



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

PROBATION OVERSIGHT COMMISSION

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INSPECTION REPORT FOR DOROTHY KIRBY CENTER (DKC)

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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 2026 Annual Inspections of all of Probation's detention facilities, marking the sixth round 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 from the inspection of the Dorothy F. Kirby Center (DKC). In the months prior to the inspection, Probation presented a plan to the Superior Court 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) at LPJH. Probation determined that confining Girls and Gender Expansive youth at a single site would facilitate the Probation Department's ability to provide an individualized approach to serving and rehabilitating these young people. As a result, three distinct populations of girls and gender expansive youth housed at DKC were moved out by January 2026, including those dispositioned to camp, Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF), and DKC placement. Boys dispositioned to DKC placement remained at the facility through these changes and were the only category of youth present at DKC at the time of the POC's 2026 inspection in May 2026. Probation's plan also included intent to move pre-disposition youth with developmental disabilities and complex care needs from LPJH to DKC, which would convert the site into a juvenile hall in addition to its long-standing use as a locked residential placement. While staff at DKC discussed preparing for this move, no predisposition youth had been moved to DKC at the time of the POC's 2026 inspection.

Key Findings from the 2026 inspection of DKC:

- **Need for full utilization of the facility** – Multiple cottages sat empty at the most therapeutic detention facility with the most highly trained Probation staff that Los Angeles County has to offer. Reports from young people, officers and other professionals at the facility about the positive impact of a trauma informed facility culture were a throughline of the inspection. Girls and Gender-Expansive (GGE) youth dispositioned to DKC placement and camp were moved away from the therapeutic facility months before to make way for pre-disposition male youth with developmental disabilities from Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall (LPJH) which Probation reports will require significant changes to the physical plant of the facility, with no move date in sight.
- **Trauma-informed services pave the way for youth reflection and progress** – Access to coordinated clinical services throughout the day positively affected young people during their detention at DKC. Officers demonstrated an understanding of trauma, adolescent behavior, and mental health not readily observed at any other facility. The presence of Deputy Probation Officers II



Treatment & Counselors (DPOII T&C), a classification requiring a clinical degree, increased the time youth spend receiving mental health interventions each day and added a peer-to-peer modeling component for officers providing supervision. Youth repeatedly reported that they were pleased to be at DKC after being in the juvenile hall. Probation acknowledged the strength of the therapeutic environment supported constantly by mental health clinicians at 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 Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, the Los Angeles County Juvenile Court, and the public. This report marks the sixth round of annual inspections conducted by this body.

METHODS

Details about the inspection of DKC:

- The inspection was conducted on Thursday, May 21, 2026.
- 3 POC Commissioners and 4 POC staff members participated for a combined total of over 42 hours of interviews and observations.
- The POC coordinated with Probation ahead of the inspection to ensure availability and avoid overlap with other oversight bodies.
- The BSCC does not have a required template for inspections, so the POC developed a detailed facility inspection template that was updated this year and shared with Probation and the BSCC ahead of the inspection. The template includes key themes to ensure a thorough inspection of both physical structure and environment. The template also highlights the need to examine practices and the treatment of youth at the facility.

The information provided in this inspection depicts data gathered directly from the May 21, 2026 inspection. It should be noted that the data is a "snapshot" of information



recorded only on the day of the inspection. The numerical data collected was provided to the POC staff by the facility's superintendent and is directly reported in this report.¹ The findings in this report are a compilation of POC Commissioner and staff's observations made while conducting the inspection.

GENERAL DATA FOR THE DOROTHY KIRBY CENTER

- **Address:** 1500 McDonnell Ave, Commerce, CA 90040
- **Facility Type:** Residential Placement for boys based upon a young person's mental health history and current functioning.
- **Housing:** Ten cottages each with up to 10 single occupancy, locking rooms, a kitchen, refrigerator, common areas, laundry area and bathrooms. Each cottage has an adjoined concrete outdoor patio which youth currently are not allowed to access. There was a HOPE Center at the facility occupying one of the ten cottages with the same layout as the rest.
- **Rated Capacity:** 84²
- **Youth Population:** 45
- **Youth at Court/Medical:** 3
- **Number of Boys:** 45
- **Number of Gender Expansive Youth:** 0³
- **Total number of Probation employees assigned to the facility (sworn and non-sworn):** 169
- **Probation Officers on day of the inspection:** 77

FACILITY AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The facility and grounds appeared spacious, clean, and well-kept. There are ten cottages around the edges of the property. There were grassy areas, benches, exercise equipment, basketball courts, a gymnasium, and a pool on the grounds.

