



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PROBATION OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE VIRTUAL
REGULAR MEETING



poc.lacounty.gov

THURSDAY, JULY 22, 2021, 12:00 P.M.

VIDEO FILE FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING BEGINNING AT 11:59 A.M.

Attachment: [Video](#)

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order and Roll Call.

Chairman Franky Carrillo called the meeting to order at 11:59 a.m. Wendelyn Julien, Executive Director conducted the roll call:

Present: Commissioner Sean Garcia-Leys, Commissioner Donald D. Meredith,
 Commissioner Dominique D. Nong, Commissioner Robert M. Saltzman,
 Commissioner Cyn Yamashiro, Secretary Dolores Canales, Vice Chair Esché L.
 Jackson, Chairman Franky Carrillo

Absent: Commissioner Danielle M. Dupuy

2. Approval of the July 8, 2021 meeting minutes.

No members of the public commented on this item.

On motion of Vice Chair Jackson, seconded by Commissioner Meredith, and unanimously carried (Commissioner Dupuy being absent), the Los Angeles Probation Oversight Commission approved the July 8, 2021 minutes:

Ayes: 8 – Commissioner Sean Garcia-Leys, Commissioner Donald D. Meredith, Commissioner Dominique D. Nong, Commissioner Robert M. Saltzman, Commissioner Cyn Yamashiro, Secretary Dolores Canales, Vice Chair Esché L. Jackson, Chairman Franky Carrillo

Absent: 1 – Commissioner Danielle M. Dupuy

Attachments: [Supporting Document](#)
 [Public Comment/Correspondence](#)

II. REPORT

3. Report from and take appropriate action on a report from the Probation Department regarding current and planned staff training efforts including training to comply with the Department of Justice (DOJ) settlement agreement, to comply with other California state law, and to address goals of the department.

- Brandon Nichols, Deputy Chief, Los Angeles County Probation Department
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- Adam Bettino, Bureau Chief, Los Angeles County Probation Department

Mr. Nichols discussed the importance of training the Probation Department staff due to it being the engine of transformation with the Probation Department. The training sets the tone for how staff are expected to conduct themselves when working in facilities and in the field, as well as influence how they interact with the youth and adults. Furthermore, he added that training is a way to build staff up by imparting them with skills to enhance and expand their knowledge to ensure they are better equipped to perform the duties they are requested to do.

Mr. Bettino emphasized the need for culture change, training implementation, and transparency. He shared that the culture of the Probation Department has been gradually changing, but the Department wants to find ways to increase community engagement. He shared that the training content is starting to shift, with a focus on building rapport with adult and juvenile clients, de-escalation techniques, and how to effectively address the clients themselves, and their needs. There is also a desire to offer more adolescent development training, which has been in place for over year. The goal of the Probation Department's training curriculum is to conduct trainings embedded into transforming the Probation Department's culture, which incorporates trauma-informed care. Mr. Bettino elaborated further on the Probation Department's training initiatives related to the DOJ settlement. The curriculum has been identified, and Mr. Bettino shared that training will be conducted in one-week 40-hour intervals in areas including trauma-informed care, de-escalation, adolescent development, and interactive journaling for adult and juvenile clients. Overall, the Probation Department wants to align with the DJJ realignment goals, de-escalation, how employees address clients and coworkers are being addressed, and foster interactions between the employee others with dignity and respect. Mr. Bettino further expounded on the DJJ realignment, and how the Probation Department has been reaching out to external agencies to see the most effective techniques that would benefit the Probation Department and support building rapport, dignity, and respect. Lastly, Mr. Bettino stressed the importance of transparency within the Probation Department, and their efforts to be as transparent as possible with the community. In his conversations with CBOs, he has been seeking advice on how to get youth involved in the training so they can share their personal experiences and suggest effective ways of interacting with staff members. Mr. Bettino shared that the Probation Department is building a Citizens Academy, which will be conducted after hours virtually and in-person, to help community members better understand the Probation Department, how resources are used, and how to better serve their clients. The Probation Department wants to hear from the community to collaboratively build the program to better serve the community.

Aditi Sherikar, Eduardo Mundo, and Thomas Bell addressed the Probation Oversight Commission (POC).

Mr. Bettino clarified Chair Carrillo's inquiry about the context of "heavy-handed" approach. He mentioned that other counties' Probation Departments have sent their employees to adult correction officer training to satisfy the DJJ realignment requirements, but the Los Angeles County Probation Department will be taking an alternative approach that is in line with county priorities and values.

