



County of Mendocino  
Grand Jury

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## ***MENDOCINO COUNTY JAIL, COURTHOUSE HOLDING CELLS, AND EVIDENCE ROOM***

***March 20, 2006***

### ***SUMMARY***

In accordance with duties required, the Mendocino County Grand Jury visited the Mendocino County Jail, Mendocino County Courthouse Holding Cells, and the Mendocino County Evidence Room.

### ***BACKGROUND***

California Penal Code §919 (b) states that "The Grand Jury may inquire into the conditions and management of the public prisons within the county."

### ***METHODS***

The Mendocino County Grand Jury toured the Mendocino County Jail Facility, including the Sally Port (inmate delivery) and Booking Area, the Mendocino County Courthouse Holding Cells, and the Mendocino County Evidence Room. The Grand Jury interviewed jail personnel, Deputies, and Evidence Room Technicians, and attended meetings of the Mendocino County Criminal Justice Policy Council.

### ***MENDOCINO COUNTY JAIL***

### ***FINDINGS***

1. The Mendocino County Jail (MCJ) can currently accommodate 302 inmates.
2. There are currently 57 budgeted positions for the Corrections Department: one Captain, two Sergeants, eight Corporals and 46 Correctional Deputies, not including additional support staff.
3. The position of Correctional Deputy was recently reclassified under California Penal Code Section §830.1.
4. In the current contract, Correctional Deputies are scheduled to receive a three percent pay raise spread over 18 months. Additional qualifications, such as an AA or BA degree or Field Training Instructor status, will result in a further increase, up to a maximum of eight percent.
5. There are Bi-Lingual Correctional Deputies, with pay incentives for those who qualify, at a rate of three percent for basic command of a second language and five percent for advanced knowledge.

6. Correctional Deputies receive \$1,000 a year as a clothing allowance.
7. In 2005 there was a 13.6% turnover rate among Correctional Deputies.
8. Basic Correctional Deputy training consists of twelve weeks working in-house with a Field Training Deputy, six weeks of Core (basic) training, and three weeks of California Penal Code Section §832 training.
9. Correctional Deputies do most of the transporting of inmates; Field Deputies transport inmates on an "as needed" basis.
10. MCJ has received funding for five Sheriff's Service Technicians to relieve the bottleneck in the Booking Room.
11. The average stay for an inmate in the MCJ is 16.6 days.
12. There are currently six Tasers available to Correctional Deputies on duty.
13. From January to June of 2005 there were 21 incidents of Taser use by Correctional Deputies; from July to December 2005 there were five incidents of Taser use.
14. There is a medical doctor on staff and on call who sees to the health needs of the inmates.
15. There is one full-time Registered Nurse Manager on staff.
16. A Licensed Vocational Nurse is on duty at all times.
17. There is a psychiatrist on staff who spends up to 15 hours a week at the MCJ; in 2005 there were 1,636 psychiatric visits.
18. Mental Health workers from the Mendocino County Mental Health Department provide counseling for inmates. The number of visits from Mental Health workers in 2005 was 4,542.
19. The medical staff creates and maintains medical records on all inmates.
20. The nurse on duty dispenses inmates' medications at the direction of a medical doctor.
21. There is an extremely high percentage of inmates with a history of methamphetamine use.
22. There is no Social Worker on staff.
23. The MCJ works with the Ukiah Adult School for inmates who want to earn a GED.
24. There are Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) programs available for inmates.
25. At the time of inspection, there were many significant problems with the MCJ facility, including malfunctioning door locks, roof leaks, aging plumbing, floor tile in need of replacement, and inadequate storage space.
26. Mendocino County General Services is charged with the maintenance of the MCJ.

### ***MENDOCINO COUNTY COURTHOUSE HOLDING CELLS***

#### ***FINDINGS***

1. There are four Holding Cells.

2. All Holding Cells were clean and all fixtures were in working order at the time of inspection.
3. Thirty minutes is the average amount of time an inmate occupies a Holding Cell.
4. A Correctional Deputy is stationed outside a Holding Cell when it is occupied.
5. There is no video surveillance or monitoring system for the Holding Cells.
6. The different colored coveralls worn by inmates indicate to Correctional Deputies the security classification of each inmate.
7. Female inmates are separated from male inmates in the Holding Cells.
8. Sheriff's Department vehicles transport inmates between the MCJ and the Mendocino County Courthouse.

### ***MENDOCINO COUNTY EVIDENCE ROOM***

#### ***FINDINGS***

1. The Evidence Room is used by the Mendocino County Sheriff's Department and the Mendocino County Major Crimes Task Force.
2. At the time of inspection the Evidence Room was well maintained.
3. Staffing at the Evidence Room is insufficient to purge the large quantities of out-dated evidence.

#### ***OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS***

The Grand Jury recommends that:

1. a social worker be added to the staff of the MCJ. (MCJ Finding 22)
2. the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors should at the earliest possible date relocate and consolidate all of the Mendocino County Justice facilities to one central location on a site that is easily accessible. (MCJ Finding 25 and Holding Cell Finding 8)

#### ***COMMENTS***

The Grand Jury commends the staff of the Mendocino County Jail for the tremendous work they do in maintaining a safe environment for the staff and inmates. The challenges are enormous considering the poor condition of the antiquated facilities in which they have to work. The creation of a Criminal Justice Policy Task Force, though long overdue, gives reason to expect positive change in a system badly in need of improvement.

#### ***RESPONSES REQUIRED***

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors (all Findings and Recommendations)  
Mendocino County Chief Executive Officer (all Findings and Recommendations)  
Sheriff, Mendocino County (all Findings and Recommendations)  
Director, Mendocino County General Services (MCJ Finding 25, Recommendation 2)