Each cottage had up to ten single occupancy rooms, but there were some rooms in the facility that were non-operational due to being used as storage or having lock issues. Each cottage had a washer and dryer, and it was reported that youth coordinated their own laundry schedules.

Cottages had patios, which were locked and inaccessible to youth. Each patio observed was covered with netting. Youth reported not being able to go outside on the patio ever during their stay. Officers confirmed that the patios have "always" been locked.⁴ Various Probation interviewees stated that the patios were locked due to contraband concerns,

¹ See Appendix A.

² Data extracted from BSCC Rated Capacity of Juvenile Facilities as of July 15, 2026. Probation did not provide a rated capacity at the inspection (*See Attachment A*)

³ Probation's daily population statistics for May 21, 2026 report zero (0) "Non-binary" or "Transgender" youth.

⁴ During the [2023 Annual Inspection of DKC](#), Probation employees and youth reported that patio use was ended during the period since the previous annual inspection. The 2022 Annual Inspection Report of DKC and Camp Scott [2022 Annual Inspection Report of DKC and Camp Scott](#) documented the regular recreational use of the patios by youth and in one unit included a charcoal grill for cooking special meals.



though it was observed that the netting over each patio appeared to be in good condition. No safety concerns were observed.

Cottages had varying entertainment options available for youth though all cottages had a television. One cottage had a ping pong table. One cottage had gaming system readily available, while another cottage offered use of the gaming system only as a reward.

Young people shared their preference for placement at DKC over other sites where they were previously housed. Specifically, youth noted that DKC is much calmer than LPJH. One young person shared that they preferred this placement to previous community placements.

Youth are admitted to DKC through a screening process. Placement at DKC must be court ordered, and Probation or the youth's attorney can recommend them for consideration. A Screening Committee for admittance reviews the individual youth's case and forwards that information to court. Currently, young people are assessed within one to two weeks.

Facility leadership reported they were recently made aware of a pending plan to move pre-disposition youth with developmental disabilities to DKC. It was reported that significant changes would be required in order for the facility to be in compliance with legal standards for juvenile halls which would include changes to bathroom access for youth and window glass in the facility. It was reported that just days prior to the inspection, Internal Services Department (ISD) visited the facility to begin an assessment process to determine what structural changes would be required to upgrade rooms to be self-contained wet rooms. Facility leadership was also unsure about the full extent of changes needed and reported that Probation was considering the changes for three or four cottages at DKC.

It was reported that a clinical screening was being considered for the potential admission of pre-disposition youth identified with developmental disabilities, however the Committee needs to ensure the facility has the appropriate treatment resources for these youth. There was a Probation Director on site leading the plan to implement appropriate services, including provision of additional training to Probation Officers who would supervise youth with developmental disabilities. It was reported that a Probation Director on site was in the process of reviewing and assessing previous assessment practices, changing them to expedite process.

Recently an HVAC project was completed.

Young people were observed wearing different styles of clothing; some wore sweatpants, others wore shorts with standard black shoes. The young people also had polo shirts for school, including a black and gold option for honor roll students, while youth also had the option of wearing a standard gray t-shirt.

Young people overall indicated that they felt safe at DKC, often comparing the positive aspects of DKC to what they did not like in the juvenile hall where most were detained



prior to coming to DKC. One young person said, “LP [Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall] had a lot of fighting, and here everyone is like a brother to me.”

The DKC population had more Regional Center consumers than in the past, and youth with identified developmental disabilities were spread out between various cottages.

KITCHEN AND FOOD

Young people shared mixed opinions about the food at DKC. Some youth said the food was better at LPJH and shared concerns including that they had been served breakfast food contaminated by hair, overripened and canned fruits, moldy bread, expired juice and milk. Other youth interviewed said that at DKC they received food that was “better than LP food.” Commissioners observed lunch which appeared plentiful and edible, comprised of a burrito, corn, fruit, and salad.

It was reported by the kitchen staff that the kitchen has old equipment that does not work well. Kitchen staff reported having completed a walkthrough with the Department of Water and Power (DWP) and the County of Los Angeles Internal Services Department (ISD) about a year and a half ago. It was reported that a new layout/blueprint plan for the kitchen was fully developed, however, no movement on the project had been shared since. Concern was expressed that due to Probation’s focus on LPJH, the project was not prioritized and may have been postponed.

