors, and prosecution of offenders.

[Catholic Charities of Monterey Bay](#): Located in Watsonville, the agency serves migrant farm workers. Staff are trained to detect signs of trafficking among migrants and refer cases to appropriate local and state agencies for assistance, as well as providing trauma-focused bilingual care and counseling.

State Laws Regarding Prevention and Support Services to Minors

There are two State laws mandating enhanced prevention and support services for minor victims of human trafficking. Both of these laws provide for the allocation of funding to County child welfare agencies. This section gives an overview of these laws and their requirements.

Compliance with these laws will be discussed in a later section of this report.

SB 855 - Human Services Omnibus Trailer Bill for the 2014-15 Budget

SB 855 created the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (**CSEC**) Program and requires the State of California to collect data from counties related to human trafficking cases and services provided. The law mandates a collaborative approach involving child welfare, probation, mental health, public health, and other relevant agencies.^[23]

The County of Santa Cruz participates in the CSEC Program and receives funding from the California Department of Human Services. These funds are provided to support the identification, protection, and specialized care of children and youth who are victims of, or at risk of, sexual exploitation. Counties are required to report back to the State on the allocation of CSEC funds as part of their County Biennial Call Report.

As the recipient of CSEC funds, Santa Cruz County's Family & Child Services (previously known as Child Protective Services) is required to form a multidisciplinary team and hold regular meetings for case reviews of identified minor victims and at-risk youth. This team is required to have representatives from child welfare, probation, mental health, public health, juvenile courts, the Sheriff's Office, and the County Office of Education.^[24]

In the past five fiscal years, the County Human Services Department has received annual CSEC allocations ranging from \$136,000 to \$142,000, plus an additional \$6,555 in Federal funding for fiscal year 2024-25. Funds are distributed to local service providers as shown in Figure 2.

Total contract/purchase order amount	Fiscal Year				Grand Total	% Total
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25		
Vendor						
Monarch	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$61,750	\$256,750	43.84%
Rising Worldwide	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$23,750	\$98,750	16.86%
Diversity Center	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$23,750	\$98,750	16.86%
The Coalition	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$16,150	\$67,150	11.46%
West Coast Children's Clinic	\$300	\$14,000	\$18,000	\$12,000	\$44,300	7.56%
Encompass - Youth Advisory Board	\$10,000	\$10,000		\$0	\$20,000	3.41%
Grand Total	\$142,300	\$156,000	\$150,000	\$137,400	\$585,700	100.00%
CSEC Allocation	\$139,370	\$140,739	\$135,860	\$141,938	\$557,907	95.25%
Balance not spent/excess expenditures	-\$2,930	-\$15,261	-\$14,140	\$4,538	-\$27,793	-4.75%

Figure 2: CSEC Fund Disbursement Detail by Fiscal Year

Source: Department of Human Services, Santa Cruz County ^[25]

AB 1227 - Human Trafficking Prevention Education and Training Act (2017)

AB 1227 is an update to SB 855 and requires California public schools to include education on human trafficking prevention in sexual health education classes for middle and high school students. It mandates that instruction be age-appropriate, medically accurate, and include information on how to recognize and avoid exploitation. The bill also requires school staff to receive training on how to identify and respond to signs of human trafficking. ^[26]

State Laws and Local Ordinances Regarding Human Trafficking

Pending Legislation

AB 379 Survivor Support and Demand Reduction Act: This bill passed the California Assembly with a unanimous vote of 74-0 on May 15, 2025, and at the time of publication of this report is under consideration in the State Senate.

If passed into law, a key provision of this new bill would create a grant program through the California Office of Emergency Services to support district attorneys. This funding could be used to create specialized units for the vertical prosecution of trafficking cases. Vertical prosecution refers to the process of the initial investigation of a case through final disposition, including trial and sentencing. Such a process would streamline prosecutions.

