

Probation Oversight Commission’s (POC) Examination of Progress and Implementation of Phases 1-5 of the Los Angeles County Probation Department’s Depopulation Strategy

Prepared by the staff of the Probation Oversight Commission for the January 8, 2026 regular meeting of the POC and updated on January 26, 2026 with additional statistics provided by the Probation Department.

Overview

This evaluation examines the implementation of the Probation Department’s [Depopulation Strategy](#).¹ Specifically, it assesses progress and outcomes to date by identifying the stated goals and objectives and evaluating progress toward those goals using data and information presented by Probation and county partners at Board of Supervisors (BOS) and Probation Oversight Commission (POC) meetings, as well as court filings and public reports.

Purpose and Need for Assessment

When the Court approved the Depopulation Strategy on May 16, 2025, Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall (LPJH) housed approximately 264 youth. **Despite explicit commitments to depopulation and enhanced service delivery, Probation’s data indicate that population levels at LPJH remain significantly higher than projected.**

Table 1: Projected vs. Actual Population Counts at LPJH

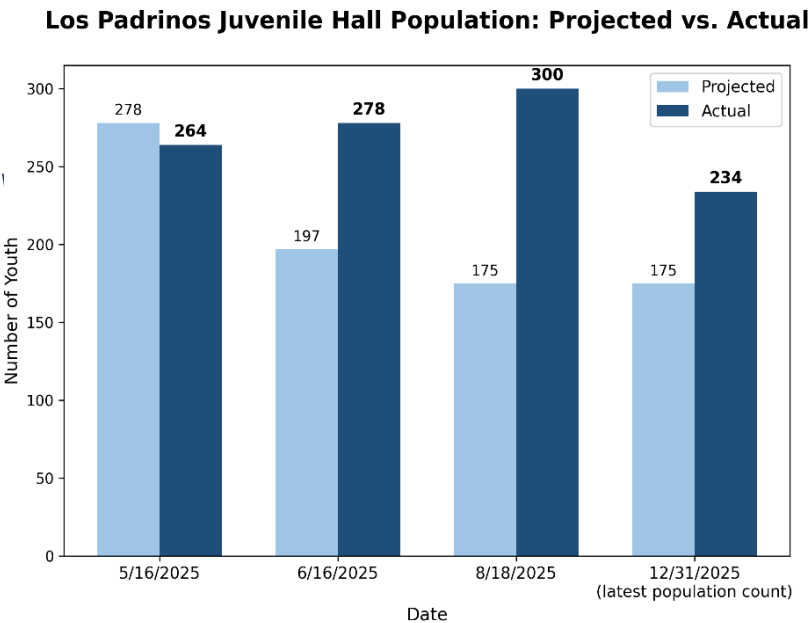


Table 1 shows the population targets in the Depopulation Strategy alongside the actual population counts as reported in Probation’s Daily Population Reports. The Strategy identified a population **goal of 175 youth at LPJH by August 16, 2025**. More than six months after Court approval of the Depopulation Strategy, LPJH continued to house approximately **234 youth as of December 31, 2025**.

Documenting and assessing the implementation of the *Depopulation Strategy* is therefore necessary to understand what occurred and evaluate whether youth-centered goals were realized in practice. Documenting implementation also promotes transparency and accountability regarding the Probation Department’s commitments to juvenile justice reform and the goals of Youth Justice Reimagined.

¹ See Appendix A for a background and overview of the Depopulation Strategy

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Progress & Outcomes

Probation projected that the Depopulation Strategy would be implemented over **five phases within approximately 60 days**.² The plan established key dates, facility-specific population targets, and a long-term vision for realigning facilities to better meet youth needs.

The following tables identify the plans and outcomes outlined in the Depopulation Strategy and compare them with actual implementation to date.

Phases 1-5 of the Depopulation Strategy

Phase	Completed?	Notes/ Outstanding Concerns
Phase 1A: Immediate depopulation of Campus Kilpatrick (CVK) to Barry J. Nidorf Secure Youth Treatment Facility (BJN SYTF). NOTE: On May 16th, Judge Espinoza added an additional requirement: At least two weeks prior to any SYTF relocation, Probation must submit an analysis of suitability for release for each SYTF youth currently housed at CVK.	Yes, including additional court requirement.	At the June 9, 2025 POC meeting, Probation leadership reported that the Department submitted step-down assessments for all 16 remaining youth at CVK to the Court. Each youth was recommended for community step-down pending court review. On July 3, 2025, Probation issued a statement that all SYTF youth had been moved out of CVK, half to community step-downs and eight returning to BJN SYTF.
Phase 1B: Immediate depopulation of post-adjudicated male youth from Camp Paige to neighboring camps. Once depopulated, Camp Paige will begin minor structural repairs.	Yes	At the June 3, 2025 Board of Supervisors meeting, Probation Leadership announced that all youth had been moved out of Camp Paige with five released to the community and the remaining 11 youth moved to Camps Rockey and Afflerbaugh. At the Annual Inspection of Camp Afflerbaugh on September 8, 2025, POC staff and commissioners observed and were informed that construction at Camp Paige was completed.