It was reported that the kitchen remained short staffed since the previous POC inspection. Concern was expressed that the three vacant food services positions may be taken away since they have not been filled for a lengthy period and that the job announcement may have closed or would be closed soon. It was reported that a minimum of five staff are needed for adequate staffing, and there were only three. When the kitchen staff need to call out for illness or other reasons, the remaining staff struggle and fall behind on deep cleaning tasks necessary to maintain equipment and kitchen overall. Meals were ordered in three-week intervals which means the menu repeats itself every three weeks. Kitchen staff reported awareness that young people who were detained at the facility for a long period of time complain about the repetition.

Kitchen staff reported a desire to receive more information from leadership at the site around population changes. They reported learning about girls being moved out of the facility shortly before it happened. Kitchen staff did not have knowledge of pending population changes included in Probation’s depopulation plan for LPJH which could move pre-disposition youth to the facility. The kitchen staff reported that they would need at least three weeks’ advance notice whenever a population change is scheduled to adequately prepare the appropriate amount of food.



EDUCATION – LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION (LACOE)

General Education Data:

- **Number of full-time LACOE teachers:** 7
- **Short-Term Substitutes:** 4
- **High School Students:** 42
 - *In School:* 41
 - *Suspended:* 1 in unit
- **Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs):** 31/42=73.8%
- **Dual enrollment students:** 10
- **High School Graduates:** 4
- **College Students:** 4
- **College(s) supporting this facility:** East Los Angeles College (ELAC)

LACOE reported 41 high school students in attendance, with many preparing to graduate from high school on June 18, 2026. The LACOE principal shared that the classrooms are organized to have no more than ten students in each classroom, which allows each classroom to be comprised of youth from a single cottage. Because of the movement of girls and gender expansive youth to Campus Kilpatrick (CVK), there were empty classrooms that could, temporarily or permanently, serve as an Opportunity Room at the school.⁵ With the shortage of space when all cottages were occupied, the principal reported using his office as an Opportunity Room as needed. Providing a permanent Opportunity Room was discussed as a “work in progress”, as the empty classroom was also used as a private space where students working below their grade level could go with teachers or other supports to do their work without feeling embarrassed in front of their peers.

Suspensions were reported to have declined as LACOE had implemented several steps of de-escalation prescribed via Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) to prevent suspension whenever possible. LACOE staff reported that “before anything happens they [students] can ask for a break. Sometimes they just need to be heard and need to vent, and then we can get them back in [to the classroom].” It was reported that students get several chances for restructure and to return to class including intervention by the teacher, a time-out for self-correction, and therapists and a psychologist available at school. Teachers are instructed to call for intervention support to avoid suspending youth. At times, when youth have arguments, LACOE will bring youth together to have a discussion and to teach youth how to better regulate their emotions. Suspensions were reported to occur on rare occasions for serious incidents, including assaults on staff, which was the cause of the one youth being in unit suspension on the day of the inspection. Young people received different incentives for pro-social behaviors at school, including the ability to wear a black and gold polo for those on honor roll.

⁵ Opportunity Rooms have been observed in other Los Angeles County Probation detention facilities and are staffed by a behavioral counselor who is available to provide counseling and other helpful interventions to students throughout the school day.



LACOE reported that their students had recently participated in the Academic Bowl, where DKC won 3rd place. A young person shared that not only was this their first academic competition, it was also their first time being on stage and their first time winning a bronze medal.

LACOE's principal noted that DKC's culture of teamwork, centralized location, and good reputation amongst Probation's detention facilities helped retain teachers. It was reported that the same short-term substitutes present at the facility were repeatedly utilized, in part because the substitutes reportedly prefer to work at DKC over other facilities and this was seen as beneficial for consistency for young people.

Several classrooms were observed and POC inspectors interviewed young people about their experiences. Most classrooms were decorated similarly to a community school with various posters and student work on the walls. The content being reviewed varied;

- In one classroom young people were making posters of jazz artists as part of their inventions research. The classroom included a general education teacher and a special education teacher. The teacher was presenting on a big screen which had several research portals for students to use for their projects. Most students appeared distracted and interrupted when POC inspectors entered the classroom⁶, and only one was interacting with the teacher.
- In another classroom, eight young people were reading "The Outsiders" aloud. The young people and teacher were interacting throughout the observation and were highly engaged. The teacher gave great compliments to the young people reading out loud related to their pronunciation and cadence, using commas and periods to impact their tone.
- In a third classroom, students were reviewing how eco-systems transformed animal habitats. The class ambassadors spoke about what the class was learning and appeared excited to share about their classwork and experience. The young people shared that they watched news channels like CNN to keep informed about current events like an Ebola virus outbreak in the Congo. The students appeared regulated and engaged with the teacher and course material.
- Some young people interviewed were dual enrollment students, and they shared that they enjoyed taking college classes and did not feel the difference between their high school and their college classes; they were taking Math, Science, History and English with LACOE, and took Sociology Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays after lunch.

