

JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY REPORT
Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission

FACILITY NAME: William Silveira Juvenile Detention Facility
INSPECTION DATE: June 21, 2022 and June 30, 2022

FACILITY CAPACITY:

| Fac # | Name | Address | R/C |
|-------|-------------|---------|-----|
| 1 | JDF (Pod 1) | | 60 |
| 2 | JDF (Pod 2) | | 60 |
| 3 | JDF (Pod 5) | | 90 |

At the time of this inspection, there were 53 youth being housed in the Juvenile Detention Facility. Only Pod 5 was in use at the time, with youth in all four individual units (Units A-D). The Maximum-Security General Population male youth are in unit A (13 youth), General Population male youth are in unit B (10 youth), Program male youth are in unit C (14 youth), and unit D (4 youth). All female youth are also housed in Unit D (4 females total). There were also 8 youth being held in Medical.

INSPECTION INFORMATION:

Address: 11200 Avenue 368, Visalia, California 93291

Phone Number: 559-735-1600


Fax: 559-713-3046

Superintendent: Jose Gonzalez

Staff Interviewed: Mike Ortiz, Karen Valdiviezo

Type of Facility: ☒ Juvenile Hall ☐ Camp ☒ Coed

Presiding Juvenile Court Judge: Honorable Hugo Loza

Commission Chair: Bud Darwin /S/ 
Name Signature

Phone Number: 559-782-6960

Commission Inspection Team: Bud Darwin, Galen Quenzer, Sneha Kumar

MAJOR CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Concerns:

- The outdoor (confined) space directly adjacent to the pods seems to be more indoor than outdoor. It consists of concrete walls with two basketball hoops and a concrete floor. The ceiling is open to the outdoors, for fresh air. Recreation equipment did not appear to be in good condition. One of the youth interviewed stated that they were allowed in this outdoor space one hour per day, Monday-Friday, and two hours on Saturday. The youth said he had been at the detention facility for two years and had been outdoors in the grassy field area once.
- The youth have little chance of creative expression. They reported only having access to a pencil to write letters or draw, but are not allowed to trace, and do not have colored pencils, paint, or any other materials. They are also not allowed to listen to music.
- Youth are allowed books, but only one at a time for multiple days. If they do not like the book, there is no way to return it and get a new one until the next time the "library" cart is available.
- Youth are not in any vocational or hands-on courses. Their education is very rigid and standards-based, with anything else that could be applicable to a real job outside of the center unavailable.
- Youth mentioned that they have very little access to shampoo, and no conditioner.

Recommendations:

- Allow the youth to spend time in the grass field where they can feel like they are outdoors and can see the mountains
- In past years, youth have been able to paint and have music. Prior youths' paintings are hung on the walls of the center. Allow them chances to do these activities again.
- Bring the library cart by once a day during free time to allow youth to exchange books if wanted.
- These youth are likely not planning on college, and may not get their high school degree on time. Vocational courses will support them in finding and holding a job, which can prove helpful and important to prevent recidivism. Provide more training for them, and share opportunities that could be open to them (e.g. places that will hire adults with their backgrounds).
- Provide the youth with more hygiene products.

AREAS REVIEWED: Please check

QUALITY OF LIFE

- ☒ Physical Plant
- ☒ Meals/Nutrition
- ☒ Mental Health
- ☒ Physical/Dental/Health
- ☒ Religious Services
- ☐ Volunteer Involvement
- ☒ Visiting

PROGRAMS

- ☒ Education
- ☐ Vocational/employability
- ☐ Community Service
- ☐ Victim/Gang Awareness
- ☐ Substance Abuse
- ☐ Other

PERSONS INTERVIEWED

- ☒ Minors (3)
- ☒ Superintendent
- ☐ Medical/Psych. Staff (1)
- ☒ School Staff (1)
- ☒ Supervisor
- ☐ Child Supervision Staff (Counselors) (1)
- ☐ Food Services Staff
- ☐ Other

FACILITY SAFETY AND SECURITY

GENERAL INFORMATION

Has Facility Exceeded Capacity Since Last Inspection? No

Date of Last Fire Drill: 4/18/22

Number of Suicides: 0

Number of Attempted Suicides: 3

Number of Deaths from Other Causes: 0

Number of Escapes: 0

Comments: None

LOCAL INSPECTIONS

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Fire*: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Date: 3/23/21 |
| Medical/Mental Health**: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Date: 10/5/21 |
| Environmental Health**: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Date: 10/5/21 |
| Nutritional Health**: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Date: 10/5/21 |