² While the Depopulation Strategy says in the "Timeline" section on page 5 that it will be implemented over 30 days, the chart provided in the document indicates that the phases will be implemented over 60 days (by August 16th). The Department does also note that there could be delays.

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Phase Two: Development and implementation of a new "SYTF Recommended" track at Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall (BJN) for pre-disposition youth.	Yes	<p>On September 15, 2025, the Probation Department issued a press release announcing they had transferred pre-disposition youth identified as SYTF-eligible from LPJH to BJN.</p> <p>BJN housing protocols for November 2025 indicate that four units at the facility were housing pre-disposition youth.</p>
Phase Three: Transfer all girls and gender expansive (G/GE) youth from LPJH and Dorothy Kirby Center (DKC) to CVK.	Partially	<p>On December 19, 2025, Probation released a statement announcing the relocation of all girls and gender-expansive youth from LPJH to CVK.</p> <p>As of December 31, 2025, girls and gender expansive youth dispositioned to DKC placement, camp, and SYTF were still housed at DKC.</p>
Phase Four: Male youth currently housed at LPJH who have already received a disposition for camp or placement but remain at juvenile hall will be transferred to DKC until Paige repairs are complete.	No	<p>At the June 3, 2025 Board of Supervisor's meeting Probation leadership reported that the Department had submitted plans to BSCC and was in process of preparing responses to questions.</p> <p>According to Probation's Daily Population Reports, as of December 31, 2025, no youth with camp dispositions have been transferred to DKC.</p>
Phase 5A: Once structural repairs are complete and Camp Paige is ready for occupancy, the male youth population temporarily housed at DKC during Phase Four will be transferred to Camp Paige.	No	<p>Probation informed the BSCC in September that Camp Paige has been vacant since June 2025 and would remain vacant for remainder of the year. 2025-2026 - Google Drive, Letter 7255.</p> <p>UPDATE: At the January 8, 2026 POC meeting, Probation leadership reported that, based on their assessment showing that male youth with camp dispositions move out of LPJH within an average of 2-3 days, the Department decided not to use Camp Paige for this purpose. There was no report on future plans for Camp Paige.</p>
Phase 5B: Once 5A is completed, male youth currently housed at LPJH and identified as Regional Center clients will be transferred to DKC.	No	<p>As of December 31, 2025, no pre-disposition youth with developmental disabilities have been transferred to DKC.</p>

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Section 2: Population Counts

As a result of the population transfers outlined in Phases 1-5, the Depopulation Strategy also identified projected population counts for the Camps. The following tables contrast the population projections with the actual population totals, according to the Department's Daily Population Reports.³

Camp Joseph Paige

The Depopulation Strategy indicates that Camp Paige would be depopulated for repairs (Phase 1B) and, upon completion of repairs, would reopen to house 22 male youth with camp or placement dispositions (Phase 5A). As of December 31, 2025, Camp Paige was depopulated, repairs completed, but not yet reopened.

Camp Joseph Paige		
Date	Projected	Actual
5/16/2025	17	16
6/16/2025	0	0
8/18/2025	22	0
Latest Data (12/31/2025)	22	0

Camps Rockey & Afflerbaugh

The Depopulation Strategy states that post-disposition male youth from CJP would be moved to Rockey and Afflerbaugh which occurred.

Date	Camp Glenn Rockey		Camp Afflerbaugh	
	Projected	Actual	Projected	Actual
5/16/2025	42	48	44	47
6/16/2025	51	52	52	48
8/18/2025	51	49	52	47
Latest Data (12/31/2025)	51	65	52	56

Camp Vernon Kilpatrick (CVK)

The Depopulation Strategy noted the transfer of 18 male SYTF youth out of CVK, which occurred. The Strategy then plans for the transfer of 51 girls and gender expansive (G/GE) youth from LPJH DKC to CVK. The transfer from LPJH occurred, but the transfer from DKC has not occurred as of December 31, 2025.

Camp Vernon Kilpatrick		
Date	Projected	Actual
5/16/2025	18 (male)	17 (male)
6/16/2025	51 (G/GE)	12 (male)
8/18/2025	51 (G/GE)	0
Latest Data (12/31/2025)	51 (G/GE)	23 (G/GE) ⁴

³ The Depopulation Strategy provided population projections for May 16, 2025, June 16, 2025, and August 16, 2025. Because August 16, 2025 fell on a Saturday and population statistics were not available for that date, this assessment uses population data from August 18, 2025, the closest available reporting date.

