



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

PROBATION OVERSIGHT COMMISSION

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INSPECTION REPORT FOR CAMPUS VERNON KILPATRICK - SECURE YOUTH TREATMENT FACILITY

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INTRODUCTION

The Los Angeles County Probation Oversight Commission (POC), in its mission to oversee and make recommendations to the Los Angeles County Probation Department (Probation or Department), is completing the 2025 Annual Inspections of all of Probation's detention facilities, marking the fifth year of inspections. The POC has found it of critical importance to provide substantial feedback to Probation, the Board of Supervisors (Board), and public stakeholders after each inspection of the conditions observed within the facilities.

This summary presents the findings of the second facility inspected during this annual cycle Campus Vernon Kilpatrick (CVK). CVK has continued to function as an internal step-down Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) for those young people previously housed at Barry J. Nidorf-SYTF with exemplary behavior who have achieved Developmental Stage System (DSS) levels six and higher. In the month prior to the inspection, a plan was accepted by the county courts to allow a change in use to the facility to aid the movement of young people out of Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall (LPJH) due to continued findings of unsuitability for the confinement of minors by the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC). Therefore, during the inspection, the POC inquired about the planning process and preparations to shift CVK from housing transition-age males to the proposed function to house girls and gender-expansive (GGE) young people. In addition to the change in gender served, the proposal intends for all GGE to be housed at CVK, facilitating the need to meet the supervision and programming needs of four distinct populations: pre-disposition GGE currently housed at LPJH, GGE dispositioned to SYTF, GGE at camp, and GGE in placement, all of whom are currently housed at the Dorothy Kirby Center (DKC).

While the POC collected a large amount of information at this inspection, takeaways were derived from the most impactful observations and interviews made during the day.

The following list represents key findings from the inspection of CVK:

- **Trauma-informed services pave the way for reflection and progress** – Years of interdepartmental implementation of the LA Model created a facility environment where rapport-based supervision and trauma-informed interventions helped youth aspire and achieve. Young people at the facility emphasized that being treated with trust, respect, and being afforded more freedom in daily choices and in physical space motivated positive changes in relating to others and personal mood management.
- **Unwanted changes paired with insufficient information** – Probation employees described a sense of success, pride, and cultivated expertise in their work with the male SYTF step-down population, thus questioning why the successful program would be terminated. Many questioned whether an adequate number of experienced staff would volunteer to work there and whether the facility could be made physically ready in the proposed timeline. Staff reported ongoing problems with communication from Probation's Executive Leadership to



employees, partners, and young people. Many voiced concerns about the rushed timeline and foresee safety and health risks that could be dangerous and harmful to young people, staff, and the overall image of the Probation Department. Young people were especially affected by the lack of information and agency over their futures. Moods were low and anxious throughout the facility.

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 Board of Supervisors (Board) and the Los Angeles County Probation Department (Probation) about progress and challenges within Probation. The POC has considerable authority and responsibilities directly related to juvenile institutions. Specifically, Title 15 of the California Code of Regulations, section 1313 (f), 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 Board also granted the POC specific authority to "as permitted by law... conduct unannounced inspections of any facility, and its non-confidential records, where any juvenile probationer can be held or where probationers receive services and "prepare reports on inspection findings" for the Board (LACC Sections 3.80.040(B) and 3.80.050(A)). 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 31st each year and shares the report with the Board and the public. This report marks the fifth round of annual inspections conducted by this body.

METHODS

At the beginning of the 2025 Annual Inspection cycle, Probation ran six juvenile facilities: one juvenile detention center ("juvenile hall"), four juvenile camps, and two facilities solely dedicated to housing young people dispositioned to Secure Youth Treatment Facilities, including CVK.

In order to complete the inspection of CVK:

- Two POC Commissioners conducted the inspection. Two POC staff members provided support during the inspection.
- The CVK inspection occurred on May 22, 2025, and took eight hours to complete.
- Dates for the inspections were coordinated with Probation's Executive Leadership and leaders from the facility were aware in advance of the inspection.
- The BSCC does not have a required template for the inspection report, so the POC previously developed a detailed facility inspection template that was updated this year and reviewed by Probation and the BSCC. Within the inspections template, key themes are included to ensure a thorough inspection of both physical structure and environment. The template also highlights the need to examine practices and the treatment of young people at the facility.



