

**PROBATION OVERSIGHT  
COMMISSION**

**ANNUAL INSPECTIONS:**

CAMPUS VERNON KILPATRICK, BARRY J. NIDORF  
JUVENILE HALL, AND CAMP GLENN ROCKEY

**2023**

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## **SUMMARY**

The Los Angeles County Probation Oversight Commission (POC), in its mission to oversee and make recommendations to the Los Angeles County Probation Department (Probation), is completing the third round of Annual Inspections of all of Probation's detention facilities. While Probation's facility utilization has changed substantially over the course of the last year, including changes in the utilization of Campus Kilpatrick, Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall, Central Juvenile Hall, and the re-opening of Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall, the POC has found it of critical importance to provide substantial feedback to Probation and the Board of Supervisors (Board) at this juncture as well as to provide the public information of the conditions observed within the facilities.

This summary presents the inspections' findings of three facilities: Camp Glenn Rockey (Camp Rockey), Camp Vernon Kilpatrick (Campus Kilpatrick), and Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall. Camp Rockey is one of Probation's residential treatment facilities. Campus Kilpatrick and Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall have transitioned to house youth newly dispositioned to the Secure Youth Treatment Facilities and absorbed the returned population of young people from the shuttered Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities.

The POC collected a large amount of information at each inspection. The following list represents key findings that arose during the inspections of these three facilities:

- **Substance abuse prevention has not been treated as an emergency** – At Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall, security and searches have increased while illicit substance contraband found has decreased over the past year. However, rehabilitative programming, services, and treatment for young people remain severely lacking. Naloxone, a lifesaving intervention, remains locked away, and the staff of various county departments report an urgent need for collaborative training efforts to bring Probation Department, Department of Public Health, and the Department of Mental Health employees in the facility up to speed with best practices recognized by the substance use disorder specialized medical professionals and researchers.
- **Programming should address the age-appropriate needs of an older population** – On the days of the inspections at Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall and Campus Kilpatrick, more than 80% of individuals detained in these facilities were ages 18 and over. While arts programming was viewed as beneficial and regularly scheduled, the young adults in these facilities spoke openly about their need for vocational and educational programming that can put them onto a career path, or at minimum, provide options for gainful employment once they are released.
- **LA Model implementation** – Positive effects on facility culture stemming from the collaborative effort to implement the model across departments continues to have a positive effect on the young people housed at Campus Kilpatrick. Efforts to embrace the aspects of the LA Model prior to formal implementation at Camp Rockey, including approaching work with young people in an individualized and trauma-responsive way, contributed to positive reports from youth in the way they saw themselves, staff, and Probation.
- **Underutilization of Campus Kilpatrick** – Campus Kilpatrick provides one of the most rehabilitative environments in a locked facility in the County and could house up to 48 young people. Yet, the population is capped at 20 at any given time, while young people desperate to

get there languish at the Barry J. Nidorf Secure Youth Treatment Facility, despite having met the required benchmarks for transfer.

The inspections described within this report are a testament to the power of the intentional creation of facility culture. Partnerships play a key role in each, highlighting positive environments that can be created when relationships and understanding are centered at every level of an organization and how disorganization, devalued, and ruptured partnerships detract from the County's goal of safety and well-being of the human beings inside of these institutions.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Los Angeles County Probation Oversight Commission (POC) was established in 2021 as a civilian-led oversight commission focused on systemic reform of the Probation Department. The POC advises the Los Angeles County Probation Department (Probation) and the Board of Supervisors (Board) about progress and challenges within Probation.

The POC has some authority and responsibilities directly related to juvenile institutions. Specifically, the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Sections 209 and 240, and the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 15, Section 1313, authorizes and requires the POC to conduct annual inspections of the buildings, grounds, and services delivered to the young people detained in each of the County's juvenile facilities on an annual basis. The POC submits these annual reports to the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), a statutory agency that inspects for compliance of standards of detention facilities in California, by December 31 each year. This report marks the third round of annual inspections conducted by this body.

## **METHODS**

At the beginning of the 2023 Annual Inspection cycle, Probation ran eight juvenile facilities: two juvenile detention centers ("juvenile halls") and six juvenile camps, including the Dorothy Kirby Center (DKC) in Commerce, CA. On May 23, 2023, the BSCC found both Central Juvenile Hall and Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall "unsuitable for the confinement of minors" due to a lack of compliance in areas of facility functioning such as staffing, room confinement, educational programs, and other programs, recreation, and exercise<sup>1</sup>. Probation was afforded a 60-day period to move all pre-dispositioned youth out of these two facilities. In response, the Probation Department formulated a plan to re-open Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall which was closed in 2019. On July 19, 2023, Probation reported in a memo to the Board that all youth pending disposition had been moved from both Central Juvenile Hall and Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall into Los Padrinos. Probation indicated that Central Juvenile Hall would be used only as a holding facility for medical appointments. Because the BSCC did not have jurisdiction to make unsuitability findings at a Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF), the youth dispositioned to SYTF were able to remain at Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall.

Since changes were occurring throughout the inspections cycle, the POC reconfigured our inspections plans, which finalized as follows:

- Two to four POC Commissioners conducted each facility inspection and two or more POC staff members provided support. Dates for the inspections were coordinated with Probation leadership and leaders from each facility were aware in advance of the inspection.