⁴ Population update (23): Probation's population stats for Dec. 31st showed 19 G/GE youth at CVK. At the January 8, 2026 POC meeting, Probation leadership reported that the Daily Population Report for CVK contained an error due to an IT issue. On January 14, 2026, Probation provided a corrected population count, reporting an updated total of 23 girls and gender-expansive youth.

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Dorothy Kirby Center⁵

The Depopulation Strategy projected the transfer of approximately 22 girls and gender expansive (G/GE) youth out of DKC to CVK. That has not occurred as of December 31, 2025. The Strategy then calls for the transfer of 21 male Regional Center clients from LPJH to DKC which has not occurred as of December 31, 2025.

Dorothy Kirby Center		
Date	Projected	Actual
5/16/2025	60 (22 G/GE and 38 male)	68 (23 G/GE)
6/16/2025	60 (all male ⁶)	65 (21 G/GE)
8/18/2025	60 (all male)	71 (20 G/GE)
Latest Data (12/31/2025)	60 (all male)	58 (18 G/GE)

Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall and Barry J. Nidorf SYTF and Juvenile Hall

The Depopulation Strategy projected the transfer of 18 SYTF youth from CVK either to community step-downs or BJN and the transfer of 30 pre-disposition males from LPJH to BJN. This occurred.

In total, the Depopulation Strategy committed to reducing the LPJH population by approximately 103 youth based on the facility's population on April 25, 2025.⁷ As of December 31, 2025, the Department's population reports show a reduction in the population of 30 youth. For additional context, the comparison table below also includes the counts of OC spray deployments at the juvenile halls.

Date	Los Padrinos			Barry J. Nidorf		
	Projected	Actual	Monthly OC Spray Use	Projected	Actual	Monthly OC Spray Use
5/16/2025	278	264	33	98	98	2
6/16/2025	197	278	28	146	103	2
8/18/2025	175	300	29	146	118	11
Latest Data (12/31/2025)	175	234	28 ⁸	150	153⁹	4 ¹⁰

⁵ The Depopulation Strategy does not define an exact number but says all G/GE youth will be moved. There were 22 G/GE on April 29, 2025.

⁶ According to the Strategy, this should include 21 pre-disposition boys from LPJH. As of December 31, 2025, no pre-disposition youth had been moved to DKC.

⁷ This includes 82 youth by June 2025 and an additional 21 youth following the completion of structural repairs at Camp Paige.

⁸ December OC spray data was not available on the original date of publication of this report. On January 20, 2026, the Probation Department provided updated OC Reports. The value shown has been revised accordingly.

⁹ This is the total number of both SYTF and pre-disposition youth at Barry J. Nidorf.

¹⁰ December OC spray data was not available on the original date of publication of this report. On January 20, 2026, the Probation Department provided updated OC Reports. The value shown has been revised accordingly.

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Deepening Crisis

The environment at Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall remains fragile since the implementation of the *Depopulation Strategy* and some challenges have increased.

1. **Receivership Hearings:** In July 2025, California Attorney General Bonta filed a lawsuit asking the Los Angeles County Superior Court to place the County's juvenile halls into receivership amid the County's ongoing inability to comply with a 2021 stipulated judgement. If approved, Los Angeles County would lose control over the budget and operation of Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall. The trial is ongoing, although the Judge issued a tentative ruling against granting the receivership.
2. **The POC's August 2025 [annual inspection of LPJH](#)** raised several concerns about youth-wellbeing including:
 - The lack of a practice model in the facility which results in no measurable level of rehabilitation for youth and no clear path to strength-based interventions that foster positive youth development
 - Programming that is sporadic and sparse. Youth reported being bored and desired more concurrently running programs and increased opportunities skill-building training that improves career readiness
 - Continued levels of violence as evidenced by the severity of grievances, staffing challenges, safety concerns related to crowding and the continued use of OC spray.
3. **New/Renewed Struggles at Barry J. Nidorf:** In September 2025, pursuant to the *Depopulation Strategy*, the Probation Department moved approximately 30 pre-disposition young men and boys from Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall to Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall, essentially splitting BJN into two facilities under one roof: one for pre-disposition boys/young men and another for boys/young men dispositioned to a Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF). The BSCC did not approve the facility for a "mixed-use" prior to the move. On July 7, 2025, the BSCC reaffirmed that "Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall remains unsuitable for the confinement of juveniles" based on several items of Title 15 noncompliance.¹¹ In effect, the Department moved youth from one unsuitable facility to another. The result has been some decreases in violence and OC spray at LPJH, and increased levels at BJN.

