



## Los Angeles County Probation COVID-19 Weekly Update August 21, 2020

**L.A. County Probation COVID-19 at a glance for the week ending August 21, 2020**

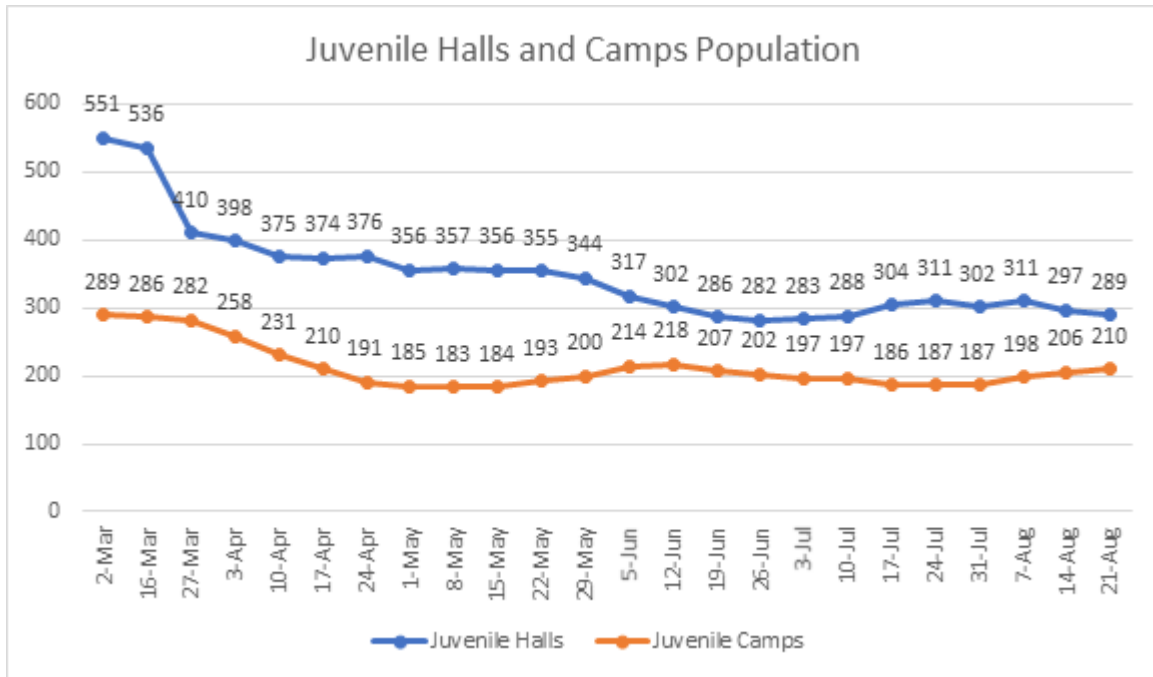
Youth testing positive for COVID-19 this week	<b>6 (2 upon admission, 1 while in care at BJNJH; 3 while in care at Camp Afflerbaugh*)</b>
Number of youth currently isolated from general population due to a positive COVID-19 test	<b>8</b>
Total number of youth testing positive upon intake since pandemic began	<b>42</b>
Total number of existing youth testing positive since pandemic began	<b>17</b>
Youth tested for COVID-19 this week	<b>133</b>
Total number of youth tested for COVID-19 since pandemic began	<b>1469 (773 youth tested upon admission; 474 tested from juvenile hall general population, 222 tested from camp general population.)</b>
Probation staff testing positive for COVID-19 this week	<b>7</b>
Probation Juvenile Institution staff testing positive for COVID-19 since pandemic began	<b>68</b>
Probation field and administrative staff testing positive for COVID-19 since pandemic began	<b>72</b>
Number of youth currently under quarantine due to exposure to individual testing positive for COVID-19	<b>99</b>

\*Youth who tested positive at Camp Afflerbaugh were transferred to Central Juvenile Hall.

