



**Recommendations for the 2022 Juvenile Regulations Revision of the Minimum Standards for Local Juvenile Facilities Title 15 and Title 24.**



**A report to the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) by youth and families impacted by juvenile detention and The Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC).**

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## I. Background and Acknowledgement

The Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC)<sup>1</sup> sought community input from Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and contracted with the Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC). Three ARC staff members led and hosted four in-person community meetings, three in LA County and one in Orange County. A diverse group of fifty-five (55) formerly incarcerated young adults and family members were provided food and a \$150 stipend for their 2-hour long participation. At each meeting, we surveyed participants and gathered key information and input on important questions relating to the regulations. We presented the purpose, objectives, and scope of the survey and the overall BSCC project before jumping into an open conversation. We spent most of the meeting discussing and going over Title 15 and 24 text, gathering additional input and recommendations on the regulations.

## II. Youth Statement

As youth who have been directly impacted by the juvenile justice system, we share from our own experiences the changes we believe need to be made to Title 15 and Title 24 minimum standards for juvenile facilities. We came together sharing the same concerns, whether those meant rights were violated, needs not being met, or lacking understanding and awareness of the regulations. During incarceration, separated from our families, we needed protection, and our families needed to be sure we were safe. If these regulations are not met, youth will not be in positive environments nor receive the adequate programming and services they need. We must give them something they can stand on and feel protected. We can no longer allow youth/families to be misinformed of their rights and miss out on the services, whether it be their daily program, educational needs, visitation with family, clean clothing and bedding, or access to healthy food. When these regulations are met, they also work to hold staff accountable. These standards must ensure they are centering and contributing to successes and development of youth.

## III. Executive Summary

The Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) launched the 2022 Juvenile Regulations Revision process to review the Minimum Standards for Juvenile Facilities Title 15 and Title 24. The BSCC contracted with the Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC) to host a minimum of three (3) community meetings to survey and gather input on recommendations for the Minimum Standards for Juvenile Facilities Title 15 and Title 24; and to provide a written report on the findings to BSCC on September 1<sup>st</sup>. ARC hosted 4 in-person meetings with a diverse group of formerly incarcerated youth in LA and Orange Counties. Four major themes were prioritized **(1) Training, Personnel, and Management, (2) Programs and Activities, (3) Health Services and (4) Facility Physical Spaces (Including clothing, bedding, and hygiene)**.

## IV. Survey Findings

The following data provides participants, Race/Ethnicity, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Amount of Time Incarcerated, Year of Incarceration, and Counties of Commitments/Facility Locations. Although a total of 55 participated in the meetings, only 52 filled out the surveys. The 3 that missed the survey were female participants and a handful of them missed or did not provide responses to certain questions. Lastly, despite most participants being 25 and under, there were a few of them who were over 25 years

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bscc.ca.gov/>

of age, however, they had been incarcerated as a youth (some in and out) and were released as young adults.

**Gender Identity:** From the 55 participants, 48 (87%) identified as male and 7 (13%), identified as female.

**Race/Ethnicity:** Of 52 responses, 36 (69%) identified as Hispanic/Latino, 7 (13.5%) identified as Black/African American, 4 (7%) identified as Asian, 1 (2 %) identified as Multiracial, 1(2 %) identified as Native American, 1 (2 %) identified as Middle Eastern/ North African, 1 (2 %) White/ Caucasian, 1 (2 %) Hispanic/ White, and 1 (2 %) provided NA.

**Sexual Orientation:** Of 52 responses, 49 (94%) identified as straight/heterosexual, 2 (4%) preferred not to state, and 1 (2%) identified bisexual.

**Time of Incarcerated:** Of 51 responses, 71 % (37) were incarcerated as youth for more than 1 year, 11.8% (6) were incarcerated as youth for more than 6 months, 9.8 % (5) were incarcerated as youth for up to 3 months, and 5.9% (3) were incarcerated as youth for 3-6 months.

**Year of incarceration:** Only 25 participants provided the year(s) in which they were in a juvenile detention facility. 5 were incarcerated between the years 2007-2015, and 20 were incarcerated between the years 2016-2021.

#### **Counties of Commitment/Facility Locations**

Of the 24 participants who reported their location of incarceration, they served their juvenile detention commitments in the following counties:

Orange County (14), Ventura County (2), Los Angeles County (14), Santa Barbara County (1), San Diego County (1), and San Bernardino County (2).