At the November 4, 2025 Board of Supervisors meeting, Supervisors expressed frustration about the lack of programming for pre-disposition youth detained at Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall and particular concerns about youth with developmental disabilities.¹²

¹¹ BARRY J. NIDORF REMAINS UNSUITABLE AS JUVENILE HALL - Multiple Areas of Noncompliance for SYTF also Found. BSCC news release July 7, 2025 <https://www.bscc.ca.gov/news/barry-j-nidorf-remains-unsuitable-as-juvenile-hall/>

¹² Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Meeting, November 4, 2025 Agenda Item 50 https://lacounty.granicus.com/player/clip/12062?view_id=1&redirect=true

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4. **Continued Struggles with Staffing:** Also at the November 4, 2025 Board of Supervisors meeting, Probation leadership shared recruitment data showing that by that date in 2025, the Department had made contingent job offers to 1,161 people. Of those:
- only 53 accepted the conditional job offer
 - of those, only 81% (43) graduated from the academy
 - 20 people left the Department within a year of graduating from the academy.

This data speaks to the Department's ongoing challenges with recruitment and struggle to fill vacant positions and retain staff after hiring.

Conclusion

While the implementation of the Depopulation Strategy resulted in some youth moving to other facilities, it has not resulted in a meaningful reduction in the population at LPJH or the overall population of detained youth. Indicators such as increased OC spray usage at Barry J. Nidorf suggest that population transfers may have displaced, rather than alleviated, operational and safety challenges from LPJH to the receiving facilities.

While the girls and gender expansive youth who moved from LPJH to CVK are now housed at much more therapeutic and rehabilitative facility, that came at the cost of the use of the facility for SYTF young men who had earned step down privileges.

The total number of youth detained by Los Angeles County Probation at its halls, camps, SYTF, and Dorothy Kirby Center on May 16, 2025, when the Depopulation Strategy was approved was **558**. On December 31, 2025, the total detained population was **589**.¹³ Until the County, the Probation Department, the Courts, and all the youth-serving departments and community stakeholders come together to reduce that overall number or permanently increase the staffing, programming, and resources available in the facilities, resolution of these issues of violence and legal noncompliance seems unlikely.

¹³ Total population update (589): Probation's population statistics for December 31, 2025 reported a total population of 585. At the January 8, 2026 POC meeting, Probation leadership indicated that the Daily Population Report for CVK contained an error due to an IT issue. On January 14, 2026, Probation provided corrected population counts, adding four youth to CVK. This updated total population reflects this correction.

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Appendix A: Depopulation Strategy Background & Overview

Background

In October 2024 the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) found Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall (LPJH) unsuitable for the confinement of youth. BSCC's finding of unsuitability was based on an inspection that revealed the facility was out of compliance with nine provisions of state law, including: Title 15 sections 1321 Staffing and Section 1371, Programs Recreation and Exercise. Per BSCC's formal notice of unsuitability, LPJH could no longer be used for the confinement of youth as of December 12, 2024. Despite this outcome, Probation continued to house youth at LPJH beyond this deadline.

In response, the LA County Office of the Public Defender filed a motion with the Los Angeles County Superior Court questioning the legality of keeping youth detained at LPJH. The filing argued that the continued detention of youth at Los Padrinos violated Welfare and Institutions Code. This action initiated an ongoing legal proceeding overseen by Judge Espinoza.

In April 2025, Judge Espinoza ordered the Probation Department to submit a proposal and timeline to depopulate LPJH. The ruling specifically directed Probation to develop a plan describing how youth housed at Los Padrinos would be relocated.

Probation submitted the [Depopulation Strategy](#) to the court on May 2, 2025. The plan was heard and accepted by Judge Espinoza at the May 16, 2025, hearing.

The Depopulation Strategy: A Brief Overview

The Depopulation Strategy outlines the Probation Department's plan to redistribute predisposition youth housed at LPJH across existing Probation facilities in order to:

- "...create more manageable youth-to-staff ratios, improve oversight and allow for more individualized attention and services for each youth..." and
- come into compliance with Title 15 minimum standards to achieve suitability with the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC).

The Depopulation Strategy submitted to the court emphasized a coordinated approach including a commitment to¹⁴:

- Family notification and engagement
- Communication, preparation and counseling for youth
- Coordination with County Partners for continuity of services
- Staff preparedness and facility readiness
- Continued review and assessment of youth eligibility for release

Probation projected that the Strategy would be implemented over **five phases within approximately 30 days**. The plan established key dates, facility-specific population targets, and a long-term vision for realigning facilities to better meet youth needs.

¹⁴ A follow-up assessment and analysis of the Departments commitments in the Depopulation Strategy is forthcoming.