AB 379 will also create a Survivor Support Fund, opening grant opportunities to community-based organizations that provide direct services and outreach to victims of sex trafficking and exploitation.^[27]

Existing State Legislation

There are three existing critical California laws addressing the issue of sex and labor trafficking. The laws focus on public notice requirements and civil lawsuits against traffickers and those benefiting financially from trafficking. In brief:

SB 1193 - Human Trafficking: Public Notice Requirements: Requires certain businesses (such as bars, massage businesses, and transit stations) to post a notice with information on how victims of human trafficking can seek help, including the National Human Trafficking Hotline. SB 1193 also requires farm labor contractors to post human trafficking signage, according to the State Department of Industrial Relations. SB 1193 was expanded by AB 260, which requires hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts to post the same human trafficking public notice. It also requires that staff be trained to recognize and report human trafficking.^{[28] [29]}

SB 225 - Human Trafficking: Civil Actions: Allows victims of human trafficking to bring civil lawsuits against perpetrators and other responsible parties (such as businesses that benefited from the trafficking), even after criminal proceedings have ended.^[30]

The Jury learned somewhat late in the investigation that AB 2130 requires all new emergency medical responders licensed on or after July 1, 2024, to also receive training to recognize and respond to victims of human trafficking.^{[31] [32]} Well-trained medical responders are better positioned to identify human trafficking victims than are law enforcement officers because of their perceived neutrality and the fact that they deliver medical care, not citations.^{[33] [34] [35]} The Jury was unable to verify compliance of local fire and emergency medical responders in the county, but acknowledges the importance of them being properly trained to recognize victims of human trafficking to potentially collaborate with local service providers.

Local Ordinances

In addition to California laws, there are also local ordinances in effect at the County level and in each city within the county. These regulations focus on massage businesses and vary between cities and the County.

The codes for the Cities of Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley, and Watsonville are nearly identical. They each require massage businesses to be registered with the Chief of Police and require practitioners to be certified by the California Massage Therapy

Council (**CAMTC**).^[36] The Chief of Police is responsible for enforcement and inspections in these jurisdictions. The County of Santa Cruz also requires certification with CAMTC, but in addition, restricts proximity to schools and playgrounds. The City of Capitola does not have any specific ordinances regarding massage businesses.^{[37] [38] [39] [40] [41]}

Why Are So Few Human Trafficking Cases Prosecuted?

In interviews with representatives of the Sheriff's Office, municipal police departments, and the District Attorney's Office, the Jury was told that there are very few cases of human trafficking identified and fewer still that are prosecuted. There are several reasons for the low number of reported cases.

- Perpetrators force victims to commit crimes in their stead to shield themselves from prosecution. Therefore, victims are at risk of being prosecuted for these crimes.^{[42] [43]} A common example is where a victim has been tasked with recruiting new victims and can herself be accused of trafficking.^[44]
- Victims can be reluctant to report being trafficked because, unfortunately, they themselves have been sexually assaulted by police officers, or have heard from other victims of cases of such abuse. This was stated by both a law enforcement administrator and a trafficking survivor who has worked with multiple victims experiencing this abuse.^{[45] [46]}
- Victims may come to the attention of police officers for incidents that are *the result* of being trafficked.^[47] Law enforcement may respond to a case of domestic violence or a report of rape, both incidents that may have occurred because the person is being trafficked. If the victims are unwilling to declare being trafficked, an officer may cite them for prostitution, for example, an offense that will bar them from entry into any housing shelter in the future.^[48]
- Victims can experience the Stockholm syndrome, where they identify with their captor and see that person as a protector or ,and so will not cooperate with police.

Interviews revealed that even when a victim of trafficking is identified and presented to the police, there are barriers to apprehending and prosecuting the trafficker.

- Victims rarely remain in the jurisdiction of local law enforcement. Most victims are moved frequently by their captors to avoid detection. Law enforcement may begin an investigation when a victim is cooperating but must close the case when the victim refuses to cooperate or leaves the area.^[48] Investigations require law enforcement time and resources, and these cases may never result in arrest or prosecution. Even in the event of a completed investigation, the prosecution process can take years to complete.^[13]

- Victims can initially be cooperative with law enforcement, but they frequently return to trafficking. This occurs because shelter and other long-term support services are often not available. Jurors were told that victims who succeed in escaping trafficking have returned to their captors multiple times before finally severing ties.