* (Health & Safety Code Section 13146.01)

** (Health & safety code section 101045)

OTHER INSPECTIONS:

Building Structural Safety: 6/1/21

Building Safety: 3/15/21
Juvenile Court Review: 3/17/22
Board of State and Community Corrections: 2/24/20
Mental Health, WellPath: (Not Provided)
School Lunch Program: 9/28/21

STAFFING

CURRENT STAFF:

Superintendent (Division Manager) – 1
Assistant Superintendent (Supervising Probation Officer) – 2
Institution Supervisors – 10
Probation Correctional Officers I/II – 59
Probation Correctional Officers III – 4
Detention Service Officers – 13
Food & Laundry Manager - 1
Cook III – 7

Notes: During both inspection dates, the facility was on quarantine mode. Inspectors were not able to talk to any staff outside of probation officers, the assistant superintendent, the superintendent, and the principal of the school.

STAFF TO CHILD RATIO:

The type of population in a Pod can vary, depending on if it is being used for program youth or general population, and overall facility population. JDF ratios are as follows:

| Unit Type | Awake Ratio | Sleeping Ratio |
|--------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Program/Camp | 1:15 | 1:30 |
| General Population | 1:10 | 1:30 |

COMMUNICATION IN LANGUAGE MINOR CAN UNDERSTAND?

There are bilingual staff who can also converse in Spanish and Hmong. Other languages are not as easily accessible.

DIVERSITY OF STAFF

The staff demographics represent and reflect the demographics of the local area where the youth are from.

STAFF/MINOR INTERACTIONS

According to the minors interviewed, the staff were mostly agreeable and nice enough. Some minors did have issues with the grievance policy, as they mentioned that certain staff did not seem to care about grievances.

PHYSICAL SPACE INSPECTION

CONDITIONS OF GROUNDS (Lawns, Playing Fields, Blacktop, Asphalt, Other)

The outdoor space was clean, though rather hot. There were a few basketball hoops and a volleyball net. The youth were not able/allowed to use the outdoor grass field, for unknown/unclear reasons.

Recreation/Sports Equipment

There were basketball hoops and a volleyball net, but very little other equipment. The balls that were there were worn out and not properly inflated. There was no indication or mention of other equipment available for use.

EXTERIOR OF BUILDING (General Condition, Paint, Roof, Drains/Gutters, Other)

The building's exterior seemed to be in good condition.

INTERIOR OF BUILDING (Walls, Paint, Floors, Drains, Plumbing Fixtures Working, Air Vents, Windows)

Cleaning Fluids and Chemicals Labeled and Safely Stored? Yes

Hallways Clear, Doors Propped Open? Yes, No – Doors are closed at all times, and need to be unlocked from a separate security room before opening

Weapons Locker Location: Weapons are not allowed in the facility. There are weapons lockers in the main entrance, as well as the employee entrance, which is located on the east side of the building. Officers that use the Sally Port when booking youth lock their weapons in the trunk of their vehicles.

Temperature: The temperature was pretty nice in the facility. Youth seemed pretty content with the temperature and atmosphere within the building. There was mention of little to no ventilation, which can cause the building to get stuffy.

SLEEPING ROOM/DORMITORIES

The facility has pod-style rooms, with individual rooms for each youth.

Beds – Type

The youth each have a mattress pad on a concrete base. Youth stated that some of the mattresses were ripped.

Art, Books, Personal Possessions Allowed In Sleeping Rooms?

All youth are allowed to have one religious book and one reading book in their room. Other items such as art and photos are supposedly allowed, though some youth mentioned that they are not able to have the complete allowed quantity. They are not allowed to write in their rooms.

Graffiti Present? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Ample Blankets? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Each get 2 sheets, 2 blankets and a pillow. One youth mentioned that the pillows are “built in” to the mattresses, but “Leaders” get separate pillows.

STUDY AREA

Adequate Lighting? ☒ Yes ☐ No

ORIENTATION OF MINORS

Are Minors Oriented To Rules And Procedures? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Are Rules And Grievance Procedures Posted? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Are Rules And Grievance Procedures Understood By Minors? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Minors Interviewed – Comments

Minors interviewed mentioned that rules and grievances are understood by the officers, but that some officers did not seem to care, and would not follow rules on occasion.