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<sup>1</sup> May-24-2023-Notice-of-Unsuitability-Los-Angeles-County-Probation-FINAL.pdf (ca.gov)

- The BSCC does not have a required template for the inspection report. The POC developed a detailed, 12-page facility inspection template that was updated this year and reviewed by Probation and the BSCC. Within that template, areas of interest are highlighted to ensure a thorough inspection of both physical structure and environment, but also highlights the need to examine practices and treatment of youth at the facility level. Prior to each inspection, the template was shared with Probation leadership at each facility, respectively. Each formal inspection took between 4–8 hours to complete.
- The first facilities inspected were the Dorothy F. Kirby Center and Camp Scott which continue to be located together on a single campus in Commerce. Next, a pre-inspection was conducted of Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall prior to re-opening. All camps were inspected: Camp Afflerbaugh, Camp Paige, Camp Rockey, and Campus Kilpatrick. The POC decided to conduct a limited inspection of Central Medical Hub, located in the facility formerly known as Central Juvenile Hall. Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall was inspected since youth dispositioned to SYTF continue to be housed there.

The information below depicts data gathered directly from each facility inspection. It should be noted that the data is a “snapshot” captured during the day of the inspection. The data collected about the “facility’s rated capacity,” “population” and “staffing” was provided to the POC staff directly by the facility’s Director, Administrative Director (AD), or an appointed individual; each of these numbers was directly reported in this report. The only two numbers which required calculation in this report were the “Staff to Youth Ratio” and the “Number of Graduates.” Staff to Youth ratio is calculated by dividing the number of total active staff by the total youth population. For clarification, these ratios do not reflect the actual staff to youth ratios per shift, but rather a broad staff to youth ratio for each facility.

The findings stated in this report are a compilation of POC Commissioner and staff observations made while conducting the inspections.

## **FINDINGS**

### **August 2023**

*Inspection #5 – Campus Kilpatrick (CVK): 427 Encinal Canyon Rd, Malibu, CA 90265*

*Facility Rated Capacity: 48*

<b>Youth Population<sup>2</sup> (Physical) – Co-Ed.</b>	<b>Youth at Court/Medical</b>	<b>Total Staff (Payroll)</b>	<b>Total Active Staff (DPO’s and GSN’s)</b>	<b>Staff to Youth Ratio (Number of Staff at time of Inspection / Youth Pop.) rounded to whole number</b>	<b>Line staff on Duty at time of inspection</b>	<b>Total Credentialed Teachers (LACOE)</b>	<b>Number of High School Students</b>	<b>Number of High School Graduates</b>
17	0	50	50	1:2	15	4	4	13

<sup>2</sup> Physical youth population and High School Student/Graduate numbers may be discrepant due to differences in Probation/LACOE data gathering and reporting processes.

## Access to Medical and Mental Health Services

Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS)	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: <b>6:30 AM –10:30 PM</b>
Department of Mental Health (DMH)	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: <b>8:00 AM – 8:30 PM</b> (Staff Shifts: 10-hour days, Sun – Wed or Wed – Sat.) <b>plus 24-hour access to on-call DMH psychiatrist</b>

### **Facility and Physical Environment**

Upon entering Campus Kilpatrick, a POC Commissioner and staff passed through a metal detector and were asked by security if we were aware that cell phones were not allowed in the facility. POC staff and Commissioners were asked for identification and observed the appropriate sign-in procedure as instructed by reception staff. The campus area is large and includes a well-maintained grassy field. All areas had safe and clear walkways. All buildings looked new and in good repair with no broken windows nor significant graffiti. Near the field, equipment was observed including multiple exercise machines and a volleyball court with a net. There is also a working pool at the facility.

In the first cottage visited, the living unit is clearly lived in which looks comfortable in comparison to living areas in other facilities. One young person was laying stretched out across the couch while watching television, while two youth played video games on a different television. The sleeping area also had more of the comforts of home, there were personal bed sheets and blankets on the beds. There were birthday presents on one youth’s bed who was celebrating a birthday and being released to a step-down facility on that day. There were three beds observed in the designated area of the cottage. There were two other youth working on college assignments. A POC commissioner observed that it was challenging for youth to keep focus on those assignments given the amount of noise coming from the various televisions and conversations happening at that time. There were two dogs observed in the outside patio area for the cottage and youth reported that they enjoyed having the dogs with them and training them through the Marley’s Mutts program. There were cameras observed in the units visited.

### **Staffing**

Staffing perspectives differed during the inspection. Some individuals described the facility as short-staffed while others did not. Those that believed the facility was short staffed said that the issue was sufficiently dealt with by utilizing overtime. Throughout the day staff repeatedly shared that the collaboration that took place between county departments to support youth contributed to their feeling of sufficient staffing at the facility. Examples of this were given throughout the day describing the way that LACOE and DMH staff were consistently available, present in the living cottages, and participated in de-escalation efforts alongside Probation.

### **Room Confinement/Hope Center Use**

Given the open dorm setting of the cottages at Campus Kilpatrick, youth reported no instances of room confinement. There is no identified Hope Center at the facility. Most county employees at the facility (including Probation, DMH, and LACOE) have had previous training in the LA Model which emphasizes the need for staff members to work collaboratively with young people to de-escalate tensions and regulate emotions when needed.

## **Grievances**

POC commissioner and staff inquired about young people's perceptions of the grievance process, and it was reported that grievances are rarely filed because when there are disagreements between young people and staff, they resolve it through direct communication and discussions. There were 10 grievances filed for the year that were reviewed. None of the grievances indicated concerning conduct on behalf of any facility staff. It was notable that multiple grievances written by young people were expressly advocating for various Probation staff to not be reassigned to juvenile hall facilities, making it clear that youth were concerned about losing positive relationships and rapport that was established with those staff. All the grievances appeared to be addressed.