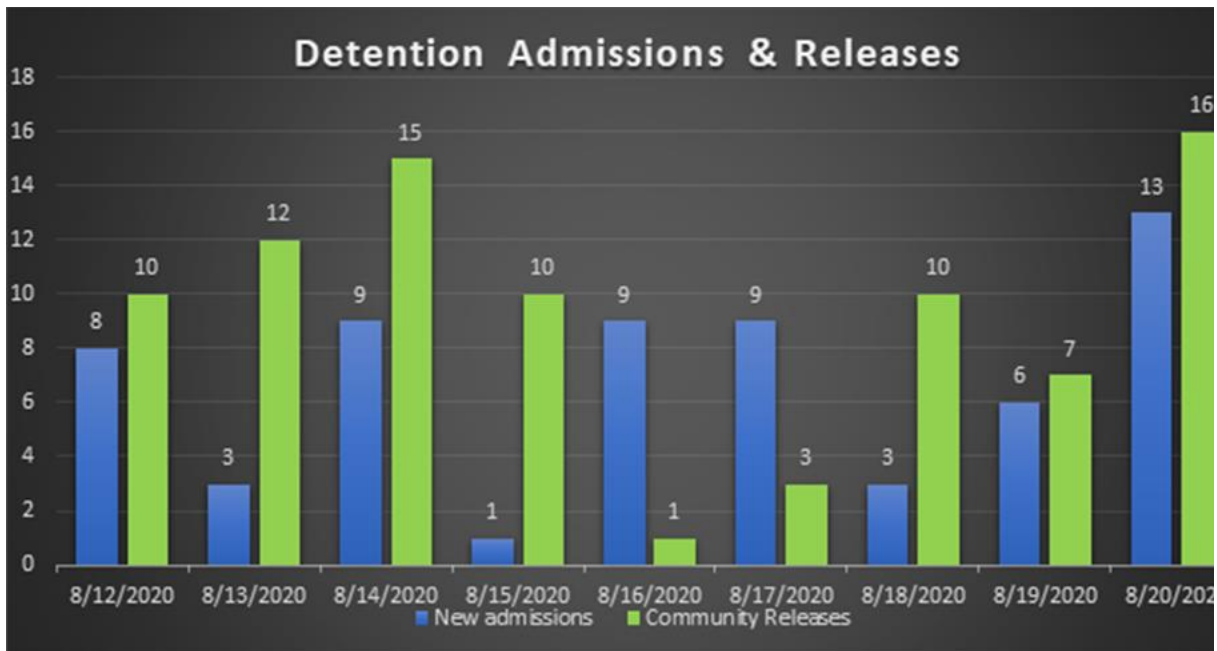
## Juvenile Division

### Reducing the Population in Juvenile Facilities

Over the last week, the Los Angeles County juvenile hall population dropped from 297 to 289 and the juvenile residential camp population increased from 206 to 210 over the same period. Since March 2, the juvenile hall population has decreased by 262 youth, or 47.5% and the juvenile camp population has decreased by 79 youth, or 27.3%.



The Probation Department's juvenile detention population experienced some rise in new admissions in recent weeks, however the continued efforts to release youth into the community has continued. The chart below provides a nine-day review of the new detention admissions for Central Juvenile Hall (CJH) and Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall (BJNJH). In addition, it illustrates the releases for the detention facilities.



The L.A. County Probation Department continues to work with the courts and legal partners on methods to safely reduce the juvenile population housed at Probation facilities. A new warrant protocol has been developed after other jurisdictions around the State were surveyed to find other tools instead of automatic detention for warrants. This exploration process led to a reimagining of the Warrant detention protocol. The protocol was developed, vetted with the courts and stakeholders, and was implemented June 23. Warrants led to approximately 30% of detentions before this change. The expectation is this new protocol will lead to reduced police/youth contact and a significant reduction in detention numbers.

### Health Care Services

Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS) continues to work with Probation facility staff regarding the care of the youth in the Quarantine and Isolation units to prevent potential spread of disease. JCHS nurses have trained selected Probation staff at the juvenile halls and camps for the use of infrared thermometers on all staff and visitors upon entry to the facility. A DHS Infectious Disease specialist is assigned to assist correctional facilities. He is a clinical resource for medical staff to help workflow and answer clinical questions.

The Department has continued to partner with JCHS to develop telemedicine services for assessment and consultation by medical staff and to build 24/7 capacity that currently does not exist. Telemedicine workstations are now operational in all juvenile halls and camps.

