

October 10, 2025

Leonard Bakker, Chief Probation Officer
Kings County Probation Department
1400 W. Lacey Boulevard
Hanford, CA 93230

RE: APPROVAL OF CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN PURSUANT TO WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE SECTION 209 (d)

Dear Chief Bakker:

The final Corrective Action Plan (CAP) for the Kings County Probation Department Juvenile Facilities as to Title 15, Sections 1321-Staffing, 1361-Grievance Procedure, and 1371-Programs, Recreation and Exercise has been received and is approved effective **October 10, 2025**.

Initial inspection reports were provided to each facility on August 12, 2025, and an approved CAP was due no later than October 11, 2025. In your CAP, you note that the items of noncompliance as to Sections 1361 and 1371 were corrected on August 12, 2025. The CAP further notes that the County Resolution Date for the remaining item of noncompliance at each facility is **January 8, 2026**. Please notify Field Representative Shay Molennor by email no later than January 8, 2026, when the department has completed the corrective action and is in compliance with Title 15, Section 1321-Staffing.

BSCC staff will verify the resolution of corrective action, effective **January 8, 2026**, during a follow-up inspection.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Steven Wicklander
Deputy Director
Facilities Standards and Operations Division

Cc: Shay Molennor, Field Representative



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October 10, 2025

Shay Molennor, Field Representative (FSO)
Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC)
2590 Venture Oaks Way, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95833

Subject: Response to the BSCC Comprehensive Inspection – Kings County 2024-2025

Dear Mrs. Shay Molennor,

Between August 4, 2025, and August 12, 2025, you inspected the Kings County Probation Department's BRANCH Juvenile Center which incorporates the BRANCH juvenile center, juvenile center camp, and the Secure Youth Treatment Facility. I have reviewed the BSCC inspection report and the needed corrections.

The inspection report for the facility identified the following areas of non-compliance:

1. Title 15 Section 1321 Staffing
2. Title 15 Section 1361 Grievance Procedure
3. Title 15 Section 1371 Programs, Recreation, and Exercise

The following information outlines the specific issues relative to the non-compliance findings and the department's corrective action plan to bring the facilities into compliance with BSCC guidelines and standards.

SECTION 1321 STAFFING

NON-COMPLIANCE

The facility is budgeted for 64 youth supervision and supervisory positions: currently there are only 23 youth supervision staff available to work with youth. Fifteen of these budgeted positions are on leave status or light duty and are unable to work with youth. In addition, the agency has two Senior Juvenile Services Officers, 24 Juvenile Services Officers, and two support clerk positions vacant. The lack of available staff impacts the delivery of required services, efficient management of the facility, and affects compliance with additional regulations.

Section 1321(a) requires adequate staffing for all operations, programming, activities, and functions of the facility to occur and to ensure the safety and security of staff. The operations of the facility impacted by a lack of staff were identified as mental health, medical and educational.

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CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN – BRANCH JUVENILE CENTER, JUVENILE CENTER CAMP, AND SECURE YOUTH TREATMENT FACILITY (SYTF)

Unfortunately, our staffing levels have been significantly impacted by on duty injuries; currently nine (9) of our Juvenile Services Officers are on total temporary disability and of this nine (9), three (3) are Supervising Juvenile Services Officers and two (2) are Senior Juvenile Services Officers. In addition, we have one (1) Juvenile Services Officer on extended military leave, two (2) Juvenile Services Officers on modified duty status, and one (1) Juvenile Services Officer on administrative leave. However, since the Board's inspection on August 4, 2025, the County has hired 8 Juvenile Services Officers. An additional 15 Juvenile Services Officer candidates are in the background stage of hiring and one Juvenile Services Officer candidate is pending medical clearance. As of September 15, 2025, there will be 32 Juvenile Services Officers available to work with the youth, this total includes the 8 new hires and a JSO that has returned to regular duty after being on leave. In addition, we recently hired and trained a new Juvenile Support Clerk to fill one of our vacancies identified in the initial inspection report.