Law enforcement agrees that human trafficking is a problem and does occur in the County. However, from their point of view, few cases of trafficking come to their attention. Other crimes are more easily identified, investigated, and prosecuted. ^[49] ^[50]

It is of note that in Grand Jury interviews with law enforcement for this investigation, the Jury perceived that officers are sincere in their desire to address the human trafficking problem in our County, but acknowledge that the obstacles outlined here are difficult barriers to overcome. ^[51] ^[52] ^[53] Later in this report, suggestions will be offered to help in the successful prosecution of more cases.

Santa Cruz County - A Feeder for San Francisco Bay Area Trafficking

Despite its relatively small size, the proximity of the County to the San Francisco Bay Area serves as a driver for recruitment and a transit point, connecting traffickers and victims with broader Bay Area networks. As mentioned above, major public events in the Bay Area are natural incentives for human trafficking. ^[54] ^[55]

New venues being built and upcoming large events may also result in increased human trafficking activities. ^[15] Planning for this growth has not been found in local agency documents.

There is Room for Improvement

In spite of obstacles to preventing, identifying, and prosecuting cases of human trafficking, there are areas where obstacles can be minimized or even overcome. Overcoming obstacles includes improving data collection, improving agency collaboration, enhancing prevention and awareness in school settings, among law enforcement agencies, and within the wider community, and complying with existing laws.

Inconsistent Data: Except for County Family & Child Services reporting requirements, the Jury found no evidence of a countywide effort to collect human trafficking data. Although the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) gathers data on a broad scale regarding the number of human trafficking cases and other crimes reported, the data does not align with statistics reported locally. The FBI data shows zero cases of human trafficking in Santa Cruz County over a ten year period, ^[56] yet a 2018 Santa Cruz County Sheriff Operations Training Bulletin reported 37 children, youth, and young adults were confirmed to have experienced CSEC in the Tri-County Region between January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2016 and 54 children, youth and young adults were

suspected to have experienced CSEC. That report also stated that 690 children, youth, and young adults were identified as at risk of experiencing CSEC in the Tri-County Region (Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Monterey counties) during the same time frame.^{[57] [58] [59]}

There are currently four human trafficking cases being prosecuted in Santa Cruz County Superior Court, all related to a single trafficker.^[60]

The Jury found that while local law enforcement agents interviewed relied on data from the Polaris Project, which sponsors the National Human Trafficking Hotline, there is no collaboration among the agencies responsible for oversight of vulnerable youth to share information. This includes data gathered by the County Sheriff staff from the Internet Crimes Against Children ([ICAC](#)), a national data-gathering agency. These data yield significant numbers of potential cases of exploitation monthly.^{[61] [62] [63] [64]} Furthermore, the Tri-County collaboration has dwindled due to a lack of regularly scheduled interaction and informational sharing opportunities. Because human traffickers are very mobile, it is important that there be regularly scheduled information sharing.^{[65] [66]}

Neither law enforcement, nor child welfare staff, nor community nonprofit organizations share data on this issue with each other on a regularly scheduled basis.

There is a chasm between the figures shared with the Grand Jury from law enforcement and local nonprofit organizations on incidents of human trafficking cases they have encountered.

- A District Attorney's Office representative reported only two cases over the past four years, neither of which was successfully prosecuted.
- Information from the Watsonville Police Department reported there were no recent cases of human trafficking. However, a follow-up document stated that numerous cases were being reported and investigated each year, including cases of child trafficking.^[67]
- An administrator from the Santa Cruz Police Department was not able to cite the number of victims encountered since 2023, but guessed it's a single-digit number.
- A representative of the Sheriff's Office believes that there have only been two cases "in the last few months". The representative couldn't be more certain because data on crimes is categorized only by the Penal Code.