The inspection was conducted on Thursday, which is the regular early dismissal day and school ended at 12:30pm. Probation officers expressed concern that this waiting time was too long to have a young person just sitting in a classroom. Young people stated a concern that LACOE staff withheld water breaks as a form of punishment.

⁶ POC attempts to minimize distraction during all inspections and left the classroom as soon as possible.



One young person was excited to show inspectors their classroom which had several certificates hanging including a Southwestern Law school program completion, PBIS certificate, and LACOE good behavior certificate.

EDUCATION – POST-SECONDARY

POC inspectors observed college classes taking place in the living area of the cottages housing college students as DKC does not have a classroom designated for college. Two young people were reviewing class material with a Rising Scholar health worker next to them. It was reported that Probation Education Services had community workers through Rising Scholars helping youth with their course material.

Probation Education Services staff reported that there were four high school graduates who were all enrolled in college. East Los Angeles College (ELAC) was the DKC college provider and had a counselor present at the facility once a week. It was reported that the college students were currently taking one asynchronous class (meaning no live instruction), and students received one hour of computer access in the morning and one hour in the afternoon Monday through Friday to fulfill course requirements.

Classes were assigned based on the student's academic plan where students work on their general education classes first. As a result, the first class all students take is a general introduction to college which includes counseling. Probation Education Services staff informed that they provide accommodations for students with disabilities upon request and if the students had an IEP in high school, however no students were reported to be registered with the college disability office. In addition to the accommodations and community workers, ELAC provided students with online tutoring services if needed.

Probation Education Services reported collaboration with America's Job Center of California to provide high school graduates with 250 hours of workforce training, which includes 20 hours of mock job interviews. Youth work by performing jobs around the facility. It was also shared that when a young person leaves the facility before completing their class, they can contact Education Services for assistance on transferring to their local community college.

Young people shared that they were satisfied with their college education and enjoyed their online classes. They described their college classes as "chill and not boring", they also shared that although they would appreciate a trade program, they were "happy with whatever".

GRIEVANCES

- **Total Grievances⁷:** 48
- **Grievance system:** Paper and Grievance Management System (GMS)
- **Emergency grievances:** 2

⁷ POC generally requests all the 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. Since this inspection was conducted early in the year, the grievances provided and reviewed were from November 2025 onward.



Most grievances reviewed were submitted by youth in paper form. It was also reported that since late 2025, the Grievance Management System (GMS), an electronic grievance application available on LACOE computers, was back in use.⁸ GMS was only accessible to youth while they have a LACOE computer and appeared to be utilized sparingly.

The GMS link was verified and worked for both anonymous and logged in individuals.

POC inspectors noted that there was thorough follow up by Grievance staff including multi-page responses and narrative descriptions of follow up. An anecdote regarding a particular grievance related to the change in multiple providers from Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall (LPJH) to Dorothy Kirby Center (DKC) due to a young person having difficulty in the transition to new providers. Probation officers at DKC appeared thoughtful in considering the needs expressed by the young person and documented attempts to create continuity of care for the young person. The grievance was forwarded to a DPOII Treatment & Counselor (DPOII T&C) so that court advocacy or a formal request could occur to link the youth to options for care.

All grievances were manually modified when indicating that youth declined a copy of grievances despite “decline” not being a pre-written option.

Most grievances were not urgent. Two that were urgent were discussed with facility leadership and inspectors noted that leadership were well aware of both circumstances and reported appropriate action including forwarding them to offices outside of the facility as necessary. Non-urgent grievances related to things like hair in food and clothes and shoes not fitting.

POC inspectors were confused about the process of emergency grievances as documentation indicated that they were forwarded to Probation’s Internal Affairs (IA) and not to Prison Rape Elimination Acts office (PREA), however it was clarified that when something is sent to IA, that means it is also sent to PREA at the same time. One emergency grievance indicated that an officer told a youth to pull down his pants and to allow the officer to perform a sexual act. Investigation and interviews led to youth in the unit denying the event, and grievance was closed. The outcome was that the grievance was forwarded to IA. Another grievance related to a teacher making comments to a student that may have been considered to fall under PREA, but no PREA referral was documented.