MEALS/NUTRITION

Kitchen - Clean, Knives And Chemicals Locked? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Have Youth Working In Kitchen Been Trained? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Minors are not allowed to work in the kitchen.

Meals Served or Cafeteria Style?

Meals are served to the youth in their units.

Are Minors Permitted To Converse During Meals? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Conversation is generally allowed, but can be modified based on activity and tension within a unit. Youth mentioned that it depends on the officer.

Is Staff Present and Supervising? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Weekly Menu Prepared? Posted? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Weekly menu is posted in the kitchen. It is not clear if it is posted in the units or near the youth. They are not able to go to the kitchen at the moment because of overlapping quarantine periods that have lasted for weeks.

Are Servings – Ample, Nutritious, And Appetizing? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Servings are large enough for most meals, though the male youth mentioned that they are often hungry. The female youth mentioned that most meals were plenty, though some were less filling. All youth mentioned that the meals were pretty tasty.

Are Weaker Youth Protected From Having Food Taken From Them? ☐ Yes ☒ No

One ward interviewed stated that this happens when staff are not watching.

Length Of Time Allowed For Eating? 20 minutes for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF MINORS

APPEARANCE

The youth appeared overall healthy, clean and had clean clothes. They have clearly been able to get haircuts as well, which is an improvement over last year.

SHOWERS

Frequency, Privacy Maintained, Supervised By Staff? Youth are able to take daily 7-minute showers. There are four individual showers in each pod. Privacy is maintained between the four showers. Staff members are located nearby for supervision. Youth reported that shower duration was insufficient.

Was There Any Assault By Other Youth? None reported by youth or staff.

CLOTHING

What Is The Condition Of Clothing – Does It Fit?

The clothing seemed to be in good/decent condition, and did not seem too baggy or too tight on any of the youth.

Is The Clothing Appropriate For The Weather?

Yes, for the most part, the clothing seemed comfortable to wear even in the heat of summer.

PROGRAMS

PROGRAMS, RECREATION AND EXERCISE

The facility is required to provide the opportunity for programs, recreation and exercise for a minimum of three hours a day during weekdays, and five hours a day each on Saturday, Sunday, and other non-school days. Of this allocated time, at least one hour a day should be set aside for an outdoor activity, weather permitting. This one hour time block is built into the daily schedule of the facility. Only one unit is allowed outdoors at a time. The four units cycle through the outdoor space for one hour each. On weekends, each unit is able to access the outdoor space for 30 minutes at a time, but twice in a day. When temperatures reach or exceed a certain threshold, outdoor time can be cut to 30 minutes per unit on weekdays. Other programs, such as art, are provided but not at a high level. Youth mentioned that many of the supplies for these activities, such as colored pencils/paints/etc. are no longer available.

ACCESS TO RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Religious services are provided one day per week. Youth can request to speak to a religious leader on a one-on-one basis. Youth are allowed one religious text in their rooms as well.

MEDICAL/MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Medical services are provided by WellPath, an outside contractor. Youth receive routine medical and dental check-ups. Youth are also able to request a check if necessary. There is no full-time doctor on staff. There are always nurses available, 24/7. A dentist is available and provides services once a week.

Mental health services are also provided by WellPath, but this is changing. Mental health services will soon be provided by another contractor. Services are also provided by Alliant University.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Volunteers can conduct religious services within the facility.

COUNSELING & CASEWORK

The youth are all assessed individually throughout the detention process to identify individual needs. Mental health and counseling services are provided as ordered by the Court, or on a voluntary basis. Alliant University interns provide counseling and apply cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) practices and skills.

FAMILY REUNIFICATION PLANNING

Family members and parents are included in all communications throughout the time youth are detained. Meetings with probation staff and counselors occur at the beginning, middle, and end of the youth's time in detention. Referrals are made for services that can assist in the transition from the facility to the home. For those parents who cannot visit the facility, FaceTime video visitation options are offered. Many youth and parents have taken advantage of this virtual visitation during COVID restrictions. Some parents are unable to access this without an Apple device, as FaceTime is proprietary for Apple.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELING

Youth can participate in substance abuse counseling groups, as well as in individual counseling facilitated by an Alcohol and Drug Counselor assigned to the facility, on a volunteer basis or as ordered by the Court.

GANG AWARENESS CLASSES

There are gang awareness classes available for those youth who are interested, as well as those assigned by the Court.

