



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



[poc.lacounty.gov](http://poc.lacounty.gov)

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2021, 12:00 P.M.**

VIDEO FILE FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING

Attachment:    [Video](#)

**I.     ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call.

**Chairman Franky Carrillo called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.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 August 26, 2021 meeting minutes.

**No members of the public commented on this item.**

**Commissioner Garcia-Leys joined the meeting at 12:06 p.m.**

**On motion of by Vice Chair Jackson, seconded by Commissioner Saltzman, and unanimously carried (Commissioner Dupuy being absent), the Los Angeles Probation Oversight Commission approved the August 26, 2021 minutes:**

**Ayes:**            **7 –**     Commissioner Sean Garcia-Leys, Commissioner Donald D. Meredith, Commissioner Dominique D. Nong, Commissioner Robert M. Saltzman, Secretary Dolores Canales, Vice Chair Esché L. Jackson, Chairman Franky Carrillo

**Absent:**         **1 –**     Commissioner Danielle M. Dupuy

**Abstained:**    **1 –**     Commissioner Cyn Yamashiro

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

**II.     DISCUSSION**

3. Discuss and take appropriate action on the progress towards accomplishing the goals of the Board of Supervisor's motion regarding maintaining the low census of youth in Los Angeles County juvenile halls and camps.
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- Los Angeles Probation Department, Chief Deputy Adam Bettino
- Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, Frank Santoro
- Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office, Cris Mercurio and Sampda Kedia

Mr. Bettino mentioned that the requested demographic information is attached to the agenda and that the Probation Department has seen a significant decrease in its population since January 2020, with efforts to only detain youth that absolutely need to be detained, or that the Probation Department is required by law to detain. He added that the department has been internally discussing consolidation plans while seeking compliance with the DOJ stipulated judgement, BSCC Title 15 regulations, and realignment to create more home-like settings for the youth promoting a care first model. Ultimately, he emphasized that a plan must be in place to safely move kids within the facilities.

Mr. Santoro shared statistics from the DA's office between January 2021 and August 2021 that showed no significant increases in filings. He added that he has recently observed an increase in the number of juvenile cases transferred from law enforcement to the District Attorney's Office. Mr. Santoro emphasized that most of the cases are being diverted, but the in-custody cases are typically those with multiple cases, open cases, or bench warrants. He anticipates cases to revert to the trends detected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Mercurio shared that data from the Public Defender's Office demonstrates a dramatic decrease in the number of detained clients since the start of the pandemic. According to Mr. Mercurio, from January 2021 to the present, the low numbers have been persistent. More recently, however, they have seen more cases being filed as detained petitions, with an average of 43 petitions per month. He mentioned that these detentions are generally for more serious crimes, making the judges more reluctant to release youth. He stated that often if the family is not available to support the child, then the child is detained in juvenile hall or referred to the Department of Children and Family Services.

Mr. Bettino explained that one of the reasons for increased numbers of youth in the Halls is due to a COVID-19 cases resulting in quarantining, which affected the Probation Department's ability to move them to different facilities. He added that another factor in high populations is the number of youth on the secure track and that the department is awaiting the disposition of another 50 kids.

Geneviève Clavreul, Edin Madrid, Varden Phan, Lea Gasser-Ordaz, Sonia Aldaz, Mainor Xuncax, Thomas Bell, Romana Barajas, Oscar Canales, and Kruti Parek address the POC.

Chair Carrillo inquired about the Youth Diversion and Development (YDD) program. Ms. Sharon Harada, Bureau Chief in the Probation Department, joined the call and mentioned that accurate information will be obtained from Ms. Felicia Cotton, Deputy Director in the Probation Department.

Commissioner Yamashiro inquired on how the Probation Department can justify operating four camps that collectively have the capacity of one camp and asked for an explanation of the associated costs. Mr. Bettino mentioned that the conversations with Chief Adolfo Gonzales are accelerating to determine concrete plans to consolidate camps and halls. Commissioner Yamashiro asked why the camps cannot be closed immediately when the Probation Department has done that before in cases of fire. Mr. Bettino clarified that JCHS,

DMH, and LACOE staff assigned to closed camps may not be transferred to the new sites so Probation needs to work with its partners and labor before consolidating camps.

Commissioner Meredith stated concern with the cost of maintaining currently closed facilities to keep them viable for future use opposed to using those funds elsewhere in the Probation Department where funding is needed.

Mr. Bettino responded to Commissioner Saltzman's inquiry about the timing for consolidation of the camps by stating that he must confer with Chief Gonzales but expects an answer within the next couple of weeks. He estimated that the entire consolidation process for the closure of one camp should take between 60 to 90 days.

Vice Chair Jackson inquired to what extent, if any, line staff will be included in the conversation on consolidation. Mr. Bettino mentioned that there needs to be conversation to determine the best strategy moving forward that does not include layoffs.