⁸ It was reported in the [2024 Annual Inspection of Probation’s “East Camps”](#) that Chief Viera Rosa ordered a stop to the use of GMS in July 2024. POC learned later that a GMS issue had prevented the timely review and response to grievances at that facility. Due to this history, POC inquired about the use of GMS during the CVK inspection, and leadership was unable to provide information about GMS updates or who in the Department could assist in answering questions. After the inspection, POC inquired with Probation executive leadership via email about expanded use of GMS in other detention facilities, how it was being ensured that it was working properly, and whether staff were trained on the system. Probation responded, indicating that a new version of GMS was rolled out county-wide in October 2025, but there was no indication of any training on the system.



While in one of the classrooms, a POC inspector asked a young person to model a grievance submission and they shared knowing how to submit a grievance but was currently having computer issues, so another young person was able to model submitting a grievance through their computer. Another young person interviewed was not aware of how to use GMS.

PROGRAMMING

Young people had mostly positive experiences with programming at DKC. A young person shared that they liked “DKC better than LP because there are a lot of programs like making music.” In addition to sharing positive feedback about the programming they received, and youth added that they would appreciate other programs like Million Little, the Homeboy programs like tattoo removal, screen printing or graphic design. Youth in another unit specifically noted appreciation for programs including Inside-out Writers, Boyle Heights, Million Little, and Street Poets, noting that there were more and different programs than when they were at LPJH. One youth asked for more music programs and another for a gardening program. Young people also shared that they appreciated having a break on Wednesdays to have a down day.

Probation officers reported that there were fewer programs this inspection cycle than last year’s inspection, but no one could identify why a decrease had occurred. It was noted during the inspection that job skills and vocational programming options that used to be available were ended during the last year, a longstanding automotive program ended and it was reported that LA Trade Tech was reviewing a new contract and would hopefully resume in the fall. The practice car remained parked in the grassy area. Probation reported being in the process of having credible messengers available to youth in all camps, including DKC, on eight-hour shifts.

There were issues with the accuracy of the program calendar on the day of the inspection, and youth and officers reported that the calendars were regularly inaccurate, saying, “Don’t rely on it for what’s on that day.” For example, a community-based substance use provider came to provide programming at one cottage at 3:00pm as indicated by calendar, however, young people away from the cottage at recreation time. Providers were confused and waiting outside the cottage and Probation supervisors escorting the POC called staff to return the youth to the unit for programming. When they returned, youth and officers were visibly upset about the rapid transition and being pulled away from recreation. When the providers started, it turned out that only three youth were able to participate in the program. As another example, POC inspectors observed another provider arriving at the cottage 15 minutes after the program was due to start.

Programming observed in another unit included six young people participating in “gender expansive” work. Young people appeared disinterested or not connecting with material. Young people were reading a packet out loud and answering questions in a packet.

An art program in another cottage had young people engaged and participating. Young people shared “The other units do have better programming, but we used to have better. Now we have enough, we need our down time.”



DISCIPLINE/POSITIVE BEHAVIOR REINFORCEMENT

DKC uses a Behavior Management Program (BMP) based on a points system where youth are awarded a certain number of points for each day based upon their ability to run their program and demonstrate pro-social behaviors. DKC offered youth a number of special events throughout the year to motivate young people including rotating use of a game room, holding a prom, having a car show, and others.

Young people in one cottage shared that “everything is good,” noting that “we only get county snacks like baked stuff.” It was reported that snacks received depended on the stage each young person is in according to the points they have earned. It was reported that CBOs also bring snacks for youth.

Young people reported positive interactions with officers providing supervision at DKC and noted that the presence of DPOII T&C staff “was good.” Officers reported a culture at the facility where officers and partner staff are mindful of the trauma youth have experienced, and found it helpful to ask youth and to consider “What happened?” instead of leading with finding fault or “Who did it?” Officers demonstrated recognition of the mental health needs of youth and the need to utilize DPOII T&C staff and Mental Health clinicians on site to help meet the needs of youth.

LACOE continued to use PBIS to address behavior expectations which included posters in classrooms and different colored polo shirts for youth on the honor roll. Young people interviewed also knew about re-entry plans for school when they return to the community.

VISITATION

DKC holds visitation every Sunday. Special visits are accommodated with scheduling help from facility supervisors. The facility requires court orders for special visits.

