

# INSPECTION OF THE CHARLIE BYRD YOUTH CORRECTIONS CENTER

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## SUMMARY

The Charlie Byrd Youth Corrections Center (CBYCC) was contacted and arrangements were made to conduct a visit. The Civil Grand Jury found that the facility is well managed and operating efficiently.

## BACKGROUND

The Siskiyou County Probation Department operates a number of programs to work with youth who are placed under their control through court action. These programs include the Charlie Byrd Youth Corrections Center, the Charlie's Place Juvenile Day Reporting Center (JDRC), and the J. Everett Barr School.

The facility was built in 2005 and began operation in 2006. Design capacity for the Charlie Byrd Youth Corrections Center is 40 juveniles in residence. The JDRC is only limited by staff capability. There are ten juvenile correctional officers and seven probation officers. The budget for the combined program is \$1.6 million per year.

There is significant discussion concerning the proposed modification of the facility to become the new county jail. This would require a new location to be selected for the juvenile facility. This is currently under consideration by the County Sheriff, Probation Department, and Board of Supervisors.

## METHODOLOGY

The Civil Grand Jury inspected the physical layout of the facility and were shown the procedures for the handling of detainees from initial booking to release. In addition, facility operations, maintenance, security, and the handling of daily medical procedures were covered. Charlie Byrd staff assisted with the visit and answered questions concerning facility operations and procedures.

## DISCUSSION

The vision of the Siskiyou County Probation Department is to affect change for a safer community. The goal is to rehabilitate youth and re-unify families. The focus for each juvenile probation officer is to determine the needs of each youth and find the appropriate services to help them become successful in life. This will result in a safer community. Youth are referred or placed under County control to attend school, for individual programming, or a combination of both.

The JDRC is a weekend program for youth modeled after the very successful County Adult Day Reporting Center (DRC). They participate in community service programs, engage in individual counseling, and

develop pro-social skills. Evidence based programming includes anger management, cognitive behavioral thinking, and overcoming barriers. This helps provide accountability and guidance to youth who are successful at home but need additional resources. Youth enrolled in this program can utilize the DRC facilities on weekends when not used by the adults.

Youth who are truant or struggling in a regular classroom setting can attend school at the J. Everett Barr School "Charlie's Place" to accomplish their educational goals. Students will be able to focus on credit recovery for graduation or to better prepare to return to regular school systems. College preparation and additional educational help are available as needed.

When full-time detention is ordered by the court, youth are transported to the Tehama County Juvenile Hall on Monday morning and returned to Charlie Byrd on Friday afternoon. They will stay the weekend at the facility. Youth participate in community service work and pro-social activities on Saturday and Sunday; this includes meetings with counselors and staff.

Charlie Byrd is built around two housing units, each with twenty beds. When juveniles arrive, they receive a medical evaluation normally conducted by a nurse who is on call 24 hours a day. A medical doctor reviews admissions and any medications to be administered as needed. Personal possessions and clothing are placed in storage; on-site clothing is issued and cells assigned. Kitchen, laundry, and maintenance services are provided by staff on site.

Educational services are provided by the Siskiyou County Office of Education. A full-time teacher administers an Individual Education Plan (IEP) based on student needs. Topics can include subjects based on GED, high school, or beyond. This can include writing, cooking, science, physical education, sports, mental and physical health and other subjects offered in traditional schools. Additional topics such as gardening and equine therapy are also available. Once a student completes their high school or GED requirements, they can obtain permission to have jobs outside the center.

Youth are encouraged to participate in work activities. For example, on weekdays, youth, under staff supervision, handle the kitchen work. This gives them job experience and allows them to earn a certificate that permits them to work in the food service industry.

Positive and negative conduct is administered by a point system which is monitored for each juvenile. Points can be redeemed for movies or off-site activities such as bowling, tennis, etc.

A conflict resolution program is available and encouraged with the goal to reduce negative behavior and maintain harmony in the center. Grievances are handled promptly, recorded, and administered by senior staff as there is no corporal punishment on site.

Communication with families is allowed and encouraged. This can be accomplished through mail and collect telephone calls to parents. Visitation is scheduled for three days per week and limited to parents, guardians, and approved relatives. All juveniles are assigned an attorney. Consultations can be scheduled by request during normal operating hours.

## **FINDINGS**

F1: The Grand Jury found that Charlie Byrd Youth Corrections Center is well managed and operating efficiently. The staff is well trained, the center is clean and properly maintained. By transporting youth to the Tehama County Juvenile Hall, the cost per youth is lower than full-time on-site housing.

F2: Youth are monitored from a centrally operated control room with oversight over the entire facility.

F3: Educational opportunities are excellent and well managed to insure juveniles are given every opportunity to improve themselves.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Educational and social opportunities should be continued and expanded.

## **REQUEST FOR RESPONSES**

Pursuant to Penal Code section 933.05, the Siskiyou County Civil Grand Jury requests responses from the County Probation Department to findings and recommendations as appropriate.

Reports issued by the Civil Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code section 929 requires that reports of the Civil Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of a person who provides such information.