On the other hand, the number of potential trafficking cases, stated earlier in this report as provided by local service providers, is much higher.

A starting point to address the problem of human trafficking would be to have solid data on the number of cases collected countywide, as well as other data points on human trafficking activity in Santa Cruz County.

Lack of Local Community, Government, Law Enforcement, and Nonprofit Collaboration: The Sheriff's Office and the District Attorney's Office collaborate with Arukah Project and Monarch Services in some cases. However, this appears to be the limit of collaboration in our county.

There is currently no countywide team of stakeholders joining forces that is meeting regularly to coordinate and facilitate training, prevention activities, support services, or interdiction efforts.^[68] Such a group could collaborate to consolidate statistics and other data on human trafficking in Santa Cruz County. Quantifying the number of human trafficking cases, as well as collecting additional data on trafficking, would better enable the group to procure additional funding to address this problem. The CSEC multidisciplinary team and the tri-county steering committee's goals are different.

Multiple sources stated that the formation of law enforcement task forces specifically focused on human trafficking interdiction efforts would allow law enforcement to more directly and effectively address local human trafficking activity. Good data collected and consolidated by a human trafficking coalition could work toward procuring this funding.^[69]

The District Attorney's Office did apply for grant funding, but was unsuccessful because it had only two cases that it had attempted to prosecute. If AB 379 is enacted into law, which appears likely, funding specifically designated for the District Attorney's Office to support vertical prosecution of human trafficking cases will become available.

The CSEC Program requires that a tri-county steering committee be established and hold quarterly meetings. The initial 35-member committee was chaired by the child welfare directors of the three counties. It included representatives from child welfare, juvenile probation, law enforcement, and other community partners.^[70]^[71] Meetings were disbanded in 2018 once protocols were established and the counties discontinued pooling CSEC funds for collaborative staff training. The child welfare directors from Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito Counties continued to meet monthly, then quarterly, but have not held any meetings since May 2024.

Training for Business, School Staff, and Students: Local nonprofits specializing in human trafficking prevention, as discussed earlier, are available to provide low or no-cost training to students and staff, law enforcement, government staff, businesses, and the general public. Classes are led or supplemented by trafficking survivors. It was reported to Jurors that classes that include survivors are much more impactful, especially on students, than those led by non-survivors. Unfortunately, the Jury has also learned that these services are underutilized.^[72]

AB 1227 requires trafficking awareness training in grades 7-12. It also requires school staff and counselor training. Despite mandates, some local school administrators and agency representatives interviewed were unaware of training resources or have failed to implement trafficking prevention education.

Multiple County Office of Education staff interviewed could not recall when they last received any training specifically on this topic, but believe it was likely covered briefly in their required online training.^{[73] [74]} Staff working with high-risk student cases report that it has been at least five years since they had training that touched on human trafficking.^{[75] [76]}

The Coalition to End Human Trafficking reports that it provides human trafficking prevention training by trafficking survivors to students at Juvenile Hall. This training has been very well received by these high-risk students.

Training of Law Enforcement: The Jury interviewed administrators and investigators in the District Attorney's Office, the Sheriff's Office, and Santa Cruz and Watsonville Police Departments regarding the depth and frequency of human trafficking training. The record of such training is spotty and, in some cases, can be improved.

- A representative from the District Attorney's office reports that there is a mandatory training requirement for human trafficking, but believes that it is not in-depth enough to enable officers to identify human trafficking victims.
- The Sheriff's Office is mandated by the State to provide sexual assault investigators with a weeklong training on a human trafficking component.^[77] Documentation from the Sheriff's Office shows that some staff have attended three different human trafficking related trainings since 2024. It is unknown how widely these trainings were attended.
- An administrator from the Santa Cruz Police Department believes that human trafficking training is provided in the Peace Officer Standards and Training in the police academy, but doesn't believe that it is included in ongoing training.^[78]
- The Watsonville Police Department received two hours of human trafficking training for detectives in 2019, but has no record of human trafficking training since that time.^[79]

Some local nonprofits discussed earlier in this report are available to provide low or no-cost training on human trafficking to law enforcement upon request.