It was reported that beginning on Mother’s Day 2026, contact visits (hugs) have been allowed during visitation at DKC and have continued regularly since then. A young person shared that they started hugging their family members at the end of visits and stated, “I love it”.

Facility leadership shared that a Director is present at visitation on a monthly basis to meet with parents and youth to discuss any concerns and to obtain general feedback.

Youth receive monitored phone calls once a week for one hour. Calls are facilitated by the cottage’s assigned DPOII T&C, in the privacy of their office.

POC inspectors noted that most young people had positive experiences with phone calls and visitation. Related to special visits, one young person shared that they received special visits from their four siblings, and this was coordinated through their assigned DPOII T&C. Other young people shared that through good behavior, they were able to make phone calls to loved ones beyond their parents.



ACCESS TO MEDICAL/MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Department of Health Services-Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS) reported that nursing was present seven days a week from 6:00am-10:00pm. No barriers to services were reported and JCHS reported being fully staffed. Nurses reported that in the months preceding the inspection, approximately one appointment was missed each month due to Probation staffing issues. JCHS staff reported that they observe Probation officers exhibit patience and kindness toward youth while engaging youth into medical services and encouraging medication compliance. One nurse who was newer to the site shared that it was more organized than other facilities across the county and reported that the facility culture caused them to choose to work at DKC despite a longer commute.

POC inspectors talked to two young people who were observed to have braces and asked them about their orthodontic treatment. Both reported that they had come into detention with braces on and shared that they have not seen an orthodontist or received orthodontic treatment beyond regular dental visits since arriving at LPJH and being transferred to DKC. One youth reported being detained at LPJH for three months then at DKC for two months, and the other youth had been detained at DKC for nine months.

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) reported hours of operation from 8:00am-8:30pm, seven days per week with on-site psychiatric services five days a week. There was also access to a 24-hour on-call psychiatrist for emergencies after hours. DMH reported that clinicians meet with each youth at least once per week, however due to the ongoing mental health needs of youth at the facility and some enhanced supervision levels, some youth are seen more often. It was reported that many youth detained at DKC have histories of and/or active issues with self-harm including cutting, attempted suicide and suicidal ideation, thoughts of harming others, and previous psychiatric hospitalization. Despite short staffing, DMH has patched sufficient coverage for the facility together by offering overtime to clinicians from LPJH and Barry J. Nidorf (BJN). It was reported that supervisors also see clients on occasion to ensure appropriate coverage. DMH reported some issues to access due to lack of meeting space and that they often meet youth in a large open room, the laundry room in the cottage. It was acknowledged that youth often do not feel comfortable speaking and being vulnerable in spaces where others may be able to overhear.

AGENCY RELATIONSHIPS

LACOE reported a “great relationship” with Probation in large part due to the consistency of officers. LACOE leadership meets monthly in interagency meetings with the Probation Director and other stakeholders, reporting that those meetings are productive and there was good rapport with current facility leadership. It was mentioned that consistency amongst the probation officers at the facility was helpful, but that frequent changes in facility leadership presented a challenge. They reported that leadership changes can result in people being unclear about their roles and/or LACOE leadership needing to frequently bring them up to speed on current plans and relevant, recent history at the facility. Another challenge mentioned was regarding facility population changes made by



Probation Executive Leadership without including LACOE leadership in planning discussions. LACOE referenced a time in which Probation sent LACOE a memo a day or two before an upcoming population change, giving them little time to ensure they had the proper staff capacity for the entire population after the move.

DMH reported a positive relationship with Probation and there was a perception that the relationship and communication had improved alongside changes in DMH leadership at DKC. It was reported that clinicians and officers facilitated Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) together in the units, encouraging stronger teamwork and collaboration overall. It was reported that the main stressor between the departments is a struggle for space. There was a plan reported for a case manager trailer to be installed at DKC which would not alleviate the lack of space for individual and family therapy but would bring more capacity for family engagement and connection to resources during reentry to the community. DMH reported that better collaboration is needed around space to ensure that youth can fully engage in therapy without fear of sensitive information being heard by others who may exploit that information. While DMH praised Probation Officers for the culture at the facility, there was acknowledgement that officers would benefit from additional training in trauma informed interactions, interventions, and sensitivity to the youth experience.