## **Discipline and Positive Behavior Reinforcement**

LACOE uses a model called Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS), which is a point-based reward system meant to promote students' academic and social behavior outcomes. Probation also uses the Behavior Modification Program (BMP), which is also point system where youth can accumulate points throughout the day for a reward, in addition, Probation also has "on the spot recognition" program from the LA Model's past implementation at Campus Kilpatrick.

Throughout the inspection, interviews with young people indicated that the main difference in discipline is that in this facility, compared to any others they had been dispositioned to and detained within in the past, Probation staff related and communicated with youth in a different and more positive way. It was repeatedly shared that staff at Campus Kilpatrick took time to talk through problems and showed more understanding of the way young people are feeling. Some young people expressed positive feelings around earning some trust with staff and feeling that they meet the staff's behavior expectations. Other young people reported that respect was reflected in the staff's willingness to allow them the agency to select between certain activities. It was also shared that the partnership between DMH and Probation via Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) groups strengthened each cottage's ability to resolve conflicts internally, promoting prosocial relationships between all.

## **School**

At school, there were three full-time teachers for the high school students. There was one education services coordinator with an aid available to support high school graduates with their online college courses. At the time of the inspection there was one substitute in the high school, and it was reported that the other substitute teachers left for Los Padrinos to provide services. At the inspection there were three youth in the high school classroom, and four "adult learners." A classroom of high school students was observed, and video media was being used. Youth Bill of Rights posters and flyers were posted in the classroom at eye level. There were zero suspensions on the day of the inspection, and it was shared that they don't suspend youth at this facility, and there is a process called "restructuring" that happens instead. In the restructuring process, the principal and Supervising Deputy Probation Officer (SDPO) meet with the student to discuss the current experience and needs of the young person, and the issue is often resolved by the student taking a 15-minute break from class. All the high school graduates were enrolled in college. It was notable that all LACOE staff went through DBT training with Probation two years ago during a push for LA Model implementation, and teachers still attend the DBT groups. LACOE has a woodworking room that is used on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It was commented that there is a need to hire a full-time teacher for the room so that the youth could have daily access to the machinery. A metal detector was observed in the woodworking room to ensure safety and security for tools to remain on the premises. Young people appeared to be invested in the schoolwork and two of the college students were observed choosing to actively work on college course materials while others watched television and played video games.

### **Kitchen and Food**

The kitchen at Campus Kilpatrick was clean and looked like it had state of the art equipment to prepare the food needed. It was shared by kitchen staff that they recognize that some of the meals served are more popular than others, and they are required to prepare food according to the monthly menus that are provided by the nutritionist. Commissioner H expressed concern about the pre-set menu due to repetition of certain items on the menu that young people opt to not eat. Young people interviewed expressed a desire for food to be better in the following ways: more food options that reflect the flavors and seasonings young people ate at home, dishes from youth's cultures of origin, and less repetition of menu items. Overall, young people said they got enough to eat, and they had access to ample snacks when they did not eat the cafeteria meal provided. One young person reflected that his vegan diet was well accommodated at the facility.

### **Access to Medical and Mental Health Care**

Young people reported that they had substantial access to their assigned mental health clinician. It was reported and observed that DMH clinicians were spending time on the units periodically throughout the day, not only seeking participation from young people in individual services but being a supportive presence in the cottage. It was observed that DMH clinicians had positive rapport with the young people, and distinctions between clients or non-clients were indistinguishable due to the natural interactions. The young people appeared completely at ease and were joking and laughing with a clinician about the day and the future. Young people reported that they had access to medical care as needed with no issues.

### **Programs and Services**

The programs and services calendar for Campus Kilpatrick offered multiple options for participation in activities available to all young people daily. During the inspection, credible messengers and community-based organizations were observed on site, facilitating different activities. One credible messenger was seen giving one youth a haircut while talking to another young person. A few young people had positive things to say about the consistency of the credible messengers. In the other cottage, Jail Guitar Doors was conducting programming. The facilitators worked one-on-one with the youth who observed writing and recording their own music. The young people appeared highly engaged and enjoying themselves. Much of the programming available appeared focused on the arts. While at least two of the young people interviewed reported satisfaction with the programming, feedback from others indicated dissatisfaction based upon their age-appropriate desire for more vocational and higher education opportunities. Various youth cited concerns about eventually being released from the facility with no job training, no experience navigating a university setting, and no prospects for employment. One young person said, “[a]rts and crafts might be fine at Barry J., but we’re not little kids over here.” Staff from county departments echoed similar concerns.

### **Agency Relationships**

Relationships between Probation and other county co-located partners were described as positive in a way that was remarkably different than what was observed and recounted at other facilities. Multiple staff described regular experiences with partnership in their daily work with young people which were elaborated upon more substantially than in other Probation facilities and by a variety of individuals from different county departments. Different county employees described role parity and expressed less hesitation to provide intervention alongside Probation than at other facilities where they had previously worked, identifying an understanding that every county employee is a professional with a unique skill set and role who is not merely “a guest in Probation’s house” which was reported to be a common adage at the other facilities. Most attributed the positive working relationships, openness,



communication, and aligned professional values to the attempts years ago to install the LA Model at the facility. It was expressed that over the years, some of the activities aimed at strengthening partnerships dropped off and with that comes a decrease in the fidelity to the level of partnership once achieved, which is to be expected since it was reported that no ongoing trainings nor outcome measurements have been put into place.