Chair Carrillo inquired about serving small DJJ populations from other counties. Mr. Bettino responded that they have not had those conversations with other counties.

Secretary Canales asked if there will be specific training geared towards interactions with

family members. She shared that the American Medical Association performed an extensive study that proved that those that have an incarcerated loved one have reduced life expectancy rates. Mr. Bettino stated that the Probation Department has conducted family engagement training for line staff on how to handle visitations better in facilities and in the field.

Ms. Julien mentioned a previous inquiry about the need to perform training for all staff, and not just sworn staff, to facilitate culture change within the Probation Department. Mr. Bettino confirmed that line staff and professional staff are usually the initial contact person for people contacting the Probation Department. The department has tried to prioritize training for professional staff in areas such as customer service, effective communication, and emotional intelligence. Many trainings have been offered to professional staff, but they are not mandated to complete the training, which is contrary to the expectations of sworn staff.

Commissioner Garcia-Leys sought clarification about the approval to move forward with trainings, and if the DOJ monitor has approved the training curriculums. Mr. Bettino confirmed that the Probation Department is proceeding with the training preparation instead of waiting on the approval of the DOJ monitor, and awaiting final approval any day. No drastic changes are expected based on the DOJ monitor's feedback, but the goal is to make the suggested changes to the training curriculum and have training begin in mid-August. Mr. Bettino agreed to share the finalized training materials with the POC and publicly.

Ms. Julien asked about the process for finding agreement among labor, leadership of the department, commissioners, and the leaders of community advocacy groups about training. Mr. Bettino responded that the POC can assist in ensuring that the training needs of the Probation Department and additional training needs identified by the POC are frequent topic of conversation to ensure that the Probation Department is not drifting away from its goals. He further mentioned that training is foundational because the Probation Department staff must be equipped and developed, including their wellness training. There has been a renewed focus on employee wellness so that staff can better serve clients of the Probation Department despite personal challenges. Mr. Bettino stated that the POC can help the Probation Department engage with the community and strengthen those partnerships, support the vision that the training department has, and keep the Probation Department accountable and on task.

Commissioner Nong asked for more details about the training center such as the vision, steps, obstacles, and funding for the training center. He stated that the training center would be available to host community events, provide collaborative training with other county departments, and integrate learning opportunities. Mr. Nichols identified the environmental need for the training center, including the working conditions of staff, to better support the professional staff's mindset when going to work. Mr. Nichols explained that the current training center is a less than ideal facility for training and has a negative impact on morale.

Commissioner Yamashiro inquired about how the Probation Department will include consultants in their structural development processes to facilitate culture change. Mr. Bettino explained that the Probation Department is considering developing a program that prepares candidates for jobs internally, with a focus on coaching and mentoring. Mr. Nichols added that Peace Officers on all levels are trained alongside line staff when completing coursework for their mandated training hours. This gives managers and

executives an opportunity to learn and grown in their profession by participating and seeing current practices, which develops their knowledge and skills in better managing the department.

Ms. Julien introduced Erica Reynoso, the new Project Director for the POC. Ms. Reynoso shared her professional background experience collaborating with partners of the Probation Department and youth in the juvenile halls and camps, developing county-wide programs, setting up the infrastructure for both the Probation Department and the Department of Mental Health, and promoting Probation Officers. She emphasized the need to have trainings embedded to help the Probation Department's culture, to encourage staff to feel supported by prioritizing their wellness and resiliency as they continue working with the youth.

Attachments: [Supporting Document](#)
[Public Comment/Correspondence](#)

