

# KINGS COUNTY JUVENILE HALL

## SUMMARY

The Kings County Grand Jury inquired into the condition and management of the Kings County Juvenile Hall.

## BACKGROUND

As part of an annual examination of the conditions and management of the Kings County public correctional facilities, the Kings County Grand Jury inquired into the Juvenile Hall. California Penal Code §925 provides: “The grand jury shall investigate and report on the operations, accounts, and records of the officers, departments, or functions of the county...”



## METHODOLOGY

The Kings County Grand Jury met with staff of the Probation Department and toured the facilities, including the Juvenile Center and the J. C. Montgomery School.

## DISCUSSION

The Kings County Probation Office, in a Message from the Chief, states:

*“Our mission is to protect the community we serve through enforcement of probation conditions, risk/needs assessments and the treatment and control of adult and juvenile offenders. Additionally, we provide intervention*

*services for at-risk youth, including teaching evidence based programs in local schools to meet the needs of this population.”*

The Juvenile Detention Facility located on 1424 Forum Drive in Hanford, CA is the only juvenile detention facility in Kings County. Once a juvenile is arrested by a police officer, several things may or may not occur depending on the nature of the offense:

- The arresting officer may release the juvenile back into the custody of the parent or guardian.
- The arresting officer may cite the juvenile, requiring him or her to appear at the probation department.
- The juvenile and the parent or guardian may be cited to appear at the probation department.
- The juvenile may be detained at the Juvenile Center based on the recommendation of the Probation Officer. If the juvenile is not released, he or she will be sent before a Juvenile Court Judge at a Detention Hearing where the judge will decide to detain or release. If detained, the juvenile becomes a ward of the county and is entered in as a resident of the Juvenile Center.

The Kings County Juvenile Detention Center is very similar to the design and functions of a jail facility geared towards the rehabilitation and care of juvenile offenders. The detention center contains medical facilities, psychological assessment facilities, dining hall, single and double occupancy rooms, and the J.C. Montgomery School.

### **JC Montgomery School**

Mission Statement:

*“We encourage positive choices to promote successful changes. Kings Community School’s Mission is to produce students who...*

- *...Acquire structure and discipline*
- *...Learn the importance of strong ethics and good character*
- *...Become more confident and universally aware*

- *...Develop essential skills and problem solving strategies*  
*...Set goals and plan for the future”*

The J.C. Montgomery School is an alternative school program operated by the Kings County Office of Education and located within the Kings County Juvenile Center. All students who attend the J.C. Montgomery School are court ordered to attend the school and are housed within the facility. In the 2012-2013 school year, J.C. Montgomery School served a total of 245 students in grades six through twelve. Students who graduate from the J.C. Montgomery School are awarded a high school diploma.

Youth housed in the Maximum Security Unit at the Juvenile Center are mostly detained youth who have aged into adulthood and/or youth that have behavioral issues that require a more secure setting. School is attended five days a week excluding weekends and holidays from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. Youths are taught at their present grade level but do not leave their housing units. Classes are held in the respective housing unit’s day room.

## **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Finding 1**

During the tour, the Kings County Grand Jury found the facility to be well maintained and the staff was engaged in their duties. The youth were respectful in their interactions with Probation Department staff, teachers and the members of the Grand Jury.

### **Recommendation 1**

None

## **COMMENTS**

The Grand Jury thanks the Staff of the Kings County Probation Department and Juvenile Hall for their hospitality during the very informative and instructive tour.

## **RESPONSE REQUIRED**

None

## **INVITED RESPONSES**

None