ANGER MANAGEMENT CLASSES

Current counseling programs that are available for youth include anger management components.

SEXUAL HARRASSMENT CLASSES

Sexual harassment training is provided in accordance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act.

PARENTING CLASSES

Parenting classes are available. Youth are assigned to these classes as determined by the Court.

VOCATIONAL CLASSES

There are no vocational classes being offered at this time. In the past, youth have been able to earn a food handling certification, among other certifications.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

There are no community service opportunities at this time.

WORK PROGRAM

There is no work program offered at this time.

OTHER

DISCIPLINE OF MINORS (Frequency and Type)

Discipline of minors occurs as needed, as determined by the Probation Officers on staff. Consequences include loss of free time, which includes time to play games, read, etc. and a later bedtime. Room confinement is no longer a disciplinary tactic. All youth are allowed access to a telephone and have the option to write letters as part of their mandatory recreational time, regardless of disciplinary status.

GRIEVANCES (Number and Type)

Youth are allowed to file grievances if they have complaints about the facility, their treatment, or programs and services offered.

TELEPHONE ACCESS

All youth have access to a telephone, free of charge, during mandatory recreation time every day. Youth are allowed two 6 minute phone calls per day. They are also allowed access to a phone or a video call option during visitation time, if pre-arranged by family who are unable to visit the facility.

CORRESPONDENCE

Is Postage Free? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Confidential Correspondence (Is Incoming/Outgoing Mail Read?)

Incoming and outgoing mail is not read, but envelopes are inspected for contraband or other inappropriate objects.

VISITING

Adequate Space?

The youth report having little privacy during visitation. Youth are required to sit in a line of chairs, 6 feet apart from each other, while visitors sit in a line of chairs opposite, facing them. There is no physical contact during visits. This seems to be adequate space for the youth.

Convenient Times or Accommodations for Parent Work Schedules etc.?

Visitation times are on weekends. If parents or families are not able to visit during this time in person, they are allowed a visitation via video-call through FaceTime, if pre-arranged with the facility staff.

Special Visits?

Special visits and child visits are allowed on an individual basis if necessary. Contact is allowed during these visits.

Does Staff Supervise Visits? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Is There Adequate Privacy During Visits? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Have All Minors Had Visits? If No, Give Reason ☐ Yes ☒ No

Some minors do not have visits because of schedule constraints on the part of the parents/families, or because of restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and protocols.

SCHOOL

STAFF

Number of Full Time, Frequency of Substitutes

Unknown

Relationship between School and the Juvenile Facility Staff

Unknown

YOUTH

Number of Minors Attending School

All of the youth in the facility attend school.

Number of Minors in Each Classroom

All of the youth in a single unit attend school together. Each unit has an individual classroom.

Number of Minors on Independent Study

Youth are placed in independent study if a medical issue prevents them from attending class.

Number Of Minors Not Attending, Reason?

N/A - all youth are required to attend

CLASSROOM

Atmosphere in Classroom

Classes were not in session during both inspections, due to timing or special circumstances. However, youth report that atmosphere in classroom is nice.

Are There Adequate Supplies? (Books, Computers, etc.)

Yes

ACTIVITIES AND COURSE WORK

Are Minors Required To Do Homework?

Yes

CONFINEMENT

Describe Access to School, Recreation, and Exercise for Minors Confined To Their Rooms

If youth are confined to their rooms for medical reasons, staff will work with medical staff to determine a variety of alternate activities or options during program time. For example, they are placed on independent study, and work with school staff on an individual basis. Youth who are able are allowed to access the outdoor recreation area on an individual basis, with supervision.

COVID-19 SAFETY MEASURES

Booking and Housing Process

The booking and housing process has changed dramatically due to COVID. Youth are required to be tested and must wait in individual medical rooms for 48 hours until test results come back, regardless of if they are general population youth, program youth, or if they will be transferred. If they are to be processed and released back to the public, they are not held for the full 48 hours, though they are still tested upon entering the facility.

In general, COVID-19 safety measures are followed closely. Anytime a staff or outside contractor tests positive, or there is a suspicion of exposure, the facility goes into quarantine mode, which lasts for 10 days. This time period restarts if another exposure or positive case is detected during the original quarantine period. The youth and staff report multiple weeks' worth of quarantine periods during the past two years of living with COVID-19 restrictions.