L.A. County Probation and Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS) continues to closely monitor the health of youth in Probation juvenile facilities. Besides testing youth displaying possible COVID-19 symptoms, all youth who are entering and departing juvenile hall for another facility are tested for COVID-19. Youth who have tested positive are housed in a designated isolation unit, separate and apart from other youth until cleared by medical

staff to return to a traditional housing assignment. Additionally, all youth in juvenile facilities are provided with masks.

### **Staff Health and Screening Measures**

The Department is screening every person entering a juvenile detention facility. Those attempting to enter a juvenile hall or camp at any time are required to verbally respond if they currently have new or worsening symptoms of a respiratory illness. If the individual's response is that they are experiencing symptoms, they will be restricted from entering the facility that day. The department is also conducting infrared temperature checks on all individuals entering juvenile facilities.

Employees testing positive are legally entitled to privacy and we will provide no further details at this time. For each employee who has tested positive, the County will notify potential workplace contacts, including other employees who may have been in close contact with the COVID-19 positive individual. All Probation staff have been instructed to wear face coverings in line with County and State Health Orders as part of an employee outreach campaign.

### **Staffing of Juvenile Facilities**

The Department ensures that all critical security and safety posts are staffed as required by the Board and State Community Standards and in accordance with the Department's Emergency Operations Plan. Contingency plans have been developed and put in place if facilities are not adequately staffed. Juvenile and Adult Field Operations have been designated to assist and have continued to report to the halls and camps since March 23, 2020.

### **Expanded Precautions at Probation Offices and Facilities**

In addition to efforts outlined in past updates, Probation has made additional efforts to keep youth and staff safe from COVID-19:

- The Department has issued masks to all staff and youth in juvenile halls and residential camps.
- A new shipment of infrared thermometers was received that will be distributed to Probation facilities across the County.
- The Probation Department has continued to make safety assessments of the Downey Headquarters facility and area field offices to ensure that physical distancing plans are arranged. The plans include having hand sanitizer dispensers, and place markings to create 6 feet spacing to allow for physical distancing.
- Probation's Management Services Bureau continue to provide janitorial services at facilities to ensure all bathrooms and staff quarters (where applicable) are cleaned

daily and have readily available hand soap, paper towels, toilet paper and disinfectant. The Department has also hired additional staff to clean and disinfect common touch areas twice per shift.

All Probation facilities have been instructed to conduct additional deep-cleaning efforts in high-traffic, high-volume areas, including visiting and health care facilities. Staff have also been granted permission to carry personal-use hand sanitizer. Public Health guidelines are reinforced daily to all staff and youth of the importance of social distancing and frequent handwashing.

### **Youth-Parent Communications**

In person weekend visitation is taking place at juvenile institutions where quarantines are not in place. This past weekend there were 35 youth who received in person visits at Central Juvenile Hall and 75 youth from camps received visits. In person visits were temporarily postponed at Barry J Nidorf Juvenile Hall due to the poor air quality that surrounded the Sylmar area as a result of the wildland fires and at Camp Afflerbaugh due to a quarantine in place at the facility.

Parents and guardians followed the safety precautions set in place, including outdoor visits, physical distancing, usage of hand sanitizing stations and having their temperature checked via infrared thermometers as well as a designated custodian who was responsible for cleaning chairs and tables after each visit. Procedures for visiting were sent out to parents as well as posted on the [Probation website](#). Increased collaboration and partnership with JCHS and the Department of Public Health took place to ensure health and safety is properly addressed as visiting sessions are reopened. The resumption of visitation at facilities is taking place as a phased, week by week approach, with safety focused criteria dictating the pace and locations.

The Probation Department continues to utilize virtual platforms for keeping families connected when in person visits are not available. Virtual visiting is also taking place in both the halls and the camps. Youth are still able to make free phone calls to families and are also provided with supplies for letter writing. The Department pays for all postage regardless of the number of letters a youth sends out.