4. Discussion and take appropriate action on the progress of the Probation Oversight Commission's Strategic Plan and progress towards goal accomplishments.
 - **Juvenile Facilities: Conditions & Closures** – Commissioner Saltzman reported that there were over 50 participants in the July 13, 2021 town hall with lots of community discussion on OC Spray, DJJ closure, inspections, and the DOJ settlement.
 - **Training, Personnel, Management, & Development** – Vice Chair Jackson emphasized that training is an important component of the Probation Department's work and within the POC's oversight. She shared insights from the July 15, 2021 town hall which include refining the ad hoc committees' priorities in the upcoming strategic planning meeting. Additionally, she shared that the ad hoc committee understands its strategic direction and how it aligns with the PRIT recommendations, DOJ settlement, and YJR goals. Commissioner Meredith added how the town hall was successful in soliciting feedback from the community, and the ad hoc committee looks forward to working with the community to identify best practices.
 - **Programs & Services** – Commissioner Garcia-Leys reported that the POC staff are surveying current programs offered in the juvenile facilities to share with the ad hoc committee and the community. By having this exhaustive list of programs, areas of need can be identified, and the best opportunities for effective partnerships with community-based organizations can be determined. The POC staff are also reviewing the Probation Department's grievance procedures and activities. Ongoing site visits are being conducted to inform the ad hoc committees report on observed educational programming inside the juvenile facilities.
 - **Data & Research** – Commissioner Yamashiro reported that the ad hoc committee met with Mr. Faust from the Probation Department to inquire about the number of data platforms that exist, and how to best integrate them into an outward facing dashboard. There were discussions about the type of

information that could be hosted on that dashboard. The next step is to meet with the Probation Department's data team to gain a better understanding on the Probation Department's internal capacity for the dashboard. The ad hoc committee plans to host another town hall with subject matter experts from other jurisdictions with experience building outward facing dashboards to have them explain the expectations for an implementation timeline.

Ms. Julien reminded attendees that the spreadsheets for each of the ad hoc committees were attached to the agenda. These spreadsheets highlight how the POC's goals for each of the ad hoc committees overlap with and relate to the PRIT recommendations, YJR goals, DOJ settlement requirements, and Alternatives to Incarceration metrics for the Data and Research Ad Hoc Committee.

Roxana Aguilar, Sarah Lucero, Jose Osuna, Mel Bailey, and Zoe Rawson addressed the POC.

Vice Chair Jackson added that the POC plans on hosting a series of in-facility town halls so that those youth's voices can be considered and incorporated into the POC's strategic plan as much as possible.

Attachments: [Supporting Document](#)
[Public Comment/Correspondence](#)

5. Discussion and take appropriate action on scheduling Probation Oversight Commission meetings in person after October 1, 2021.

Ms. Julien informed everyone that the Brown Act rules for public meetings are set to be reinstated on October 1, 2021 but is subject to change. In preparation for the return of in-person meetings, Ms. Julien explained that the Commissioners would have to attend meetings in a physical location, which must be open to the public and published on the agenda. She discussed the option of mirroring the Civilian Oversight Commission's choice to hold meetings once a month for four hours and hold multiple town halls and other meetings to engage with the public during the month. The location for meetings is still under consideration.

Zoe Rawson, Thomas Bell, Oscar Canales, Mel Bailey, Eduardo Mundo, and Ezekiel Nishiyama addressed the POC.

Discussion ensued from the Commissioners on their preferences for holding POC meetings once a month for four hours with the addition of one to two town halls during the month. Ms. Julien added that the POC can have hybrid meetings where members of the public can join virtually or by phone. However, with the Brown Act reinstated, Commissioners would have to join in person or at a published location that allows for public attendance and comment.

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Commission Dupuy being absent), the Los Angeles Probation Oversight Commission approved to change the frequency and duration of the POC meetings to once a month for four hours once in person meetings resume.

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[Public Comment/Correspondence](#)

III. MISCELLANEOUS

MATTERS NOT POSTED

6. Matters not posted on the agenda, to be discussed and (if requested), placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the authority, of matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take action arose subsequent to the posting of the agenda.

These were no new items proposed for a future agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

7. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Los Angeles Probation Oversight Commission (POC) on items of interest that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the POC.

You may submit public comment by e-mail to info@poc.lacounty.gov.

Written public comment or documentation must be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled meeting. Please include the Agenda Item and meeting date in your correspondence. Correspondence received shall become part of the official record.

Thomas Bell, Sonia Aldaz, Ezekiel Nishiyama, Eduardo Mundo, Milinda Kakani, Oscar Canales, Zoe Rawson, Alexia Cina, Ronaldo Villeda, Gloria Gonzalez, Jose Osuna, Nicole Brown, and Mel Bailey addressed the POC.

Vice Chair Jackson and Commissioner shared closing remarks.

Attachments: [Public Comment/Correspondence](#)

IV. ADJOURNMENT

8. Adjournment for the regular meeting of July 22, 2021.

Chairman Carrillo adjourned the meeting at 2:07 p.m.