The information below depicts data gathered directly from the inspection. It should be noted that the data is a “snapshot” of information recorded only on the day of the inspection. The data collected about the “Population,” and “Staffing” was provided to the POC staff directly by the facility’s Director; and each of these numbers was directly reported in this report. The findings stated in this report are a compilation of POC Commissioner and staff observations made while conducting the inspections.

GENERAL DATA FOR CAMPUS VERNON KILPATRICK

- **Address:** 427 Encinal Canyon Road, Malibu, California 90265
- **Facility Type:** Secure Youth Treatment Facility
- **Housing:** Five separate cottages with two sides each with open dormitory style living space.
- **Rated Capacity:** 48¹
- **Youth population present at facility:** 16 boys/young men
- **Young people at court/medical:** 0
- **Total number of Probation employees assigned to the facility (sworn and non-sworn):** 65
- **Probation Officers on duty on the day of inspection:** 14

FACILITY AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

CVK sits in a small canyon in a semi-remote area in Malibu. All facilities at the site are modern and clean. The facility was fully re-built and re-opened in July 2017 to be the launch site of the LA Model, making it the newest and least carceral of any of Probation’s facilities in Los Angeles County.

Upon entry to the facility in the administration building, a security guard was present, items were passed through an x-ray machine, and guests and staff entered through a metal detector.

The grounds included an administrative building which connected to a cafeteria, kitchen, and gym. That building opened up to a large grassy area leading to five cottages and a school building with a sign that reads, “Road To Success Academy.” The grounds offered outdoor exercise equipment, a volleyball court, a swimming pool, basketball courts, and a garden.

Two cottages were used to house the 16 young people present on the day of inspection, all of whom were previous residents of Barry J. Nidorf- Secure Youth Track Facility (BJN-SYTF) and serving a disposition to a Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF). Three additional cottages housed no young people and had been modified since the POC’s last Annual Inspection to be utilized for different activities and programming including an art studio, a weightlifting gym, and a gaming room equipped with many different consoles

¹ July 15, 2025 [BSCC Rated Capacity of Juvenile Detention Facilities](#)



and arcade-style games. The garden appeared well maintained and added a refreshing pop of color to the beige exterior of the cottage. The inside of the cottages displayed many individual style choices from the young people housed there. Young people at CVK were allowed to have their own personal bedsheets rather than the standard county-issued sheets used at other facilities, decorate the walls above their beds, and have keepsakes and photos on their windowsills. The cottages each have two sides, and each side had two separate sleeping areas with three or four beds in it. In the center of the cottage was a living room area replete with a large, mounted television, sofas, and a table in the center. No graffiti was observed in either cottage. Clean bathrooms and showers were observed in both cottages with privacy curtains in place. Each cottage also had a kitchenette and a refrigerator.

As in previous years, POC inspectors questioned why the population of the facility remained at 20 or less despite a rated capacity of 48. There was no clear answer and many staff and youth noted that more young people were already qualified to step down from BJN-SYTF. Staff and youth noted awareness and concern about recent plans² to change the use of the facility from an SYTF step down to a multi-use site that would house all GGE young people including juvenile hall, placement, camp, and SYTF populations.

Staff shared multiple issues with the physical facilities including a problem with insufficient sewage capacity. Staff reported that with the current population, the sewage pump is running at 90% capacity. It was reported that when the population was higher, it cost \$10,000 each month to have sewage hauled away. Staff also mentioned the insufficiency of the staff sleeping quarters since the facility was built with just 15 staff sleeping rooms. Probation Officers at the facility work a highly compressed work schedule (the “56”) that typically allows these employees to sleep at the facility, which is helpful due to the remote location and high traffic commute.