### August 2023

Inspection #6- Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall-Secure Youth Track Facility: 16350 Filbert St., Sylmar, CA 91342

Facility Rated Capacity: 584<sup>3</sup>

Youth Population (Physical) – Co-Ed.	Youth at Court/ Medical	Total Staff (Payroll)	Total Active Staff (DSO's and GSN's)	Staff to Youth Ratio (Number of Staff at time of Inspection / Youth Pop.) rounded to whole number	Line staff on Duty at time of inspection	Total Credentialed Teachers (LACOE)	Number of High School Students	Number of High School Graduates
51	2*	196	105	2:3	37	7	25	26

\*In court

### Access to Medical and Mental Health Services

<b>Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS)</b>	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: 24-hour coverage: 3 shifts (6:00am-2:30pm, 2:00pm-10:00pm, 10:00pm-6:30am)
<b>Department of Mental Health (DMH)</b>	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: 7:00am-7:00pm <b>plus 24-hour access to on-call DMH psychiatrist</b>

### Facility and Physical Environment

Entry into Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall (BJNJH) included multiple security steps to ensure that all visitors were contraband free. There was significant signage at the entrance to provide an understanding of what items and dress are not allowed in the facility. Probation officers located outside of the entry were there to ensure that the clear bag policy was followed, and visitors were asked to return any cell phones to their car before entering the facility. They asked for all belongings to be placed in bins which were looked through and wanded with a metal detector before passing those same items through an x-ray while individuals walked through a metal detector. One commissioner that joined the inspection during a shift exchange period noted that a bag was overlooked and not passed through the x-ray machine during this busy time at the entry/exit point. Commissioners and staff were all asked for appropriate identification prior to entry.

Upon entry beyond the administrative building, the facility looks like a high security carceral setting with the campus split into various areas by a series of chain link fences. The campus is sprawling, and large,

<sup>3</sup> During the inspection, construction was underway to transform a number of living units into dedicated programming spaces, which may cause a decreased Facility Rated Capacity.



well-maintained grassy lawns fill the space between walkways leading to the living units. The two main living areas have colloquial names that people use to refer to them: specifically “The Hill” and “The Compound.” On the date of inspection, BJNJH housed only young people dispositioned to the Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF). All youth awaiting disposition were moved to Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall in July 2023, approximately six weeks before the POC inspection. Due to that move all the units on “The Hill” lay vacant. With the exception of a single identified freestanding “step down” unit located near the school, all young people were housed within “The Compound.” One unit within “The Compound” remained closed since the overdose death that occurred in May 2023.

Within the locked staff office of each living unit, signs were observed indicating that Naloxone was available for staff to administer. Naloxone, also known as Narcan, is a potentially life-saving intervention when used to treat a known or suspected opioid overdose in an adult or child. While some staff had the spray on them ready for use, keeping Naloxone in a locked office potentially limits access and increases response time in an emergency. POC Commissioners and staff observed grievance boxes, Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) posters, and “Know your Rights” posters in all living units.

The greatly reduced population after the move allowed the BJNJH leadership team some flexibility in the living units no longer occupied to plan for facility programming goals. Plans were reported to have a unit designated for cooking, one for a computer lab, one as a substance use disorder treatment unit, and the rest were to be determined. Some of the units were undergoing construction during the inspection. Construction timelines were not known for expected completion of those projects and facility leadership acknowledged an expectation of predictable delays due to bureaucratic county processes.

### **Staffing**

Staff reported that since the move of pre-disposition youth to Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall, the staffing shortage that previously led to frequent holdovers (i.e. the extension of an eight-hour shift to 16, 24, or more hours) was alleviated at BJNJH. Staff interviewed at the facility reported that they chose to stay to work with youth dispositioned to SYTF for various reasons, including a desire to work with the population, geographic preference, or desire to work with the newly appointed SYTF leadership team. Throughout the inspection at all units, classrooms, and spaces visited, POC Commissioners and staff observed a shift in the way leadership were approached by young people and staff that was indicative of a changing facility culture from the previous year’s inspection. Young people were observed approaching leadership to ask a myriad of questions, already clearly knowing the leadership team, and showing signs of having an established positive rapport and mutual respect. The same was observed with Probation Officers on duty. These observations were a remarkable change that indicate the work that has gone into the leadership team making themselves available, being transparent, and paying attention to improving facility culture moving forward.

Various young people made observations to POC Commissioners and staff about the diversity of Probation staff behaviors at the facility. One young adult explained that they felt that the Probation staff at Unit T “showed them love” and they did not feel judged, which was different from the compound. The young adult then explained that in that unit, disagreements with Probation staff do not escalate to arguments because staff communicate with them, not argue. It was also shared that the staff at Unit T were “structured and get us prepared for Kilpatrick.” Another young adult in the unit stated that they felt that some of the Probation staff “don’t do anything for us... and are aggressive when they search us, but my probation officer is good.”

### **Room Confinement/Hope Center Use**

At the time of the inspection, it was reported that the unit previously identified as a Hope Center was repurposed and another unit was being used as a short-term cool-down space, with no option for longer-term housing in the space. No young people on any unit were observed in room confinement.

### **Grievances**

POC Commissioners and staff met with the grievance officer who stated that the young people usually write their grievances on paper, and he inputs them on the Grievance Management System (GMS) since the software is currently unavailable on the LACOE computers or on iPads in the units. The grievance officer shared that after receiving a grievance, he meets with each young person to discuss their grievance and spends additional time teaching them how to fill out a grievance form. POC Commissioners reviewed some grievances and noted that the majority were about maintenance issues. Commissioner B noted that the grievance officer had a very detailed process for processing grievances including for anonymous grievances. One commissioner noticed a grievance from July 6, 2023, where the young person was concerned about the air conditioning in unit Z, the grievance then noted that it was resolved on July 9, 2023. Yet, when the commissioner visited that unit, there was no air conditioning nor fans, and the unit was uncomfortably hot. This concern was shared with facility leadership, and it was shared that Management Services Bureau (MSB), and Internal Services Department (ISD) were already notified of the issues and would address the unreliable facility temperature control.