In an effort to fill vacancies, the County has an ongoing recruitment for the position of Juvenile Services Officer. The Department is making efforts to increase staffing and promote retention. Probation Division Managers, Supervising Probation Officers, and the Deputy Chief Probation Officers are assisting the department in conducting background investigations to expedite the hiring and onboarding of additional youth supervision staff. The Department has also participated in several local job/career fairs for recruitment of Juvenile Services Officers and have two more scheduled on October 16, 2025, at Lemoore High School and October 21, 2025, at Hanford West High School.

The facility schedule is created 2 weeks in advance and includes the addition of Deputy Probation Officers and Juvenile Services Officers that are subject to voluntary and pre-mandated overtime to cover vacant shifts. Juvenile Services Officers are also subject to mandatory overtime when necessary to cover last minute sick call outs. We are currently operating with eight (8) Juvenile Services Officers on morning and swing shifts and five (5) Juvenile Services Officers on the graveyard shift.

As of September 2, 2025, the Probation Department has brought in a Deputy Probation Officer to conduct daily programming. This officer is not included in the daily staff ratio, he is solely facilitating programming, which frees up a youth supervision staff from performing this service on swing shift Mondays-Thursdays and allows them to be available to ensure other mandated services are covered.

As of October 6, 2025, light or modified duty staff working in a clerical capacity will coordinate special visits earned by the youth; this will free up the Senior Juvenile Services Officer that was formerly assigned this task enabling her more availability for youth supervision.

As of October 6, 2025, exterior facility ground search/perimeter checks will be conducted by the juvenile support clerks when there is more than one on duty. This will save the youth supervision staff conducting the interior ground search approximately 30 minutes due to the large size of the facility.

Supply inventory and ordering is currently performed by the Juvenile Services Manager; therefore, this task does not interfere with youth supervision by Juvenile Services Officers.

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On October 6, 2025, the Principal of JC Montgomery School, Annalynn Escoto reported observing an improvement in the availability of staff being able to remove dysregulated youth from the classroom when necessary and requested. Comfortable blue chairs have been placed outside the classroom for dysregulated youth and youth with IEP's requiring frequent breaks to utilize under supervision. We will continue our regular weekly meetings with the school to ensure all requirements are being met and to identify and discuss any issues which may arise.

On October 6, 2025, George Lozano-Gonzalves, the Health Services Administrator for our contracted medical and mental health provider (Wellpath) indicated he has found no new concerns since our inspection. His medical and mental health staff are able to meet with youth as necessary and requested. We will continue our regular weekly meetings with our Wellpath partners to ensure all requirements are being met and to identify and discuss any issues which may arise or impact the administration of services.

Chief Probation Officer Leonard Bakker is working in collaboration with County Administration in an effort to create a long-term solution to the facility staffing issues. Ongoing recruitment, hiring, and retention coupled with the continued support of the Deputy Probation Officers covering vacant shifts, and the reassignment of a few ancillary tasks to non-sworn personnel will have a significant impact on improving staffing and ensuring mandated services provided to the youth and our collaborative partners are being met as required. The facility will resolve the staffing deficiency no later than January 8, 2026.

SECTION 1361 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

NON-COMPLIANCE

The youth did not have free access to the grievance form as required by 1361(a).

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN – BRANCH JUVENILE CENTER, JUVENILE CENTER CAMP, AND SECURE YOUTH TREATMENT FACILITY (SYTF)

The Department made this correction on August 12, 2025. Grievance forms are located in the living units and are readily accessed by youth. Graveyard staff are tasked with ensuring the forms are replenished in the units daily. A clerk has been assigned to perform monthly audits of grievance logs and ensure the tracking numbers accurately correspond with the grievance form. The grievance logs are stored at Control, original grievances are placed in the youths' respective files and a copy of the grievances are placed in a separate folder in the same file cabinet where the youths' files are kept.

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SECTION 1371 PROGRAMS, RECREATION, AND EXERCISE

NON-COMPLIANCE

The program, recreation, and exercise schedule was not posted in the living units as required by 1371.

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN – BRANCH JUVENILE CENTER, JUVENILE CENTER CAMP, AND SECURE YOUTH TREATMENT FACILITY (SYTF)

The Department made this correction on August 12, 2025. The program, recreation, and exercise schedules are posted in the living units. Graveyard staff will ensure schedules are updated when necessary and remain posted in the living units daily.

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