Convening of CSEC Meetings: SB 855 requires that recipients of CSEC funds convene regular multidisciplinary team meetings to review human trafficking cases focused on minors.

A document received from County Family & Child Services states that the CSEC multidisciplinary team last met in November 2023.^[68] When no new cases were reported, monthly meetings were cancelled. However, a public records request revealed that documentation submitted by the County to the State in February 2025 declares that among the duties that the CSEC Coordinator completes are "monthly or emergency multidisciplinary meetings".^{[80] [81]}

While these meetings are cancelled because there are no new cases to discuss, in comparison, the Monterey County multidisciplinary team meets monthly and has a caseload of 30-40 minors. When there are no new cases to discuss, their team meets anyway to discuss progress on existing cases.^[82]

Signage Compliance: In spite of SB 1193 and AB 260, two laws requiring signage postings in a prominent place, a sample survey of all businesses across cities and unincorporated areas of Santa Cruz County found that only about 7% of businesses mandated to post signage are in compliance.

SB 1193 states that enforcement is typically handled by police or the Sheriff’s Office, and the County’s District Attorney representative conveyed that, as regards to signage requirements, their role is prosecution and not enforcement.^{[83] [84]}

The Jury was told by representatives of law enforcement that they believe human trafficking signage is important in raising overall public awareness and potentially providing help to victims of trafficking.

	Hotels/ Motels	Health Clinics	Alcohol Retailers	Hair/Nail Salons	Massage Businesses	Metros/ Airports	Total	
	Posted/ Surveyed	Posted/ Surveyed	Posted/ Surveyed	Posted/ Surveyed	Posted/ Surveyed	Posted/ Surveyed	Posted	Surveyed
Santa Cruz	0/25	0/3	1/12	0/6	0/5	0/2	1	53
Scotts Valley	1/2	0/2	0/4	1/2	0/3	1/1	3	14
Watsonville	0/7	0/16	0/3	0/5	0/4	1/2	1	37
Capitola	2/2	1/2	0/2	0/5	0/3	0/0	3	14
Unincorporated*	0/3	0/1	0/13	0/6	1/2	1/1	2	26
Total	3/39	1/24	1/34	1/24	1/17	3/6	10	144
Compliance %	7.69%	4.17%	2.94%	4.17%	5.88%	50.00%	6.94%	
* Includes Aptos, San Lorenzo Valley, Live Oak, and Soquel								

Figure 3: Compliance with Human Trafficking Signage Requirement

Source: Survey conducted by Santa Cruz County Grand Jury, Spring 2025^[85]

Under SB 1193, farm labor contractors are also among those businesses required to post signs regarding human trafficking. In the case of farm labor contractors, the Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commission is responsible for enforcing the signage requirement.

In addition, a survey of farm labor contractor sites showed that where the required human trafficking signs were posted, they were not necessarily readily accessible to farm workers. Existing signs in both English and Spanish were faded, in small type, and generally in very poor condition.

The Jury also surveyed rest stops throughout the County and was unable to find any human trafficking signs. Rest stops are also required by SB 1193 to post human trafficking signs.

Human trafficking signs are required to list the telephone number and text message for the National Hotline. Two Jurors called this number multiple times and experienced a 30-minute wait for a callback. They also tried the text number listed on the sign. They were put into a continuous phone tree loop. A victim reaching out to a hotline is unlikely to be available for a callback and may be calling on a public phone. It is important for callers to get immediate help. Two local nonprofit organizations, Arukah Project and Monarch Services, each have a 24-hour hotline. Because these organizations are local and can provide real-time services, they could be added to local signs for a much better chance of receiving timely assistance. These organizations are equipped to provide emotional support as well as help locate immediate shelter and other basic needs.