### **Other Juvenile Facilities Highlights**

- The Probation Department is currently partnering with the Catholic Archdiocese and additional partners to establish in person church services for the youth outdoors with social distancing protocols set in place. In the interim religious services have continued to be held virtually. This upcoming weekend Father Greg Boyle will be presenting a recorded mass that will be distributed to all living units.
- The Probation Department Education Services division continues to strengthen the Youth Leadership Academy, as they partner with the United Parcel Service (UPS) and East Los Angeles Community College. During the month of August UPS is hosting virtual academy sessions that focus on a variety of themes that include, leadership, workplace safety, and interview skills. Youth participants from

the camps and juvenile Halls will have an opportunity to learn from and ask questions directly to the decision-makers at UPS. Participating youth must be at least 17 1/2 years of age with an interest in pursuing a career at UPS when they transition back to their communities.

- Probation Education Services has partnered with the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder's office to provide voter registration information to youth in the detention facilities. This initiative builds a sense of belonging, civic responsibility, and assists in community building. Education Services staff trained in voter education and are actively engaging with the youth to support them into the voter registration process. The pre-registration services are provided to youth between the ages of 16 and 17. The youth who are 18 years of age and older have completed their voter registration forms and are eligible to vote during elections.

### **Efforts to Address the Medically Fragile Population in Detention Facilities**

The Probation Department continues to not have any youth with compromised immune systems or other medical conditions placing them at higher risk for COVID-19 infection. As previously reported, if any youth have other underlying medical conditions which might exacerbate the impact of such infection if one were to occur, the Department will work with Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS) to assess and address those issues on a case by case basis.

### **Mental Health Services**

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) implemented virtual counseling kiosks in Juvenile facilities to supplement the existing in person services provided to youth.

### **School for Youth in Juvenile Facilities**

Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) efforts to provide a quality education to youth in Probation facilities during the pandemic can be found at <https://www.lacoe.edu/LACOE-Schools/Covid-19-Distance-Learning-Plan>.

### **Virtual Court Hearings**

Video Court for the halls continue to operate effectively. A youth that needs to attend court but is in a quarantined unit will not be transported to court.

### **Adult Division**

### **Field Probation COVID-19 Precautions and related activities**

Area offices remain closed to the public. Deputy Probation Officers continue to maintain contact with probation clients by phone, email and videoconference. Clients are encouraged to reach out to their assigned probation officer as well. The Department continues to conduct field visits and is prioritizing cases where there are vulnerable victims, sex offenders, and any other circumstances that are considered high risk or

require special attention. In addition to conducting safety checks, officers are providing COVID-19 Public Health information and resources. Additionally, the Department released a notice instructing adult field DPOs to work with clients experiencing financial difficulty as it relates to fines and fees. Adult clients continue to receive housing support through contracts with the Health Right 360 housing services.

### **CDCR Accelerated Release Project**

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) began conducting accelerated releases of approximately 3,500 inmates (includes DAPO and PRCS) in April 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic in an effort to “decompress” the prison population. Early on, it was only anticipated that approximately 650 being released statewide will be coming to Los Angeles County Probation for PRCS supervision. As the pandemic continued and the number of COVID-19 positive cases climbed, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) expanded the accelerated release criteria to include individuals that are set for release 180-days early, 1-year early, and those provided with credits of 12-weeks. Due the updated criteria, the new anticipated accelerated release is approximately 17.5K statewide. Historically, Los Angeles County Probation will receive 1/3 of the PRCS releases. The Department has been in regular virtual meetings with the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) and CDCR for coordination, information sharing, and trouble-shooting efforts. As a result of the accelerated releases, AB 109 staff have pulled back from redeployment into the institutions to address and case manage the influx of PRCS individuals. AB 109 staff are in the offices 1/3 of their work week, in the field conducting contact 1/3 of the time, and the teleworking the remaining 1/3.

The AB 109 Admin team is tracking all the names projected to be released early, including those being released from San Quentin. Information from those being released is being gathered from each of the prisons, including any COVID-19 information, such as negative and positive test results, quarantine and isolation periods. The AB 109 Pre-Release Center (PRC) is coordinating housing with CDCR and Project Hope. Project Hope is a State of California Housing Program for those that are being released either COVID-19 positive, or under quarantine status, who do not have housing upon release from prison. We are also working closely with our Department of Health Services (DHS) partners in coordinating medical care and housing for those who may be ineligible for Project Hope. We have been working closely with CDCR transport teams and our own MAT unit to facilitate many transports from the institutions to coordinated and agreed upon locations in Los Angeles County. Lastly, we are also keeping the Department of Mental Health (DMH) staff informed of any individuals needing mental health assessments or care, so they may be offered such services at the earliest opportunity in the community.