The cottage environments were generally calm, but the youth expressed significant concern and tension due to the news that they would soon be moved from the facility. During the inspection, multiple young people asked POC inspectors for more information about the plan, what would happen to them, and also what would happen to the Probation Officers that they had grown attached to and considered their mentors. One young person was observed becoming overwhelmed by emotion given the uncertainty involved. Inspectors observed the Director compassionately taking time to talk to him, helping him regulate his emotions, and offer support. Another young person said he “would like transparency over changes and movements.” Others shared an increase in anxiety due to the lack of information, while also acknowledging their belief that the Director was sharing everything known. All young people interviewed reported feeling comfortable in the living space and in the facility overall, and many discussed how they experienced personal growth at CVK directly due to being granted more freedoms and receiving more respectful treatment than they had at other Probation facilities which young people described as “institutionalized”.

² Probation’s current [Depopulation Strategy](#) and the February 2025 [Global Plan](#)



KITCHEN AND FOOD

The kitchen area appeared clean and well kept. Meals are prepared and plated in the kitchen, and then everyone eats together in the cafeteria just in front of the kitchen. It was noted that professionals in the facility, including Probation staff, program providers, and credible messengers, ate alongside young people and their colleagues and were seen chatting and laughing with young people and Probation Officers. The dining hall was decorated with colorful boards, posters with information about COVID-19, healthy meal signage, youth bill of rights posters, and complaint forms.

Feedback from young people on the food available at CVK was consistent in that many young people described the food as “okay.” Young people were observed eating burritos filled with chicken, rice, and beans on the day of the inspection and were observed consuming the food enthusiastically. Some young people had hot sauce, and it was observed that a number of condiments were made available to young people by kitchen staff for different meals, including barbecue sauce, ranch, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, and other salad dressings. It was reported that eggs were the most unpopular and often wasted food, per kitchen staff.

The kitchen staff reported multiple concerns regarding the changes to the use of the facility, however they had no information about the timeline for the incoming young people. Their concerns focused on insufficient staffing and broken equipment. Kitchen staff reported that the kitchen is so short staffed that they work 14-hour days and must each work one day of overtime weekly in order to serve the current population of 16 young people. Inspectors observed that the large walk-in refrigerator was broken. Staff reported that the refrigerator had been out of order for four or five months without a clear timeline for having it repaired. Staff reported that in order to fix the refrigerator, the walk-in freezer would need to be put out of commission since they run on some shared hardware. Kitchen staff reported that they had acquired and were using an external refrigerator, but could not accommodate food storage for a larger population with the current limitations.

EDUCATION

- **Number of full-time LACOE teachers:** 2
- **High School Students:** 1
 - **Young people suspended:** 0
- **High School Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs):** 1 (100%)
- **High school graduates:** 17³
- **College students:** 13
- **Dual enrollment students:** 0
- **College(s) supporting this facility:** Mission College and West LA College

³ LACOE reported 17 high school graduates, which is greater than the total population reported by Probation. The discrepancy is likely due to delayed communication regarding release or transportation of youth.



On the day of the inspection, there was only one high school student at CVK, who was observed studying in a dedicated Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) classroom. The majority of young people seen at the school were working independently in a Probation Education Services supported study hall, a classroom LACOE allowed Probation Education Services to use for college students. In the college classroom, students worked on their class assignments through LACOE-issued laptops, and all were participating in asynchronous, pre-recorded college classes. Youth reported that they had in the past joined live virtual college classes with youth at BJN-SYTF through Zoom. All young people observed in college were working independently on their computers and appeared engaged in their course work. Probation Education Services staff were observed doing one-on-one work with students to ensure comprehension of the material. The classroom was decorated with college banners, Youth Bill of Rights posters, and PREA posters. The young people appeared well dressed in clean shoes, khaki pants, and collared uniform shirts.

The courses offered by the college were not limited, as students had access to the college's full online, asynchronous course schedule. It was reported that four students had graduated from community college with their associates degree and were taking additional transfer courses toward their four-year degree. Probation Education Services staff reported that their staffing was low and that they needed more staff to assist because the workload was heavy for onboarding youth when first arriving at the facility. It was reported that although the facility has a high college acceptance rate, young people typically come in at a high school junior level and they struggle to catch up with academic expectations for college, but eventually there is a shift.