Law Enforcement Compliance with Local Massage Business Ordinances: Local ordinances, including the County Code Section 5.08 regarding massage businesses, vary among jurisdictions. Consistency and coordination in enforcing and enhancing existing ordinances, or an overall County set of ordinances, could facilitate improved and consistent monitoring of human trafficking laws regarding massage businesses. One Sheriff's Office representative admitted that historically, Santa Cruz County has been more lax than other counties in licensing and inspection of massage businesses.

While most massage businesses are legitimate and do not engage in trafficking, local service providers are aware that some do. While conducting surveys for signage compliance, a few massage businesses visited by the Jury appeared to be suspicious. Regular inspections, enforcement of practitioner certification requirements, and compliance with signage requirements could result in curtailment of such activity.

Conclusion

Human trafficking does occur in Santa Cruz County, but goes largely unrecognized and unreported. Lack of data regarding human trafficking activity, lack of collaboration among stakeholders, insufficient training, and lack of compliance with state and local laws leave us in the dark as to the prevalence of human trafficking. As a result, the issue is not being adequately addressed, and the trafficking problem will continue unabated and possibly increase, unless proactive measures are taken. The Jury is hopeful that recommendations in this report to address the scourge of human trafficking in our community will be seriously considered and adopted.

Findings

- F1.** There is currently no consolidated data being collected on Santa Cruz County human trafficking cases. This causes an understatement of the problem and makes it difficult for stakeholders to obtain additional funding.
- F2.** The potential passage of AB 379 may provide grants for the District Attorney's Office for the prosecution of traffickers and grants for community-based organizations for direct services and victim outreach. This could provide the resources necessary to ultimately reduce human trafficking and reduce the likelihood of victims returning to trafficking.
- F3.** The tri-county CSEC steering committee for the prevention of human trafficking has not met for a full year as of the publication of this report. Therefore, there is no active body that could potentially monitor trafficking cases across the tri-county area.
- F4.** The County Family & Child Services CSEC-required monthly multidisciplinary team meetings have not been held since November 2023, despite biennial reporting otherwise to the State Department of Social Services. Therefore, known cases of human trafficking have not been properly overseen.
- F5.** Staff and administration of the County Office of Education report they are not adequately trained and do not receive regular training regarding human trafficking as required by AB 1227. This is in spite of the fact that free training is available from local providers that could bring COE into compliance if enforced. This deficiency can lead to a failure in the staff's ability to identify cases of trafficking.
- F6.** Very few businesses in Santa Cruz County are in compliance with SB 1193 signage requirements. This results in the reduction of community awareness of the problem and the likelihood that trafficking victims will be able to reach out for help.
- F7.** Existing human trafficking signs at farm worker contractor sites are not readily accessible to farm workers and are in poor condition. This can result in farm workers being unaware of available resources and an inability to reach out for help.
- F8.** The mix of County and local municipal ordinances regarding the licensing and inspection of massage businesses varies, possibly causing confusion and inconsistent enforcement of existing regulations.
- F9.** Annual inspections are required of massage businesses in jurisdictions with massage business ordinances, but inspections are generally not being conducted. This can result in undetected human trafficking activity.
- F10.** Calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline on existing signs have unacceptably long wait times and can result in a lost opportunity to assist human trafficking victims.
- F11.** Local nonprofit organizations have 24/7 hotline numbers that are staffed, and calls can be answered immediately or within minutes, greatly increasing the likelihood of contacting victims and providing assistance in real time.

- F12.** There has been a lack of human trafficking presentations to law enforcement. Local law enforcement jurisdictions could request the no-cost training that is available from local human trafficking service providers. This can lead to officers learning to identify human trafficking victims and reduce further victim trauma.
- F13.** Law enforcement task forces focused solely on human trafficking are very effective methods of detecting and preventing human trafficking activities. Such task forces could increase the rate of interdiction and the successful prosecution of human trafficking cases.