Deputy Probation Officers assigned to the Adult Division also continue to support the staffing in juvenile institutions.

### **Communication with the Public**

The L.A. County Probation Department, in conjunction with DPH, DMH, JCHS and LACOE, hosted a townhall July 22 to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on juvenile institutions and the Department's operations as a whole. The townhall can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/FutuMp8nY9o>. Below are some questions and answers that were not able to be answered during the townhall:

**Have Probation employees been instructed on the correct way on using a face mask?**

*Human Resources has provided a number of informational documents related to Coronavirus (COVID-19) and maintains a page on PROBNET (Probation's intranet) for the dissemination of all COVID-19 related information and the departmental response to the COVID-19 emergency.*

**Thank you for emphasizing the importance of the "mask over both the NOSE and MOUTH. My question is: "Can I reinforce the proper mask face cover when I see someone who is careless?"**

*If you feel you have a positive relationship with the person in question, you may broach the issue. However, you may always refer the issue to your immediate supervisor or the Officer of the Day or unit supervisor or shift leader, if deployed from a field operation.*

**Why is it that there are staff that are constantly being deployed to different camps and halls? all that does is create situations for contamination among other Staff, Minors, Field P.O.'S and in Area offices.**

*The Department is charged with ensuring the safety and security of all youth in their care. This includes guaranteeing that there are an appropriate number of staff on duty at any facility housing youth to provide for the safety and security of the children and staff. Field DPOs are deployed to support the daily staffing needs of any institution. For this reason, staff may be deployed to different facilities.*

**Many staff truly believe that we should not reopen offices until a Vaccine is obtained because reopening prematurely in California has proven to be more harmful with the uptick, and without a vaccine this would be a harmful process. Staff who want to go in should go in at their own risk, but reopening should only happen with a vaccine in place.**

*Reopening offices will be based on Los Angeles County Department of Health Services and Department of Public Health recommendations. Currently, Probation Department business offices are closed to the public. As guidelines change, the department will comply with county-led reopening guidance.*

**How has service delivery to primary assignment been impacted by Deployment?**

*Adult operations continue to be managed in accordance with expectations during these emergent situations. Face-to-face contacts have been significantly reduced due to office*



*closures, but DPOs are making contact with clients via telephone and facilitating services as appropriate consistent with Department of Public Health Guidelines.*

**In addition to the challenges of COVID-19, we're into fire season. For the wild land located or adjacent camps and halls, do we now have comprehensive evacuation protocol? If so, to what degree have staff been made aware of it, so they aren't having to learn during an emergency should one occur?**

*Yes, our contracted LASD EM leads have completed the wild land fire training and evacuation plans in the month of July for all juvenile institutions. Later training will involve field operations and admin staff.*

Other questions that were not able to be answered during the townhall will be addressed in future updates.

For information or services, clients and members of the community may call the juvenile facilities. For general questions, please contact the Probation Information Center at 866-931-2222 Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### **Future Updates**

The care of youth in Probation facilities is a joint effort between the L.A. County Probation Department, Juvenile Court Health Services, Department of Mental Health and the Los Angeles County Office of Education. During the COVID-19 crisis, these agencies have collaborated to create an environment of safety and stability for the youth under their care.

We are pleased that the situation in our juvenile facilities has remained largely stable during the COVID crisis and this creates an opportunity to respond to your needs for additional information about the situation. Accordingly, we invite questions related to the County's response to COVID-19 in its juvenile probation facilities or topics you would like to see addressed in future updates. Please email any questions to [prob-news@probation.lacounty.gov](mailto:prob-news@probation.lacounty.gov) and we will select questions and provide responses in future weekly updates. Please note that we cannot discuss the circumstances of any individual youth assigned to probation facilities or any pending litigation.

To view previous Probation COVID-19 updates, please visit <https://probation.lacounty.gov/coronavirus>.



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