



Santa Cruz County Commission on Justice and Gender

701 Ocean St
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
831-454-3400 (TTY/TDD: 711)
JAG@santacruzcounty.us

Minutes: Notice of Public Meeting and Agenda

Release and Reentry Subcommittee

Date: May 27, 2025
Time: 12:15pm – 1:45pm
Location: Monarch Services, 550 Water Street, Suite J3

Introductory Items

1. Call to Order / Roll Call: Meeting called to order at 12:17
 - 1.1 Present: Tara George, Esmeralda Torres, Stacey Palau, Sarah Fletcher, Hannah Taylor, Emma Ledvina, Sarah Kocjan, Savannah Hayes Desai
 - 1.2 Excused: Jesse Silva, Kristie Clemens

2. Public Comment

Any person may address the Subcommittee for a period not to exceed three (3) minutes on matters within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee. Subcommittee members will not take action on or discuss any topic not on today's agenda, but are permitted to ask staff to follow up and/or place the topic at a future meeting. Public comment will not exceed thirty (30) minutes. If there are additional persons still wishing to address the Subcommittee after this allotted period, public comment may be continued to the last item on the agenda.

Regular Agenda

3. Approval of Minutes from March 18, 2025 Meeting (Action Item)

Motion: Sarah Kocjan

Second: Tara George

Passed unanimously

4. Announcements by Subcommittee Members (Information Only)

4.1 Tara George read aloud the May 23 Email sent to JAG Commissioners regarding the recommended elimination of the JAG Budget, the action item at the May 8th JAG Commission meeting, and the letter Co-chairs would send to the Board of Supervisors, without input from Commissioners.

4.2 Sarah Kocjan talked about advocacy with Board members and efforts to continue to support JAG.

4.3 Stacey Palau provided an update on the Gemma house, transition plans, current situation for women living there, and commitment to keep those 6 beds for women. She also reported that the waitlist at New Life and the numbers of women was continuing to rise beyond what she has seen in 6 years – women coming out of custody, off the streets, leaving a violent relationship.

4.4 Esmeralda Torres gave an update on the Safe Release Program: 5 assessments for April, 3 women received vouchers for 2-4 nights. Monarch is also partnering with the SCSO to offer art classes once a month at Main Jail.

4.5 Polly was unable to attend and sent an email with the following numbers of women in custody as of 5.24.25 as well as additional Blaine Street programming information:

Total: 32 women

G = 13

H = 7

O = 1

Blaine St. = 11

Contact visits: 1

Commissioner Tara George offered clarification re previous discussion about jail staff reporting on number of women in custody on a Bench Warrant: she'd asked if there was any identifying information available to determine whether the Bench Warrant included a new charge but was not suggesting Bench Warrant numbers should not be reported. Suggested with or without additional identifying information this subcommittee should still collect that information.

WRRP Graduation coming up on Wednesday 5/28

Our first Blaine Street 8-week Culinary Arts for Adults cohort wrapped up yesterday with a wonderful ceremony. The next cohort will be in August.

The Blaine Garden is almost complete - start date for the Blaine Street Horticulture Class facilitated by the UC Master Gardeners on 6/13.

First Enneagram Prison Project Program to Blaine began 5/24 and will run through 6/1.

A four-week Goodwill Enterprises Employment Services class for G-Unit second cohort starts 6/2.

4.6 Sarah Fletcher gave a CAFES update: analysis shows if spending continues at same rate, they should be able to get through to February whereas in prior cohorts that was a challenge. Impacts of CalAIM unknown. Reiterated that the majority of CAFES referrals come through the Public Defender, District Attorney and Probation and encouraged nonprofit service providers to also make referrals. CAFES funding can help pay for substance use disorder and mental health treatment including recovery residences, outpatient, MAT, bridge housing, short term motel stays (case by case basis with example offered: if someone in and SLE relapses and is kicked out for 72 hours they can get a 3 night motel voucher); a peer support specialist can help with system navigation; intensive case management is offered in conjunction with peer support.

5. Discussion on Trauma Informed Care In and Out of Custody (Information Only)

5.1 Does jail staff have mandated Trauma Informed Care training? If so how often? Does it include a gender specific component?

5.2 New categorization of PREA cases and concerns expressed re fewer requests for an advocate.

5.3 Information shared re MAT and mental health medications post release: coming out with a supply is a huge help, however, the amount and type has several clients overmedicated coming into treatment so they need to get an appointment with a new provider to get an adjustment which takes a long time. "They don't come out and it's smooth sailing."

5.4 Discussion re MAT, and question re MAT data (and other) that is not disaggregated by gender; idea for each subcommittee to come up with list to

request specific data to be disaggregated by gender by SCSO, HSA, PD,
Probation, others?

6. Adjournment: 1:45pm

The County of Santa Cruz does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, programs or activities. If you wish to attend this meeting and require special assistance to participate, please call 831-454-3400 (TTY/TDD: 711) at least 72 hours in advance to make arrangements.