### **Discipline and Positive Behavior Reinforcement**

Multiple young people throughout the day reported that they are supposed to be on a Behavior Management Program (BMP) in which they earn points which they can exchange for goods, but the BMP “Al Jones” store was closed down. Young people expressed some frustration over this, and leadership reported that the issue was being addressed and the store would be re-opened in the coming months. A young adult shared that while in the compound, he was previously placed on a 40-day contract to be moved to the identified step-down units outside of the compound, which meant that they could not have any write-ups or bad behavior for 40 days. No contracts or other documents were observed posted within the compound units clarifying these steps to the full population. Within the step-down units, Commissioner C saw that there was posted signage about the expected criteria to be further rewarded by youth ultimately being sent to Campus Kilpatrick (Kilpatrick). The criteria poster informed the young people of the requirements for placement at Kilpatrick which included: no write ups for 30-days, school attendance, participation in programming and in mental health services, meet basic expectations and guidelines, no gang talk, no Serious Incident Reports (SIRs) for 30-days, no contraband for 30-days, mentor others more recently dispositioned to SYTF, follow SYTF values of safety, respect, dignity, cooperation, commitment, family, gratitude, and achievement, and a letter from the young person explaining why they feel they are ready to go to Kilpatrick. Multiple young people throughout the day expressed concerns that they had been promised to be moved to Kilpatrick by various Probation employees and expressed disappointment and diminished hope about the future.

### **School**

Two classrooms were observed and numerous high school graduates enrolled in college courses were interviewed throughout the day. Young people reported that classes from Mission College were “good.” There were questions about the consistency and frequency of the scheduling of the college classes, since young people reported that they were not always sure of when they were supposed to be attending a class or not. Since the classes are facilitated by having access to a laptop, youth may fall behind in their enrolled courses if others don’t make access possible.

Commissioners observed three young men in one class who informed the Commissioners that they were the LACOE ambassadors because of their good work. The classroom displayed their school projects, and they informed us they had created a presentation of their work which they showed the Commissioners with pride.

### **Kitchen and Food**

While in Unit T, one commissioner observed mid-morning that breakfast had been delivered to the units, however, all the food remained on the table and the only items eaten were the fruits. Several young adults were asked about the food during the day and there was unanimous report that the “food was not good.” The young people shared that they felt that the food was not tasty nor seemed cooked all way. Kitchen staff were interviewed and asked about the young peoples’ negative sentiment towards the food, and they explained that they took these feelings very seriously and were organizing to meet with the youth council to discuss the food. The kitchen manager shared his perceptions about the difficulty to mass produce meals that everyone will be pleased with and shared information about the food supplier, Sysco, which supplies food to restaurants and many facilities. The kitchen leadership served POC the dinner that the young people would be served later, however they noted that the young peoples’ food would differ from what the POC was given as they had to follow nutritional guidelines set by the nutritionist. In addition, kitchen leadership stated that after another meeting with the youth council, they would then meet with the nutritionist to discuss other food options that would appease the young people. The young people asked for assistance with reinstating the “commissary” or BMP store which had closed before the inspection.

### **Programs and Services**

Multiple programs were observed over the course of the day, though Commissioners and staff also noted on various occasions throughout the inspection that high school graduates were sitting in the units watching television or videos with little else to do. Programming observed included Tia Chucha’s (art), Paws 4 Life, and credible messengers. Some young people and staff had questions about the credible messengers and what they were meant to be doing while visiting a unit. Some young people said that the credible messengers were present on the unit, but that they didn’t know when to expect them or what to expect from them. BJNH leadership shared that they also had questions but were provided binders of information and had increased verbal communication with the Department of Youth Development when clarification was needed.

When asked about programming, one young adult in the step-down unit explained that although there was more programming there than in the compound, even the programming at Unit T was not enough. The young adult stated that they would like more programming related to music, financial empowerment, and sports. In addition, they shared that they would like for Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC) credible messengers to share more information about how they became successful. Various young people throughout the day discussed needing programs that prepare them for work. Youth expressed interest in learning trades and having hands on programming to learn barber work and hair cutting, construction skills, forklift driving, plumbing, and electrical systems.

One notably underrepresented program/service within the calendar was substance use disorder treatment. It was reported that individual services were being provided, but there were no SUD or harm reduction groups (including any 12-step programs) available, both observed for the day and on the month’s calendar.

### **Agency Relationships**

Individuals from all county departments reported that partnerships at BJNH needed to be strengthened and this was also an observation made by multiple young people in the facility. It was reported that one of the lingering ramifications of the overdose death that occurred in May 2023 at the facility is that staff of some departments reportedly continue to blame one another and harbor resentment for the young man's loss of life. Individuals interviewed throughout the day reported varied levels of continued trauma ranging from those that self-identified as having Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder to those who visibly trembled while saying few words at all about the incident. JCHS staff shared with Commissioner C that the collaborative work amongst the agencies in the facility is happening and that there is a weekly interagency meeting on Thursdays where all agencies including DYD, JCHS, DMH, Probation, LACOE, and Mission College meet via Teams. Staff of multiple departments shared that although collaboration was better under the new SYTF leadership team than in the past, there still needs to be clear defining of roles by all agencies, particularly to know who is responsible for what during emergencies. A recommendation was made by JCHS staff to have collaborative training for emergencies to support partnership in work environment. Probation employees in various roles said that they would like to see DMH more involved in programming overall, to commit to providing more services and support on the units, and to engage in basic communication more often including sharing data on how many clinicians are assigned to the facility and which offices they occupy.