## **V. Survey and Discussion Recommendations**

We expanded the survey conversation by asking more key questions and discussing title 15 and 24 regulations language. Approximately 90% of participants had little to no knowledge about the title 15 and 24 minimum standards for juvenile facilities. The following key areas of priority were identified by the participants: **(1) Training, Personnel, and Management, (2) Programs and Activities, (3) Health Services and (4) Facility Physical Spaces (Including clothing, bedding, and hygiene).** Lastly, these recommendations are also reflected in the Title 15 and Title 24 strike out document.

### **Training, Personnel, and Management**

**What type of training and skills should staff working with young people inside of juvenile facilities have?**

Staff working with young people should bring a level of credibility by having experience or background in working with similar youth populations. It should be required that staff attend trainings on anger management and impulsiveness control, youth development, motivational interviewing, understanding empathy, crisis de-escalation and intervention, healthy relationships and receive trainings from Credible Messengers and youth mentors from CBOs. Staff should already have skills in communication, peer to peer support, and relationship building. Staff should have the ability and skill to assess youth and recognize signs of negative emotions to ensure the safety of the youth and others is prioritized, especially for staff working with youth in Secure Youth Treatment Facilities (SYTFs).

#### **1. RECOMMENDATION FOR ARTICLE 3**

In **SECTION 1320.0**, (b), add qualifications that staff are required to possess youth development knowledge, and have system involved experience or experience working with youth and CBOs. Staff should also go through mental health evaluation to ensure they are able to work with youth in facilities.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION FOR ARTICLE 3

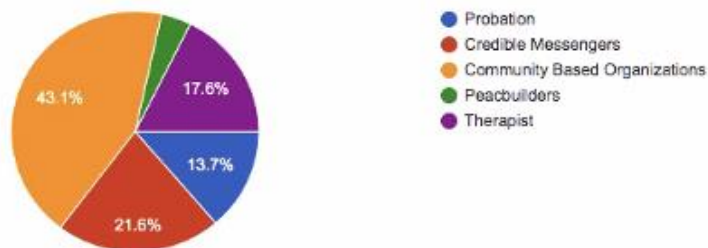
In **SECTION 1322.0 (d)**, add that staff should receive trainings from Credible Messengers and/or youth mentors from Community-Based Organizations rooted in youth development-

## 3. RECOMMENDATION FOR ARTICLE 3

In **SECTION 1324.0**, add “restorative healing approaches, youth development approaches, therapeutic approaches, and relationship buildings approaches.”

### What type of staff should work in juvenile facilities?

**43% (22)** stated that Community Based Organizations, **21% (11)** stated that it should be Credible Messengers, **17% (9)** stated that it should be Therapist, **13% (7)** stated that it should be a probation officer, and **4% (2)** stated that it should be a Peacebuilders.



## 4. RECOMMENDATION FOR ARTICLE 1

In **SECTION 1302.0**, add “Credible Messengers” and its definition as defined by the Credible Messengers Justice Center<sup>2</sup>.

### Programming and Activities

**What type of programs should be offered to youth in juvenile facilities?** Programs offered to youth should focus on their mental, spiritual, and physical development, potential, nurturing their competencies, and the shaping of their character. Programs such as, education, adult life skills, career readiness, sports and fitness, civic engagement, self-help, and peer to peer mentorship, understanding youth development, creative writing, arts, and faith-based programs expanding. Also, programs that will address root issues and trauma and prepare youth for reintegration into society. Programs such as financial literacy, basic life and technology skills, reentry support, how to communicate, professionalism, understanding toxic masculinity, parenting (for youth who are parents), family engagement, healthy relationships, writing, public speaking, and credible messenger's support.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ARTICLE 6

In **SECTION 1271**, change the minimum of three hours for opportunities for programs, recreation, and exercise to a minimum of six hours instead, add that time for breakfast, lunch, and dinner should not account for time spent outside rooms and that for youth who are suspended from programming, staff should have an alternative program available to the youth and not just take everything away from them.

## 6. RECOMMENDATION FOR ARTICLE 6

In **SECTION 1271.0, (a)**, add the following programs to the list, teambuilding opportunities through competitions and sports, non-violent communication, animal and plant therapy, civic engagement, family engagement, healthy relationships, reentry support and credible messengers.