Recommendations

- R1.** The Department of Human Services should designate a qualified staff member to take the lead in forming a countywide human trafficking coalition, including the District Attorney and the Sheriff's Office. Members should include stakeholders discussed in this report who are involved in the prevention and interdiction of human trafficking. The focus should include the consolidation of human trafficking data and the procurement of additional funds, potentially to fund law enforcement task forces. This should be completed by December 31, 2025. (F1,F2,F13)
- R2.** The Program Manager of Family & Child Services should coordinate with Monterey and San Benito County peers for the purpose of reconvening the tri-county Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children steering committee. This team would meet regularly to review and track intercounty human trafficking cases and activity in our region and participate in regional prevention activities. This should be completed by December 31, 2025. (F3)
- R3.** The Program Manager of County Family & Child Services should resume and maintain monthly multidisciplinary team meetings, required as a condition of receiving Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children funding, to review ongoing human trafficking cases and discuss other potential cases involving high-risk youth. This should commence by August 31, 2025. (F4)
- R4.** Each law enforcement agency in Santa Cruz County, including the Sheriff's Office, Santa Cruz Police Department, Scotts Valley Police Department, Capitola Police Department, and Watsonville Police Department, should require law enforcement officers to receive an annual human trafficking awareness training, preferably led by human trafficking survivors. This should commence by December 31, 2025. (F12)
- R5.** The County Office of Education should come into compliance with AB 1227, providing human trafficking-related training, led by survivors, to students and staff as required. This should be completed by February 28, 2026. (F5)
- R6.** Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors should adopt an umbrella countywide ordinance requiring human trafficking signage currently mandated by the State to be part of all existing permitting and licensing procedures for affected businesses. This should be completed by June 30, 2026. (F6)

- R7.** Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors should require that county-specific human trafficking awareness and support signs include at least one 24/7 local hotline number, and staff should collaborate with local non-profits providing support to human trafficking victims to develop an effective sign for countywide posting and distribution. This should be completed by June 30, 2026. (F10, F11)
- R8.** The Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner should come into compliance with SB 1193 by ensuring that existing human trafficking signs are refreshed annually. In addition, it should require all farm labor contractors to include the SB 1193 sign in employee handbooks for easy accessibility. A review for compliance should be done on an annual basis. This should commence by September 30, 2025. (F7)
- R9.** Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors should adopt a countywide ordinance regulating the licensing, employee certification, and inspection requirements for massage businesses consistent with California Massage Therapy Council certification and licensing requirements. This should be completed by June 30, 2026. (F8)
- R10.** Local law enforcement agencies, including the Sheriff’s Office, Santa Cruz Police Department, Scotts Valley Police Department, Capitola Police Department, and Watsonville Police Department, should enforce massage business licensing, certification, and inspection requirements. This should include compliance with SB 1193 signage requirements. Enforcement of existing ordinances should commence by September 30, 2025. However, if/when the Board of Supervisors agrees to the Jury’s recommendation to adopt a countywide ordinance, law enforcement should come into compliance with this new ordinance within 30 days of adoption. (F9)

Required Responses

<i>Respondent</i>	<i>Findings</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Respond Within/ Respond By</i>
Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors	F1, F2, F3, F4, F6, F7, F8, F10, F11, F13	R1, R2, R3, R6, R7, R8, R9	90 Days / September 29, 2025
Santa Cruz County Sheriff	F1, F2, F6, F9, F12, F13	R1, R4, R6, R10	60 Days / August 29, 2025
County Superintendent of Schools	F5	R5	60 Days / August 29, 2025
Santa Cruz County District Attorney	F1, F2, F13	R1	60 Days / August 29, 2025

Invited Responses

<i>Respondent</i>	<i>Findings</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Respond Within/ Respond By</i>
Program Manager, County Family & Child Services	F1, F2, F3, F4, F13	R1, R2, R3	60 Days / August 29, 2025
Director, Santa Cruz County Human Services Department	F1, F2, F3, F4, F13	R1, R2, R3	60 Days / August 29, 2025
Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner	F7	R8	60 Days / August 29, 2025
Police Chief, City of Santa Cruz	F6, F9, F12	R4, R6, R10	60 Days / August 29, 2025
Police Chief, City of Scotts Valley	F6, F9, F12	R4, R6, R10	60 Days / August 29, 2025
Police Chief, City of Watsonville	F6, F9, F12	R4, R6, R10	60 Days / August 29, 2025
Police Chief, City of Capitola	F6, F9, F12	R4, R6, R10	60 Days / August 29, 2025
Director, Arukah Project	F10, F11	R7	60 Days / August 29, 2025
Chief Executive Officer, Monarch Services	F10, F11	R7	60 Days / August 29, 2025