There was also observed need to strengthen partnership and understanding of the work that county contracted agencies provide in the facility. Providers reported ongoing inhospitable treatment by some Probation staff at the facility, including denigration of the legitimacy of the substance abuse services, denial of meeting space on units when requested, and Probation staff standing within earshot of confidential discussions. It was observed that one provider was not provided appropriate space to conduct individual substance abuse services which were happening in the dayroom while multiple televisions blared. It was reported that lack of appropriate space prevented substance abuse prevention groups from being conducted in the facility.

### **Oleoresin Capsicum Spray**

The use of Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) spray, also known as pepper spray, remained an optional use of force at Barry J. Nidorf. Neither leadership nor line staff reported an active plan to eliminate the use of OC spray in the facility despite a previous commitment by the Probation Department to have OC spray phased out of all its facilities by January 31, 2024. While many staff reported having OC spray on their person, it was noted that in the preceding weeks and up to the day of the inspection, there were zero reported OC deployments in the facility. Young people confirmed that OC was rarely used now compared to three or more months ago. Various staff interviewed reported that numerous aspects of their work were positively affected after the movement of the pre-disposition youth to Los Padrinos, including the sharing that staff were given the option to remain at Barry J. Nidorf to work with young people dispositioned to SYTF. They reported that choice likely resulted in stabilized staffing levels, more consistency in unit staffing, and a positive impact of established rapport with youth, from leadership to line staff. Staff reported that this domino effect likely caused the decrease in use of the highest-level use of force. Probation staff opinions about OC spray varied. Many staff endorsed needing spray though some of them had never had it, and some staff reported voluntarily surrendering their spray previously since they had not used it in years.

**August 2023**

Inspection #7 – Camp Glenn Rockey (CGR): 1900 Sycamore Canyon Rd, San Dimas CA 91773

Facility Rated Capacity: 125

Youth Population (Physical) – Co-Ed.	Youth at Court/ Medical	Total Staff (Payroll)	Total Active Staff (DSO’s and GSN’s)	Staff to Youth Ratio (Number of Staff at time of Inspection / Youth Pop.) <small>rounded to whole number</small>	Line staff on Duty at time of inspection	Total Credentialed Teachers (LACOE)	Number of High School Students	Number of High School Graduates
30*	0	79	66	2:3	18	0	29	1

\*2 youth from Camp Paige housed at HOPE Center included

**Access to Medical and Mental Health Services**

<b>Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS)</b>	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: <b>7:00 AM – 8:00 PM</b> ((3) 8-hour shifts; 24-hour coverage)
<b>Department of Mental Health (DMH)</b>	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: <b>7:30 AM – 8:30 PM</b> (Staff Shifts: 10-hour days, Sun – Wed or Wed – Sat.) <b>plus 24-hour access to on-call DMH psychiatrist</b>

**Facility and Physical Environment**

The entrance to Camp Glenn Rockey (Camp Rockey) included a single door with a security guard who checked identification badges, asked about all prohibited items, checked for clear bag use, and then used a metal detector wand on all visitor prior to entry. The facility has a well-maintained large grassy area at its center and buildings including youth living quarters, school, cafeteria, gym, and staff sleeping quarters. All buildings, rooms, kitchen, and bathrooms appeared simultaneously clean, old, and dated. There were privacy curtains observed in the showers.

In the living unit the teen boys were divided into four groups (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, and Delta) which were divided based on their behavior points from the Behavior Management Program (BMP). The teens appeared to be relaxed and enjoying their time by either socializing or exercising. Commissioner B noticed inconsistent gender announcements when staff entered the living units. Commissioners noticed grievance boxes, youth bill of rights posters, contact information for the ombudsman, and PREA signs throughout housing of the facility which were all at an appropriate eye level for youth access. PREA signs and grievance boxes were notably missing from some spaces at the school.

**Staffing**

Staff were universally proud of Camp Rockey's orderliness and working relationships with youth, colleagues, and leadership at the facility. Many attributed that to the staff's experience, their ability to work together to provide a consistent program, and the implementation of their BMP. POC staff and Commissioners observed staff and interviewed youth, finding evidence that the culture of the facility intentionally uplifted and encouraged youth while setting a universal expectation for accountability. It was clear that the intention to implement this facility culture was spearheaded by the facility's Director,

who in the months prior proactively sent supervisors to LA Model training. Throughout the inspection, youth and staff stated that they felt like there was thoughtful consideration to the individual needs of youth and staff in the facility. Staff also expressed that the positive culture in the facility insulated them from the problems facing other facilities including staffing shortages, disorder and violence, and contraband.

Staff did complain that at times there were not enough staff to oversee several programs at once but indicated that the facility was never too short-staffed to keep the camp safe and orderly.

During interviews with young people at Camp Rockey, they specifically mentioned several staff members deserving of recognition for their work, mentorship, and genuine care toward them. Youth throughout the day explained that they felt that they were being guided to succeed with motivation and without judgment. Impactful statements included sentiments that staff at Camp Rockey “look out for us”, “make us feel like normal people again, like we’re not so bad”, and endorsed having made strong bonds with many Probation officers via statements such as, “Beltran and Alvarado are the best staff.” Comparison to other facilities was often made that Camp Rockey was “better than” the other Probation facilities youth had previously been to, and numerous youth stated that they enjoyed their experience at Rockey because of the relationships with the staff. One young man shared that because of the staff at Camp Rockey he wanted to “Go to college and be a DPO.” One group of youth stated that a few staff “make stuff harder” because they gave out more write ups.