While observing and speaking with the young people about their educational experiences at CVK, it was apparent that numerous agencies, including LACOE, Probation, Probation Education Services, and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) worked together with the young people to get them as much college credit as possible so they could enroll in four-year universities. The young people made it clear that they rarely miss school and that staff helped them work through any issues they encountered. One young person shared that he had received an associate's degree and was accepted to a local university to pursue a bachelor's degree, but he was stressed about the possibility of the pending transfer to BJN-SYTF disrupting his ability to register, go to a community step-down, and attend university classes in August. He was supposed to be released days before the inspection, but the judge's plan to delay his release to consider alternate step-down facilities sent the youth's plans for the next year into jeopardy.

LACOE reported an "amazing relationship with Probation" and they use the LA Model as guidance for interactions where "everyone works together." At CVK the "students are at the center, it is flexible." Staff gave an example about how a student might be struggling with their current educational plan, but the plan could be changed within the same day. It was shared that this year LACOE contracted with PV Jobs which is a vocational program where young people receive career credits for participating in hands on work, and all the young people at the facility participated. The program was held in the woodworking room



which had TV screens up, tables with workstations, and safety equipment. The room also had a grievance box and Youth Bill of Rights posters.

When discussing the anticipated facility use changes in the Global Plan, LACOE reported that they were told by Probation that they would receive three days of advanced notice about the movement of GGE youth to the facility. Concerns were expressed about LACOE's ability to find enough substitute educators to provide services to students until people could be brought on permanently. There was also a need to set up new classrooms at the school that had been unused recently and staff noted that one had sustained damage from a flood.

GRIEVANCES

- **Total Grievances Reviewed⁴:** 17
- **Grievance system:** Paper only
- **Emergency grievances:** None

Grievance rules and procedures were posted throughout the facility including in all cottages. Interviews with young people indicated that the grievance procedure was understood. All grievances reviewed were responded to in three business days as required by [Probation's Grievance Policy](#)⁵. Grievances ranged from facility maintenance issues to relational issues with Probation Officers. The facility maintenance grievances were addressed right away, and the requests were granted by submitting a work order. Grievances related to issues with Probation Officers or other staff were also reviewed (including videos) and responded to in one to two days. Grievance resolutions were based on a case-by-case review. One grievance requested a change in caseworker and after investigation, the request was granted. Another grievance was denied as video did not support the young person's statement. No emergency (Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)/Health/Suspected Abuse) grievances were observed.

DISCIPLINE/POSITIVE BEHAVIOR REINFORCEMENT

The facility uses two behavior programs: the Developmental Stage System (DSS) and the Behavior Management Program (BMP). The differences between the two models were not immediately clear, but each cottage had information posted for young people to see how to earn points and highlight special events that were planned for the facility. Young people were observed wearing different colored polo shirts at school and were also allowed to wear shirts or sweatshirts specific to the facility. The facility had a canteen store where the young people were able to use their points earned from participating in their program as currency to purchase snacks and other personal care items to supplement products given.

⁴ POC generally requests to review all grievances from the current calendar year, unless that number is deemed too small to get a reasonable sense of common grievance themes for the facility. The grievances provided and reviewed were from January 2025 onward.

⁵ [Los Angeles County Probation 2020 RTSB Policy Manual](#)



Young people reported that the most impactful aspect of behavior reinforcement at the facility was that they felt they were treated with respect by the professionals within the facility. It was reported by young people and Probation Officers that young people are encouraged and empowered to use their voice to self-advocate and resolve problems as they arise by talking with staff first. Many Probation Officers reported frustration in their experience that young people labeled as problematic or violent in the juvenile halls can quickly move through a program at BJN-SYTF and come to CVK displaying few antagonistic or aggressive behaviors.

ACCESS TO MEDICAL/MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Department of Health Services-Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS) reported hours of operation from 6:30am-10:00pm, seven days per week including holidays. Young people receive physical exams on an annual basis.

The DMH reported hours of operation from 8:00am-8:00pm, seven days per week and access to a 24-hour on-call psychiatrist for psychiatric emergencies occurring after-hours. The Officer of the Day assists during crises, however, DMH staff noted that crisis incidents were very uncommon at CVK.