Commissioner Nong inquired about the Probation Department's efforts in maintaining a reduced population, specifically what protocols are in place to enforce these efforts. Furthermore, she sought clarification on whether the number of release recommendations instead of detentions had increased since the board motion. Mr. Bettino stated that the Probation Department gives the court recommendations, but the ultimate decision is up to the judge and that he would need to research that data. Mr. Santoro added that in misdemeanor cases, the youth is typically only detained due to other reasons such as a warrant. Mr. Mercurio agreed that cases that reach the juvenile court system usually involve complicated factors that can make relief from detention challenging. Ms. Harada added that the youth in detention recently have been ordered by the court to be in detention or there was a bench warrant, and they are not detained typically solely on misdemeanor charges. She added that when the Probation Department is given a detaining order, they do not do any intake on those. The youth is detained based on the court's decision based on information obtained that day during that hearing.

Ms. Harada explained how the Probation Department makes recommendations for detention and out of home placement for youth through a three-pronged process. The Temporary Benchmark Protocol was established in Fall 2020 and revised in Spring 2021 to mitigate the likelihood that youth with low-level offenses are detained because the bench warrant status would reflect as active in their systems. Ms. Harada described the Placement Assessment Centers and Community Detention Program that encourage community intervention. Commissioner Nong asked for these documents and policies.

Ms. Julien added that based on conversations prior to the meeting, many experts expect that trends will increase as students return to in person learning, as that is where youth often become involved with law enforcement.

Commissioner Yamashiro expressed concern about the issue of the 56-hour work week and asked if it is hindering decision-makers from shuttering facilities. He share that advocates and experts view it as unideal from a rehabilitative standpoint as it denies the youth in facilities the benefit of consistent relationships with staff. Mr. Bettino responded that the 56-hour work schedule has no bearing on the decision to close and consolidate facilities, but further deliberations and negotiations with the union are required to discuss alternatives to that work schedule.

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

4. Discuss and take appropriate action on updates on the strategic plan for the Probation Oversight Commission's strategic plan.
  - Strategic Planning Consultants Jorja Leap and Susana Bonis

**Ms. Leap shared her background and emphasized that her focus has been on developing a blueprint of action items that will lead to key indicators and action steps towards completing the priorities in the strategic operations plan. Ms. Leap provided highlights based on meetings with each of the four Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committees.**

- **Data and Research - The development of a data dashboard.**
- **Facility Conditions and Closures - Conducting inspections, elimination of OC Spray, maintaining a low census in halls and camps, and DJJ realignment.**
- **Programs and Services - Grievance procedure, improving education in the halls, and facilitating partnerships, and ensuring referrals and cooperation between the probation department and community-based organizations.**
- **Training - Culture change, and the training and promotional processes.**

**Ms. Leap further added that the strategic operations plan is also a source of public education that will aid in the POC's Oversight by identifying action steps, needed capacity, required resources, delegating responsibilities, and performance indicators. She emphasized that this strategic operations plan will be practical and align with what is happening in the Probation Department.**

**Ms. Julien expressed thanks to Ms. Leap and Ms. Bonis for their support in developing the concrete action and operational steps for the POC.**

**Vice Chair Jackson inquired about some of the anticipated challenges that the POC would encounter in achieving its strategic goals. Ms. Leap stressed that the major challenge will be resistance to change. However, she and her team will employ a consensus building approach in the development of the strategic operations plan where accomplishments are celebrated by all stakeholders.**

**Commissioner Garcia-Leys commented on the importance of the public participating in the POC's public forums. Specifically, for the strategic planning process, he emphasized that the recommendations given in the various public forums were considered and turned into a set of priorities.**

**No members of the public commented on this item.**

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

### **III. MISCELLANEOUS**

#### **MATTERS NOT POSTED**

5. 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.

*(Not on agenda)*

Ms. Julien announced that the POC will have at least one town hall in October on Tuesday, October 19, 2021 from 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. The topic will be either the DJJ site selection process or the Education Report. She reiterated that as of October 2021, the POC will change the meeting schedule to once-a-month meetings for four hours and are preparing for the need to return to in-person public meetings as required by the Brown Act. The next meeting will be October 14<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. She encouraged everyone to sign up for the POC mailing list and visit the [POC website](#) for updates and announcements.

Commissioner Saltzman suggested that the Probation Department should provide a verbal and written report on their efforts to maintain the low census, specifically about the closures of the camps and halls with the closure or consolidation of camps be placed at the September 23, 2021 POC meeting.

Ms. Julien shared that the Grievance Procedures and Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) discussions will be better served if discussed at the October 14, 2021 POC meeting.

Commissioner Yamashiro proposed that discussion around pre-trial services be added to a future agenda to elaborate on what the future of bail reform looks like for the Probation Department based on California State Legislature.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

6. 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](mailto: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, Kruti Parekh, and Mel Bailey addressed the POC.**

**Attachments:** [Public Comment/Correspondence](#)

#### **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

7. Adjournment for the regular meeting of September 9, 2021.

**Chairman Carrillo adjourned the meeting at 1:52 p.m.**