Multiple staff told Commissioners that they wished Probation leadership from headquarters would come to Camp Rockey to see how the facility program runs and to understand why their methods work for the youth and employees. Many Rockey staff conveyed a sense of pride about the approach and culture of the facility that they hoped could be used as a model.

### **Room Confinement/Hope Center Use**

There were two youth housed in the HOPE Center on the inspection day. It was reported that both were from Camp Paige, and not dispositioned to Camp Rockey. Both youth were talking and playing video games throughout the day and spoke to the POC Commissioners and staff about their circumstances. One had been in the HOPE Center for nearly 10 weeks on a Specialized Supervision Plan (SSP). He was a high school graduate who was not enrolled in any college classes. Commissioners interviewed the other young person, who had been in the HOPE Center for about a week. He felt like he was being cared for in the Hope Center and preferred to be away from all the other youth and the dormitory environment. He had a one-on-one staff with him and said he did not feel lonely there. There was reportedly a third youth there that morning, but he had already left.

Speaking with staff in the Hope Center and around the facility, all agreed that the Hope Center was regularly overutilized and misused by Camp Paige, wherein youth were sent to Camp Rockey, but was a struggle to get Camp Paige to agree to plan or make appropriate accommodations to safely return the youth to Camp Paige. The main concern for the lengthy stays for youth in the Camp Rockey HOPE Center was that there was reportedly no rehabilitative programming for the HOPE Center, and youth reported that their daily routine consisted of working out for one to two hours daily and then filling the remainder of the day with screen time.

Camp Rockey staff were proud that they used the HOPE Center solely for a "cool down" space for youth dispositioned to the camp. There were sleeping rooms with no doors that youth could enter or leave the room at will during a "cool down", though youth could not leave the Hope Center entirely. Many staff



discussed their understanding of listening to young people, modeling appropriate behavior, and coaching different coping skills to prevent fights and manage tensions so that housing in the HOPE Center was not needed.

### **Grievances**

Commissioners reviewed the grievances for the year and found that they were addressed in a timely way and resolved appropriately. One commissioner did note that there was a grievance from a youth in the HOPE Center, who was originally from Camp Paige, that was concerning because the youth stated that he was jumped at the other camp, and while staff were separating the youth, suffered an injury to his eye which caused it to turn purple and now could not see out of it. The Director reported that the grievance should have been addressed through the originating camp since the youth was dispositioned to that site and the event occurred there. She stated that she would follow up to attach documentation of how the grievance was resolved. The Director also stated that she would refer the youth to JCHS for another medical evaluation of his eye. Another notable grievance reviewed was a young person's complaint of staff behavior toward them, which included documentation in which other Probation staff corroborated the youth's experience. Supervisor-led counseling of the staff member took place to support the staff's knowledge and practice of different interventions that could be used in the future. Practical application of grievances to implement a learning environment was reported as a common and expected practice at Camp Rockey.

### **Discipline and Positive Behavior Reinforcement**

LACOE uses a model called Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS), which is a point-based reward system meant to promote students' academic and social behavior outcomes. Probation also uses the Behavior Modification Program (BMP), which is a point system where youth can accumulate points throughout the day for rewards that encourage youth to follow rules during their time at Camp Rockey. More than these point systems, what appeared to affect youth behavior is the overall culture of the facility. One youth reported, "It's only as bad as you make it, and that staff does try to motivate and encourage you." Another explained that he felt good about his progress, and he gave much credit to the Probation staff as he felt that "they give us more freedom, they trust us to walk wherever we're needed without being escorted." Other youth talked about feeling heard, feeling respect from staff, wanting to meet and exceed expectations, feeling like staff were good role models, did not feel judged, and felt cared for by Camp Rockey staff. While observing the school, a Probation Officer talked publicly to Commissioners about how one of the students had really transformed his academic performance. POC Commissioners and staff observed a level of respect shown to young people that resulted in strong rapport, leading many youth to describe a newfound interest in lifestyle change. LACOE staff noted that suspension rates had decreased over the past 4 years. When classroom disruptions occur, Probation staff only intervene if there were major behavioral concerns. Sometimes youth are offered the option to take a brief break or go to the Hope Center to cool off.

### **School**

POC Commissioners and staff received a lengthy presentation by the school administrators, counselors, and a special education teacher on LACOE's program at Camp Rockey. It was apparent from the presentation that some of the recommendations made within the POC's Educational Report<sup>4</sup> were implemented and that the LACOE program there improved significantly from previous visits. LACOE was teaching a unit that was created, at least in part, by people working in the Rockey school, and is culturally relevant. The school has integrated the facility-wide BMP into the classroom management.

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<sup>4</sup> [Los Angeles County Probation Oversight Commission: Education Report March 14, 2022 \(lacounty.gov\)](https://www.lacounty.gov/education/education-report-march-14-2022)



There was also reassignment of some teachers, including the assignment of a well-liked and motivational former Kilpatrick math teacher to Camp Rockey. Students were emphatic that their math classes with the newly assigned full-time teacher were among the best experiences with schooling they ever had, though they were less enthusiastic about some of the other teachers. Probation staff universally agreed that LACOE's program at Camp Rockey was much improved over the past year. All classes were being taught that day by substitute teachers due to the timing of the inspection falling during a time when LACOE teachers are required to take vacation days. As a result, it was impossible for Commissioners to adequately assess typical teacher quality. POC Commissioners were told there are plans to try to stagger teachers' time off in the future. It was impressive to Commissioners that site administrators had prepared a curriculum package for the substitute teachers to make sure that instruction continued even in regular teachers' absence.