AGENCY RELATIONSHIPS

A Commissioner noted that the JCHS operations appeared “flawless.” The JCHS staff shared that success in operations is due to a “combined effort” of all the partner agencies, and that the agencies have a “special relationship” where all staff understand each other. Others attributed the teamwork and respect of roles directly to LA Model trainings that all the departments participated in years prior. The JCHS staff mentioned that missed medical appointments were not a regular occurrence. The JCHS staff engaged directly with young people to help prevent unnecessary refusals of medical care; young people have to talk directly to the nurse in order to obtain a medical refusal.

The DMH staff shared that although their current operations ran smoothly due to the agency comradery at CVK, there was anxiety because of the movement rumors. The DMH staff noted that young people expressed feeling anxious, frustrated, and resentful about the possible facility changes. Clinicians planned to have a “warm handoff” to BJN-SYTF clinicians, and expressed an ethical obligation to communicate and make themselves available to the young people upon transfer.

STAFFING

- **Callouts by Supervision Staff: 2**
- **Supervision Staff on Leave(s): 0**
- **Deployed Staff Providing Supervision: 0**
- **Supervision Staff on Holdovers and Overtime: 0**



During the inspection, many Probation Officers shared their concerns about the recently released [Global Plan](#), and how it would negatively affect the facility and facilities around the county. Probation Officers expressed some feelings of learned helplessness, as multiple individuals reported a repeating pattern of the Department's disregard for their input, not having opportunities for early input, nor acknowledgement of their contributions from Probation's Executive Leadership Team. Some expressed frustration about the wealth of attention, human resources, and money poured into the juvenile hall, and their sense that the positive culture at CVK and other facilities would be eroded to try to fix it. One Probation Officer shared that he spent many years crafting interventions and expertise to work successfully with males and shared that he, and potentially others, wished to continue working with young men. It was also reflected throughout the day by various professionals that Probation's Executive Leadership team should consider that specialized professionals cannot responsibly serve a different population from one day to the next and that decision-making from a distance was a disservice to all of the human beings involved, with an emphasis on the young people. It was also noted throughout the day that the potential dispersal of the CVK staff across other facilities would pose a major challenge to the maintenance of the LA Model culture at the facility.

ROOM CONFINEMENT

Given the open layout of the cottages, there is no opportunity for any type of room confinement at CVK. There is no HOPE Center. It was reported several times throughout the day that when incidents occurred on rare occasions, the professionals in the facility took time to help the youth regulate their mood, provide support, and offer behavioral alternatives that included opportunities to be outside or participate in constructive activities.

PROGRAMMING

The programs on the facility schedule matched the operations of the day, including substance abuse services and music programming. The Programming Director noted that there was 100% participation, which was also observed. Young people reported appreciating the vocational training and the opportunity to learn practical skills that they can use when they are eventually released and living independently in the community. One young person reported that it was important to "catch up on all the things we need to know" since they felt that they had lost many opportunities for learning while detained at other Probation facilities.

HARM REDUCTION

All Probation staff interviewed were carrying Narcan on their utility belts.⁶ There was also a Narcan supply inside each of the defibrillator boxes in the locked hallways of each of the cottages. Young people were not formally trained to identify the signs of opioid

⁶ January 10, 2023 Motion: [Saving Lives by Making NARCAN Readily Accessible in the County's Juvenile Halls and Camps](#)



intoxication and did not have access to Narcan.⁷ Co-located partners such as DMH and credible messengers shared that Probation leadership at the facility had discussed making Narcan available to them, though Narcan had not been distributed or made available yet.⁸ The LACOE teachers were all trained in the use of Narcan and were able to access it in the school office.

OC SPRAY

Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) spray was not an available use of force option at CVK on the day of inspection. The question of whether OC spray would be used once GGE are brought to the facility was raised since at the time of the inspection, OC spray was being used regularly on GGE at LPJH. It was reported that the use of OC spray had not been discussed during any planning meetings for the future of CVK.

⁷ March 7, 2023 Motion: [Addressing Emergent Illicit Substances and Contraband Entering the Los Angeles County Juvenile Halls](#)

⁸ November 26, 2024 Motion: [Empowering Probation Providers to Carry Naloxone](#)