STAFFING

- **Callouts by Supervision Staff (AM): 0**
- **Callouts by Supervision Staff (PM): 1**
- **Supervision Staff on Leave(s) (AM and PM Shifts Combined): 16**
- **Deployed Staff Providing Supervision (AM and PM Shifts Combined): 0**
- **Supervision Staff on Holdovers and Overtime (AM and PM Shifts Combined): 10**

Reports about staffing at DKC included that the facility has sufficient staff to run the facility safely, but that planned overtime is a significant part of reaching those staffing levels. Reports indicated that officers choose to stay for overtime, which tended to fluctuate widely due to the varied number of youth on enhanced supervision levels at any given time due to suicidal ideation, self-harm behaviors, and any indication of intent to harm others. It was reported that there was greater need for DMH clinicians at the facility, and DMH reported that a hiring freeze had left them short staffed with five clinicians and one substance abuse counselor.

It was reported that some of the most senior DKC Probation officers were lost to due the move of girls and gender expansive youth out of the facility.

DKC leadership reported that they are looking to hire more DPOII T&Cs for extended clinical coverage. A Veteran DPOII T&C shared that the role was very valuable to youth as they wear different hats including a clinical hat and a supervision hat. DPOII T&Cs assisted other officers by sharing context about young people's reasoning and behavior choices, they are the "feedback loop" meaning that they are able to share feedback with



other officers in real time, through the DPO chat, and during Wednesday all staff meetings. It was reported that DPOII T&Cs provided at least 3 hours of case management support to youth daily, not including their clinical work. It was reported that DPOII T&Cs and DMH clinicians collaborated to provide services to youth at the needed intensity. These officers were also able to assess youth need for enhanced supervision in addition to and collaboration with their DMH counterparts.

DPOII T&Cs spend time in the cottages daily interacting with youth and officers. They write court reports for youth which are informed by their ability to understand the way that mental health symptoms can present as undesirable behaviors at times. One DPOII T&C reported concern about girls and gender expansive youth moved from DKC to Campus Kilpatrick due to the loss of DPOII T&C support.

Facility leadership reported ensuring that all Probation officers are trained appropriately for the site. However, a staff member shared with POC inspectors concerns about youth in their unit who would be served better “somewhere else” because “we can’t provide the intensive services they need” and that many of them have “a lot of trauma.” The staff member noted that the boys in DKC are often boys who are bullied in the community and end up in detention, painting a different picture of their vulnerabilities and intensive needs that the inspectors sometimes hear.

Call outs on the weekends can be a challenge, and facility leadership reported a plan to review recent call out trends. Currently, supervision staff work a “compressed 40” schedule which includes one 16-hour shift and three eight-hour shifts. This schedule was reportedly requested by officers to give them three regular days off. Officers who prefer a five-day shift may be assigned to the PM shift, which was 2-10pm, Monday-Friday.

A young person shared that at DKC “staff are more experienced; they know how to de-escalate.” In an effort to prevent violence from occurring when youth first come to the facility, housing considerations are made by the clinical team which base the assignment on needs and age; history at DKC is also considered. Another young person shared, “I really like the staff here” and compared this to their sense that at the juvenile hall they felt like it was “just a job.”

A 28-year Probation DPOII T&C who was finishing their career at DKC expressed enjoying their work at the facility. They reported taking pride in being part of the therapeutic culture of the facility and expressed understanding that youth need and benefit from the patience and talent that comes with senior clinical staff. They expressed concern for youth at other facilities needing the same level of services as is available at DKC.

Most officers interviewed expressed disagreement with the movement of girls and gender expansive youth from the facility to Campus Kilpatrick due to their belief that these youth were well served at DKC and based on information they had heard from colleagues about challenging conditions at Campus Kilpatrick. One staff shared that “changing the girls to CVK was not the best decision.” A Probation officer in one unit was working overtime at



DKC and shared “I love it here, it’s very calm here especially compared to [their regularly assigned detention facility]. It’s very homelike, very calm”.

Various officers complained about a lack of promotion opportunities in the Department. It was reported that numerous DPO I’s have been at DKC for 10 years or more but have not been able to promote despite efforts and work experience.

Facility leadership reported that they believe that gender-expansive youth likely under-report their identities for their own protection, however staff follow the youth’s lead with how they want to be identified. If a gender expansive youth is identified on site, protocol would be for staff to schedule an MDT and decide if CVK might be a better facility for the young person by discussing the issue with the youth to ask if they have a preference, and attempting to honor the wishes of the young person.

ROOM CONFINEMENT/HOPE CENTER

DKC utilized one cottage as a dedicated HOPE Center, where youth may go for a period of cool-down following an incident, to be housed temporarily or permanently as a result of medical fragility, or as ordered by a Specialized Supervision Plan (SSP). No youth were in the HOPE Center for any reason on the day of this inspection.