Discussions about restorative justice led to concerns. POC Commissioners were told that restorative justice circles took place to re-integrate students after a suspension. However, the discussion was focused on young people apologizing for their behavior and did not include any recognition that teachers' accountability or apology may be called for within the process. The idea that teachers may be a source of conflict and accounting for teachers' behavior should be part of restorative justice was not integrated in any way. Commissioners D and E reviewed documentation of warnings and suspensions which revealed significant disparities in the number of warnings and suspensions imposed by different teachers. The numbers and actions differed from verbal accounts of preventing suspensions via counseling opportunities, which Commissioners immediately raised to academic counselors for attention. This, along with things said by students in interviews, suggested that there are some teachers and substitutes who are failing to build rapport with youth and that the discipline procedure is enabling that failure rather than addressing it.

Commissioner C observed the classroom and saw that youth were able to share their work, what they learned, what a typical day was like, and how their assignments fit into the larger curriculum (math activities, diversity readings). Youth seemed proud about the work they shared. They were particularly interested in the science-based, hands-on experiments. Many youth referenced these activities. A few youth talked about the difference between school at the camp compared to school on the outside. They felt more engaged in the Camp Rocky school and felt motivated by how quickly they could earn credits. Encouraging signage was posted throughout the classrooms including words and definitions related to equity. Students were able to describe in their own words what equity meant to them. One student was able to relate the concept to his family/ethnic background.

LACOE staff seemed particularly excited about their graduation ceremonies, honor roll programs, and tutoring. The commissioner observed honor roll and college displays outside the classrooms and in the main office. LACOE Staff articulated a great deal of pride about what the students were accomplishing in terms of their educational goals.

### **Kitchen and Food**

Commissioner C noted that the kitchen was clean and well organized. Commissioners and staff observed lunch which was overseen by Camp Rockey's chef who also teaches the culinary class in collaboration with LACOE. The staff's pride in their program and food service was evident. Youth sat with their groups at lunch and while it was mostly quiet, youth did say they are generally allowed to talk to each other and staff during lunch. Commissioners and staff sat and conversed with youth during lunch. There were written menus, ample ingredients, food stored and prepared in advance of the next meal, and menu modifications (e.g., for youth who can't eat pork). The cafeteria is a large room with picnic style tables

and benches. Staff were dispersed throughout the room in different locations (front, back, sides). Before being dismissed by group and in an orderly fashion, staff made announcements about what the afternoon would entail due to the early school dismissal that day. During interviews some youth mentioned that they would like more snacks.

### **Access to Medical and Mental Health Care**

Youth reported having regular access to medical staff and constant access to their assigned DMH clinicians. They reported the extensive presence of their clinicians, feeling understood and heard by them, and enjoyed doing a range of therapeutic activities including art.

DMH reportedly provides transportation for in-person family therapy sessions at Camp Rockey. Alternative methods were also offered via virtual platforms when necessary.

### **Programs and Services**

Interviews with young people highlighted their enjoyment of the culinary program at Camp Rockey. The program is offered one time per week and allows participants to develop usable skills and obtain high school credits. There is a waiting list for this program, and several youth expressed wanting to enroll. Other youth said they enjoyed the poetry class. One youth liked the healing circles. Youth did not share specific details about the programs they attended, but they did share that the programs are helpful for getting you to think about your goals. Some youth felt they had the programs they needed, though a few asked for more vocational opportunities with hands-on learning.

Commissioner B observed the Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) Healing Circles program, where a group of young men learned about meditation, dealing with stressful situations, and shared about their experiences. The young men appeared very engaged with the subject matter and shared openly. The two GRYD staff appeared to have positive rapport with this group and ran the program in an interactive and relaxed manner.

Commissioner B spoke with two young people who shared that their romantic partners were pregnant, and they would like help with seeing their partners and newborns. They stated that they were receiving support from Camp Rockey through the “Rockey Dads” program but would like additional support. The commissioner then spoke with the facility Director and “Rockey Dads” program manager, Ms. Reyes, who gave the Commissioner an overview of the program and stated that they would work to accommodate the young men.

Commissioner D observed the substance use disorder (SUD) 13-week program provided by DMH. The youth in the program shared their experiences and emotions and were learning and openly practicing coping skills despite the vulnerability of being in a group setting. The SUD counselor appeared to provide a safe space, which was free flowing and relatable. Substances and social issues that contribute to substance use and abuse were explored. Substances relevant to youth were explored including pharmaceuticals, alcohol, cannabis, and methamphetamine. The counselor posed challenging questions to the young people and gave them space to explore scenarios with laughter, seriousness, volume, and prompted introspection. There was one youth who appeared disengaged, and later reported that he did not have a history of substance use. Youth acknowledged that the counselor was a “mentor” and let them be themselves. One youth said, “Not only is he smooth, he gets us. He was us, and he is showing us that we can be like him, too.”

### **Agency Relationships**

Probation, DMH, and LACOE appeared to work in collaboration regularly to support youth. Probation staff reported that DMH clinicians are helpful at times for de-escalation and that they spend time supporting the young people, which in turn helps staff. DMH reported that in the past if a suspected child abuse report was made in connection with Probation staff, rapport would be briefly damaged and then quickly recover, however, this was not a recent concern. When speaking about interagency collaboration, LACOE facilitated team meetings to discuss each student's educational needs, in addition the team meeting discussed exit planning for youth prior to their transition out of the facility. LACOE staff shared that they were currently considering partnering with DMH to begin offering emotional regulation circles.