

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL

August 11, 2026

Centering Multidisciplinary Subject Matter Expert Leadership in Jail Closure Planning and Carceral Footprint Reduction

Men's Central Jail (MCJ) remains overpopulated, and there have been twenty-three in-custody deaths so far this year. These conditions underscore the urgency of advancing coordinated action to reduce harm, lower the jail population, and safely close MCJ. The County of Los Angeles (County) must take meaningful strides toward jail closure to support the well-being of those incarcerated at MCJ, which requires a holistic view of justice reform. The Jail Closure Implementation Team (JCIT) has identified seven critical actions necessary to reduce the overall jail population¹:

1. Expand Office of Diversion and Reentry's (ODR) Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion
2. Expand Public Defender's Holistic Early Assessment and Linkage Program
3. Expand Department of Public Health's Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Client Engagement and Navigation Services
4. Sustain and expand Justice, Care and Opportunities Department's (JCOD) Rapid Diversion Program
5. Sustain 200 JCOD's Specialized Treatment for Optimized Programming Beds
6. Expand ODR's Housing for P3s, P4s (serves severely and acutely mentally ill individuals at scale)

¹ <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/218876.pdf>

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7. Expand ODR's Housing for P2s (the largest mental health housing group in the jail).

However, even with all actions taken, the current action plan falls short of complete jail closure. In addition to these required actions, JCIT has identified additional efforts such as independent pretrial services, Department of Mental Health's Alternative Crisis Response, determining appropriate treatment capacity, and other strategies that warrant further evaluation. JCIT has acknowledged that while the seven Required Actions are based on their analysis and background work with the departments, the additional items need further assessment to understand the impact on the jail population and the various levers involved.

To move this work forward, JCIT requires stronger coordination with relevant departments and partners. This means conducting a comprehensive review of all programs that can be utilized to reduce the County's carceral footprint and address the levers that JCIT has identified. Departments must more fully engage in JCIT's efforts to inform a complete review of existing programs, County facilities, and opportunities that align with a Care First, Jails Last approach to lowering the overall jail population and urgently closing MCJ. These efforts must all work in tandem with JCIT's seven required actions.

On July 21, 2026, JCIT presented its most recent report to the Board. The report included updated budgetary adjustments for the required actions, an account of the work currently underway, the organizational needs JCIT has identified to carry that work forward, and the case for more cohesive coordination among department heads. In response, the Board emphasized that every required action and every stream of work underway must carry a clear nexus to reducing the County's carceral footprint. Closing MCJ is not an end in itself; it is the product of successfully reducing the jail population, and the work must be measured against that outcome.

While some uncertainties exist regarding the Courts and state legislation, it is critical that the departments come together to discuss possibilities that center health and care for incarcerated individuals and offer creative strategies to present a holistic and comprehensive view of justice reform in the County.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Direct the Chief Executive Officer, through the Jail Closure Implementation Team (JCIT), and the departments listed below, in accordance with JCIT's existing coordinating authority, to ensure that future jail closure planning is guided by a multidisciplinary process that draws on the expertise of subject matter experts from relevant County departments including, but not limited to, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Health Services, the Department of Public Health, and the Justice, Care and Opportunities Department, as well as legal, clinical, and operations subject matter experts, justice system partners, and community stakeholders. This process should produce recommendations for a comprehensive justice reform strategy that addresses pretrial services, facilities, alternatives to incarceration, behavioral health, housing, reentry, and other systemwide reforms and recommendations necessary to safely reduce the County's carceral footprint.
2. Direct the Chief Executive Officer, through JCIT and the departments referenced above, to report back on the progress of Directive 1, including recommendations, implementation considerations, and any barriers requiring Board direction, as part of JCIT's next scheduled presentation to the Board.

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