## 7. RECOMMENDATION FOR ARTICLE 6

<sup>2</sup> <https://cmjcenter.org/approach/>

In **SECTION 1372**, add that staff should ensure they are actively expanding the opportunity for more faith-based programs beyond the ones that are already being provided and available to youth.

#### **8. RECOMMENDATIO FOR ARTICLE 6**

In **SECTION 1373.0**, add that work assigned to youth relates to jobs in the creative economy and that certificates should be provided for youth who volunteer or work on specific duties and assignments on consistent basis in a facility. This is important to youth established for youth who are graduates and don't have programming during school hours.

### **HEALTH – Services**

#### **How can youth be supported in their health?**

Youth should be supported in their physical, mental, and spiritual health. Youth can be supported by having access to quality healthy food, therapy, trauma-informed services, and outdoor recreation were salient needs among all participants that needed to be improved. According to participants, the minimum standards for health services within juvenile facilities should ensure that youth have access to high nutritional food diets when incarcerated in juvenile facilities that are well “portioned meals that don't leave youth starving.” Equally important are access to therapists and mental health services that provide constant support and address the negative impact of adverse childhood experiences. Lastly, expanding physical activity and longer time periods of outside recreation were particularly important to all participants when discussing the importance of health services within juvenile facilities.

#### **9. RECOMMENDATION FOR ARTICLE 8.**

In **SECTION 1433**, health administrator should ensure that provisions “must” be made for any youth requesting services under this section. **Section 1437** should ensure that youth are provided trauma-informed services that address adverse childhood experiences by appropriately trained staff that have knowledge of the new brain science and data about youth, maturity, and growth.

#### **10. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ARTICLE 6**

In **SECTION 1374**, change that a visitor's criminal history should only represent a risk if they have an active, pending or ongoing case but not simply due to their backgrounds as a lot of youth have family members with background yet are the most important people in their lives. Also add that there should be a designated visitation space for visiting hours, so it does not disrupt programming for others.

### **CLOTHING, BEDDING, HYGIENE and FACILITY SPACES**

**For this section, we combined the recommendations for facility spaces and additional topics that participants discussed and provided input.**

In any facility, youth should always have access to restrooms, clean and new clothing that is not limited to one item, ensure windows are not scratched up to see and receive unfiltered, natural sunlight, provide better furniture, and bigger outdoors areas or spaces for more recreation and sports activities. When young people are in these facilities, they should always be provided with good quality fresh and clean clothing and all the necessary hygienic items for healthier sanitation and cleaner-living conditions.

#### **11. RECOMMENDATION for Article 10.**

A section should be added to this article that would allow youth the ability to buy extra clothes through commissary such as personal t shirts, shorts, socks, boxer briefs, beanies, hats, and slippers. Under **section 1480**, serviceable footwear should include shower shoes as a standard issue by the facility.

#### **12. RECOMENDATION FOR TITLE 24**

In **SECTION 1230.2.1**, add the requirement of having a pony wall and partition doors not bigger than the pony wall to ensure better privacy for youth.

**13. RECOMMENDATION FOR TITLE 24**

In **SECTION 1230.1.1**, add access to a restroom for youth in reception, and that hot and cold-water running water is also accessible to youth and not only staff use, and access to a First Aid Kit.

**14. RECOMMENDATION FOR TITLE 24**

In **SECTION 1230.1.2**, make clear that bed bunk, shelves, and toilet and sink spare area in a room should not account as part of the minimum 15 square feet of floor are per youth.

**15. RECOMMENDATION FOR TITLE 24**

In **SECTION 1230.1.6**, add that locked sleeping rooms must provide an appropriate temperature, not too hot, not too cold.

**16. RECOMMENDATION FOR TITLE 24**

In **SECTION 1230.1.7**, single occupancy rooms shall have a window with natural light access.

**17. RECOMMENDATION FOR TITLE 24**

In **SECTION 1230.1.10**, Dayrooms should have access to a phone, gym, library, and other recreational spaces like a quiet area or games activity area.

**VI. Conclusion**

When creating standards for any facility that young people will be residing in, we must ensure that standards and regulations are created not just with facility appearance or staff needs in mind, but with the impact those regulations will have on the lives of incarcerated youth and their loved ones as the guiding force. It is the state's responsibility to ensure that the standards and regulations governing juvenile facilities strictly adhere to the recommendations of the community, fully protect youths' rights, and completely support their development as emerging adults.

