

# Grand Jury Report

## RESPONSE FORM

Grand Jury Report Title: ***Cut Backs in Mental Health Services Impacting Law Enforcement***

Report Dated: ***9/25/13***

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### ***Response Form Submitted By:***

Dan Hamburg, Chair, Board of Supervisors  
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors  
501 Low Gap Rd, Room 1010  
Ukiah, CA 95482

### **FINDINGS**

- I (we) agree with the Findings numbered: F4, F6
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the Findings numbered: F1, F2, F3  
Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons therefore.)

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Recommendation(s) numbered R2 have been implemented. (Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendation(s) numbered R1, R4, R6 have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future (Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendation(s) numbered R3 require further analysis. (Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of the planned analysis, and a time frame for the matter to be prepared, discussed and approved by the officer and/or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed. This time frame shall not exceed six (6) months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury Report.)

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- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_ will NOT be implemented because they are not warranted and/or are not deemed reasonable. (Attach an explanation.)

*I have completed the above responses, and have attached, as required the following number of pages to this response form:*

Number of Pages attached: 8

*I understand that responses to Grand Jury Reports are public records. They will be posted on the Grand Jury website: [www.co.mendocino.ca.us/grandjury](http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/grandjury). The clerk of the responding agency is required to maintain a copy of the response.*

*I understand that I must submit this signed response form and any attachments as follows:*

First Step: E-mail (word documents or scanned pdf file format) to:

- The Grand Jury Foreperson at: [grandjury@co.mendocino.ca.us](mailto:grandjury@co.mendocino.ca.us)
- The Presiding Judge: [grandjury@mendocino.courts.ca.gov](mailto:grandjury@mendocino.courts.ca.gov)

Second Step: Mail all originals to:

Mendocino County Grand Jury  
P.O. Box 939  
Ukiah, CA 95482

Printed Name: Dan Hamburg

Title: Chair, Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**NARRATIVE:**

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors appreciates that the Grand Jury has chosen to focus attention on mental health services as they impact law enforcement. In addition to the required responses to the report titled "Cut Backs In Mental Health Services Impacting Law Enforcement," the Board of Supervisors offers the following comments to address statements contained in the narrative sections of the report.

The report incorrectly states: "in an effort to control costs, County administration has decided to contract out MH services." The Board of Supervisors approved contracting out for mental health services, as recommended by County administration and the Mental Health Advisory Board, not to control costs, but to improve the specific type and level of mental health services provided to the community.

The current Grand Jury report is not unique in identifying problems related to delivery of mental health services, particularly related to delivery of mental health crisis services. At various times over the years these problems have led to tension between mental health staff, law enforcement, and medical providers, including both administrative and line staff.

Lack of appropriate in-county facilities, and delays and challenges related to out of county placement that are beyond the control of the County, have frequently resulted in mentally ill individuals being housed in the county jail, sometimes for extended periods of time, instead of being transferred to a more appropriate facility.

While it is an exaggeration, as stated by the Grand Jury, to say "every 5150 arrest takes an officer away from patrol duty for hours at a time," delayed crisis response has contributed to a variety of problems, including increased tension between first responders and delayed service delivery to those in need.

Additionally, delivery of appropriate services to individuals who have a dual diagnosis of co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse is compromised by the refusal of psychiatric hospitals to accept dually diagnosed patients who have a primary diagnosis of substance abuse.

The problems identified by the Grand Jury are not new and do not result from budget cuts, but echo reports of problems that have been identified going back a decade or more. The budget for adult mental health services has not been cut in the last couple of years but employee recruitment and retention was affected by the issuance of a Request for Proposals and the result and uncertainty.

The Board of Supervisors is optimistic that the contracts for mental health services which provide for new and enhanced services that are not currently being offered will result in improved mental health services to those in need and also result in reduced tension among first responders, including law enforcement.

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**FINDINGS:**

**Finding 1:** Disagree partially. It is the understanding of the Board of Supervisors that after hours and on weekend, one crisis worker was scheduled per shift, not one crisis worker for the weekend.

**Finding 2:** Disagree partially. The Board of Supervisors agrees with and hereby incorporates by reference the response of Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), Director Cryer and HHSA Assistant Director of Health Services/Mental Health Director Pinizzotto.

**Finding 3:** Disagree partially. The Board of Supervisors agrees with and hereby incorporates by reference the responses of the HHSA Director Cryer and HHSA Assistant Director Pinizzotto.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Recommendation 1:** The Board of Supervisors hereby incorporates by reference the responses of HHSA Director Cryer and HHSA Assistant Director Pinozzotto and notes that all services described therein have been implemented except for the Access Center in Fort Bragg which is in development but not yet operational.

**Recommendation 2:** Recommendation 2 now has been implemented as specified on cover page.

**Recommendation 3:** The Board of Supervisors hereby incorporates by reference the responses of HHSA Director Cryer and HHSA Assistant Director Pinizzotto and notes that full implementation will require up to an additional 60 days from the original estimate.

**Recommendation 4:** The Board of Supervisors hereby incorporates by reference the responses of HHSA Director Cryer and HHSA Assistant Director Pinizzotto and notes that full implementation will require up to an additional 60 days from the original estimate.

**Recommendation 5:** The Board of Supervisors notes that recruitment for a Chief Psychiatrist is continuous until filed.