

MEETING DATE: July 25, 2022

AGENDA ITEM: B

TO: BSCC Chair and Members

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SUBJECT: Reinspection of Central Juvenile Hall, Los Angeles County Probation
Determination of Suitability – (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 209, subs. (a)(4) & (d))

- Central Juvenile Hall, Los Angeles County

Requesting Approval

Summary

This report provides an update on the ongoing monitoring of the Los Angeles County Juvenile Halls and requests the Board determine whether Central Juvenile Hall is a suitable place for the confinement of youth within the meaning of Welfare and Institutions Code section 209, subdivision (a)(4), following the reinspection of the Central Juvenile Hall in the County of Los Angeles for compliance with Section 1328 of Title 15 of the California Code of Regulations (Safety Checks).

Background

On November 15, 2021, the Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall and Central Juvenile Hall in the County of Los Angeles were notified that they were out of compliance with the Board's regulations. Specifically, and what remains at issue for the Board, is that Central Juvenile Hall was found to be out of compliance with Section 1328 of Title 15 of the California Code of Regulations. The Los Angeles County Probation Department provided a Corrective Action Plan on December 10, 2021; the facilities were to be reinspected for compliance in March 2022, and the facilities were scheduled for discussion before the BSCC Board on April 7, 2022 for a determination of suitability.

In March 2022, the Los Angeles County Probation Department moved youth out of Central Juvenile Hall prior to the scheduled inspection and the Board declined to take further action while the facility was not being operated as a juvenile hall. BSCC staff informed the Probation Department that they would conduct a reinspection of the Central Juvenile Hall when youth returned to the facility. Youth returned to the Central Juvenile Hall between May 18 and 25, 2022 and BSCC staff completed an inspection of the facility on June 1, 2022.

During this inspection, it was determined that the Central Juvenile Hall remained out of compliance with Section 1328, Safety Checks. Information reviewed during the inspection indicated that probation staff documented that they had completed safety checks within

the 15 minutes required by regulation; however, review of video revealed that several of those safety checks were not actually completed. In addition, there were several incidents in which probation staff documented that a room was “closed,” which signals that youth are outside of their room; however, video recordings showed that youth remained in their room after the time “closed” was documented on the safety check log. In multiple incidents, more than 15 minutes went by without documented or observable safety checks. These patterns occurred in multiple units across different shifts.

At the June 9, 2022 BSCC Board meeting, the BSCC Board found the Central Juvenile Hall not suitable for the confinement of minors pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 209, subdivision (a)(4). This determination of suitability began a 60-day period, after which the facility shall not be used for the confinement of minors until the Board finds, after reinspection of the facility, that the conditions that rendered the facility unsuitable have been remedied, and the facility is a suitable place for confinement of minors.

The Board requested that BSCC staff reinspect Central Juvenile Hall prior to the expiration of the 60-day time period to determine if the facility had corrected the issue of noncompliance for a potential finding of suitability at the next scheduled BSCC Board meeting.

Between July 18 and 20, 2022, BSCC staff completed a reinspection of the Central Juvenile Hall’s safety check documentation to determine compliance with section 1328, Safety Checks. During the reinspection, BSCC staff reviewed 325 safety checks across all shifts and units and reviewed video documentation of safety checks to verify compliance.

Based upon this reinspection and review, BSCC staff has determined that that the Central Juvenile Hall complies with section 1328, Safety Checks. Documentation for the safety checks reviewed during reinspection indicates that safety checks are being conducted within the 15-minute time required by the regulation. In addition, BSCC staff verified that safety checks were completed by reviewing video.

During this reinspection, BSCC staff also verified that the Los Angeles County Probation Department has implemented their corrective action plan, which includes administrative review, oversight, and observation of safety check documentation. Los Angeles County Probation has also pursued personnel actions when necessary. BSCC staff is also aware that the Department deployed additional staff including managers and supervisors from the field to focus on conducting safety checks in compliance with regulation.

BSCC staff are aware that the Department will be reassigning staff to both Central and Barry J Nidorf Juvenile Halls to temporarily assist with staffing shortages. BSCC staff strongly recommend that the Department continue to assign at least one (1) posted position dedicated to each building for the sole purpose of conducting safety checks. This recommendation will ensure that safety checks are completed in accordance with regulation as well as ensuring the safety of the youth in the care of the county.

While the Department has achieved technical compliance with section 1328, Safety Checks, BSCC staff remain concerned about ongoing issues at the Central Juvenile Hall. Central Juvenile Hall has required ongoing and continuous technical assistance during this period of reinspection and BSCC staff intend to focus on those issues as the 2020/2022 Biennial Inspection begins in the coming weeks.

Recommendation/Action Needed

Staff recommends that the Board:

1. Find the Central Juvenile Hall suitable within the meaning of Welfare and Institutions Code section 209, subdivision (a)(4).