HARM REDUCTION

Contraband had not been an issue at the facility since the POC’s 2025 Annual Inspection.⁹ The main contraband point of entry was described as intake from LPJH, meaning youth carried contraband from juvenile hall when transferred to DKC. The most common illicit contraband found was vape pens, though recently matches and a note were found that may have been thrown over a facility wall.

DKC had a new security company, Citi Guard, which was put in place on August 1, 2025. This is the same security company utilized at LPJH. Security coverage included 24/7 perimeter and lobby coverage and a baggage and mail scanner which was implemented in late 2025.

DKC also has a drone prevention system in place. In recent months, DKC has only received two alerts from the drone monitor. DKC uses K-9’s to conduct searches after receiving drone alerts. No contraband was found since the POC’s 2025 Annual Inspection indicating use of drones to drop contraband into the facility.

Probation officers were observed carrying naloxone, also known as NARCAN, on their belts, and all officers asked had naloxone on their person. There have been zero deployments of NARCAN in the past 12 months. DMH and JCHS reported that their staff members are trained in identifying opioid intoxication, use of NARCAN, and are

⁹ [2025 Annual Inspection Dorothy Kirby Center](#)



empowered at the facility to carry the opioid overdose reversal medication if they should choose to do so.¹⁰

POC attempted to gauge harm reduction availability at the facility available via JCHS including Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), however JCHS reported not having the information readily available. It was indicated that JCHS believed that young people are typically taken off MAT prescriptions within one month of their arrival to DKC.

Young people were trained to use NARCAN and received certificates of completion, and young people do have access to the opioid overdose reversal medication at the facility as doses are stored in defibrillator boxes in each cottage.¹¹

OLEORESIN CAPSICUM (OC) SPRAY

OC spray was not an available use of force option at DKC. It was reported that the culture of the facility was built around a partnership of mental health clinicians and officers working to support youth, so deescalation and that verbal, trauma informed interventions were utilized in place of chemical intervention. Officers in the cottages reported that they could depend on their partners to help during crisis, and that they were accustomed to not using OC spray.

One youth shared that they would “much rather be restrained than OC spray any day.”

¹⁰ November 26, 2024 Motion: [Empowering Probation Providers to Carry Naloxone](#)

¹¹ In the March 7, 2023 Board motion: [Addressing Emergent Illicit Substances and Contraband Entering the Los Angeles County Juvenile Halls](#), Probation was directed to “make Narcan readily and easily accessible to youth”.



LOS ANGELES COUNTY PROBATION OVERSIGHT COMMISSION

APPENDIX A

- HPT Center ✓ *- CIT - people already identified ✓*

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PROBATION OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
INSPECTION REPORT FOR JUVENILE FACILITIES

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, SUITE 383
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 633-5777 • www.poc.lacounty.gov

General Information- POC Staff

Facility's Rated Capacity: _____ Population on Day of Inspection: 45 Number of Assigned Youth Outside of facility: 1 CT / 2 MED
(include total number of youth assigned to facility) (include court/ med. appt's/other)

# of girls	# of boys	# of gender expansive	Notes
	<u>45</u>		

# of youth identified with developmental disabilities	<u>7</u>
# of youth identified with Regional Center services	<u>7</u>
# of youth with CSEC history	<u>0</u>
# of youth with DCFS services	<u>8</u>

Has the facility exceeded capacity since the last inspection? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Since the last inspection, indicate the number of incidents for each category.

Suicides	<u>0</u>
Attempted suicides	<u>0</u>
Suicide Incidents	<u>0</u>
Narcan deployments	<u>0</u>
Deaths from other causes	<u>0</u>
Escapes and documented attempts	<u>0</u>
Emergency Room visits	<u>35 (3-28-2025 - 4-30-2026)</u>

Staffing- POC Staff

Who provided this information?	# of all supervision staff on day of inspection (GSN from night before, AM, PM, deployed staff, supervisors)	# of staff on leave(s) on day of inspection (GSN from night before, AM, PM, deployed staff, supervisors)	# of call-outs by supervision staff on day of inspection (GSN from night before, AM, PM, deployed staff, supervisors)	# of staff on holdover and overtime on day of inspection	# of deploy staff assign to the facility on day of inspection
<u>169</u>	AM: <u>46</u> PM: <u>3</u>	<u>16</u>	AM: <u>0</u> PM: <u>1</u>	<u>10</u>	