Definitions

- **CAMTC:** California Massage Therapy Council
- **COE:** County Office of Education
- **CSEC:** Commercially Sexually Exploited Children
- **NIJ:** National Institute of Justice

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Websites

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Site Visits

Canvassing of all five County Supervisorial Districts for SB 1193 signage compliance.

Visited public events that included Farmworker Reality Tours and Rising at the Rio.

May 15, 2025 Monterey County Human Trafficking Symposium.

California Restorative Justice Coalition
Understanding AB60
A Resource Guide for Restorative Justice Organizations

About the Coalition

The California Restorative Justice Policy Coalition (CRJPC) is composed of over 15 organizations practicing and studying restorative justice (RJ) in California. Recognizing the gap between those closest to RJ and policymakers in the Capitol, the coalition was formed to support legislative changes aimed at expanding access to, and preserving the integrity of, restorative justice across the state of California.

What does AB60 do?

This bill amended the California Victim's Bill of Rights to include notification about available restorative justice programs. The bill states

A victim shall be notified of the availability of community-based restorative justice programs and processes available to them, including, but not limited to, programs serving their community, county, county jails, juvenile detention facilities, and the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. The victim shall be notified as early and often as possible, including, but not limited to, during the initial contact, during followup investigation, at the point of diversion, throughout the process of the case, and in all postconviction proceedings.

This bill does NOT

- Create new restorative justice programs or allocate any funds to their programming
- Create new agreements between law enforcement or prosecutors and any restorative justice organizations (ie. MOUs)
- Require that any restorative justice organization provide information back to prosecutors offices
- Require that restorative justice organizations serve victims of crime that reach out or are referred, if they are not a good fit for services
- Create a *right* to restorative justice for victims or people who have caused harm

Communicating with prosecutors' offices

If your organization is in touch with your local or statewide prosecutors office (or probation, police, or other systems' partner working with victims of crime) about AB60, consider these framings, suggestions, and cautions. We make these suggestions based on our collective experience engaging with systems partners.

- **Maintain program confidentiality**- restorative justice programs are not required, through this law, to disclose any program or client information. We encourage programs to maintain confidentiality including, but not limited to client enrollment, completion, or outcomes.
- **Notification not referrals**- encourage prosecutors offices to engage in notification rather than referrals. Provide information for how victims of crime can access more information about your program and restorative justice options.
- **Ask that they don't make promises on behalf of the program**- notification does not guarantee that a victim will receive services or be a good fit for what you offer. Encourage anyone talking with victims and making notifications about the availability of RJ not to make promises or offer assurances about what is possible. This can lead to unnecessary victim disappointment or threats to your organization's reputation among victim/survivors.
- **Saying no**- this law does not mandate anything from restorative justice organizations and practitioners. You are able to say no to requests from prosecutors for information, data, outcomes, measures of success, etc.
- **Asking questions**- we encourage programs not only to provide information, but to also ask questions of prosecutors about how they will implement AB60, what and how they will share information with victims.

Reach out to the Policy Coalition

[Fill out the survey](#) to share your experience with AB60, your questions, and support needs for implementation!

We are happy to talk with you to learn more about how the bill is rolling out across CA and to strategize based on your particular needs.

Email us: rjpolicycoalition@gmail.com, Chelsea@chatproject.org, or FKhan@afsc.org

Learn More: Resources

- [Bill language for AB60](#)
- [AB60 Guide for Victim Witness Advocates](#) (Prosecutors Alliance)
- [AB60 Model Policy for Prosecutor Offices](#) (Prosecutors Alliance)