

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS JANICE HAHN
AND HOLLY MITCHELL**

AGN. NO.
March 3, 2026

Supporting Assembly Bill 1646 (Bryan): The Hug Act

It is critical that incarcerated youth receive frequent and meaningful visits from family members and loved ones throughout their incarceration. There are significant demonstrated benefits to young people receiving regular visits from supportive people in their lives, including improved behavioral outcomes, mental health outcomes, and school performance.¹ Currently, youth who are incarcerated at a Los Angeles County Probation facility can receive visits from approved family members at least once a week. However, each facility has different policies and practices related to visits, resulting in inequitable access to contact visits. Specifically, youth at Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall and Barry J. Nidorf are not currently allowed to have consistent, appropriate physical contact with their visitors, such as hugging or holding hands, while youth at other Probation facilities occasionally have access to contact visits. There is no section in the Probation Department’s manual that specifically states that youth are restricted or prohibited from embracing their family members during visitation.² However, preventing youth from hugging their family members has been the standard practice, particularly at the two

¹ <https://www.vera.org/newsroom/study-finds-that-family-visitation-is-linked-to-improved-outcomes-for-incarcerated-youth>

² http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/probation/1102328_RTSB_ManualUpdated090920.pdf

MOTION

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Probation facilities that house the most incarcerated youth.

Contact during visitation is not an unusual practice in the United States, and contact visits are standard across multiple counties in California. Other large jurisdictions such as New York City, Washington D.C., and Houston, also have contact visits as the standard practice in their facilities. Both the Los Angeles County Probation Oversight Commission (POC)³ and the California Office of Youth and Community Restoration (OYCR)⁴ have provided recommendations based on research and best practices to the Probation Department on ways to improve visitation policies, including language around allowing contact during visitation. Specifically, the OYCR states that “visitors and youth may engage in appropriate affection and contact during visitation, including a hug/kiss at the beginning and end of the visit and holding hands while seated, unless a specific, immediate, and documented safety concern exists.”⁵ The OYCR argues the contact visits should be the standard, not treated as an exception or special privilege. Research supports this argument: studies show that appropriate physical touch between youth and their loved ones leads to positive mental health outcomes and less violent behavior.⁶

The ability to have contact during visitation should not vary across each Probation facility within Los Angeles County, nor across each county within the state. Every young person in the care of Probation Departments across California should be given the right to appropriate contact with their family members and visitors. In alignment with this belief, Assemblymember Isaac Bryan introduced Assembly Bill 1646 – The Hug Act – on January 27, 2026.⁷ This bill was born from a recent visit to Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall,

³ <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/POC25-0177.pdf>

⁴ <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/POC25-0203.pdf>

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

⁷ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB1646

where Assemblymember Bryan spoke to incarcerated youth about their needs, and the young people advocated for the right to hug their visitors. Thanks to the advocacy from these youth, and the commitment from Assemblymember Bryan, The Hug Act was quickly introduced. If adopted, Assembly Bill 1646 would ensure that youth are allowed to embrace their family members during visitation by making appropriate physical contact during in-person visits a legal right for young people who are incarcerated in California's juvenile justice system.

The Los Angeles County Probation Department has acknowledged the need for reform and standardization of visitation practices across facilities, including by making contact visits a right, not a privilege. Importantly, the Department is making headway to ensure that youth at all of Los Angeles County's Probation facilities have access to contact visits, even ahead of the potential passage of The Hug Act.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Executive Office's Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations branch to advocate in support of Assembly Bill 1646 (Bryan).

I, FURTHER, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Probation Officer, or his designee, to appear at the Board of Supervisors meeting on March 3, 2026, to provide a verbal report on the status of offering contact visits for youth at all of Los Angeles County Probation facilities.

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JH:cc:ap