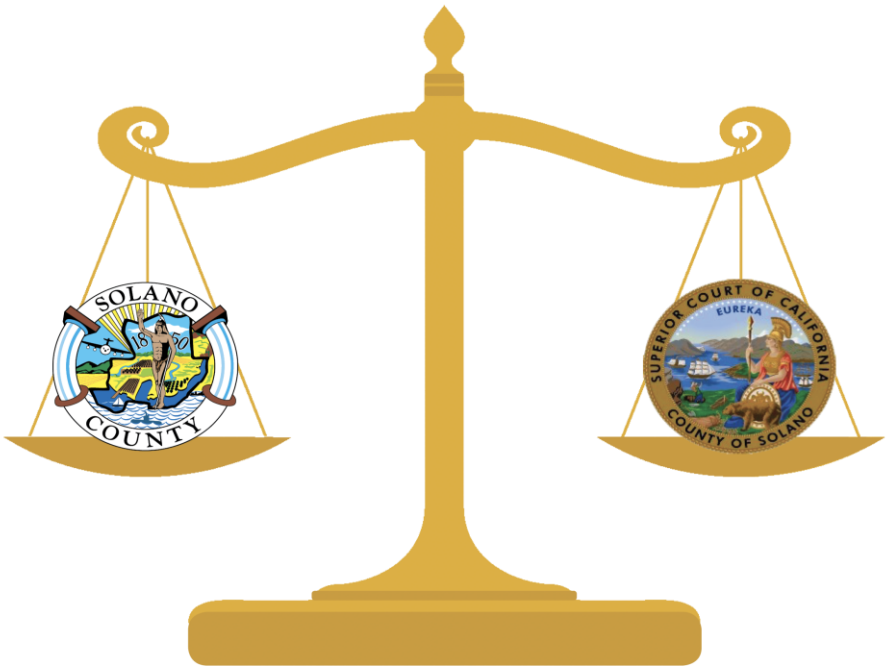


SOLANO COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY

2025-2026

SAVE OVER $10 MILLION BY CLOSING CLAYBANK JAIL

June 15, 2026

Save Over $10 Million by Closing Claybank Jail

2025-2026 Solano County Civil Grand Jury

I. SUMMARY

A re-examination of the Solano County Civil Grand Jury 2022-23 report "Assessment of Sheriff's Custody Division Operations" revealed several continuing financial issues. Further research has shown that the Sheriff's Office Custody Division could save the taxpayers of Solano County over $10 million by reevaluating its current allocation of facilities and staffing.

II. INTRODUCTION

The 2022-23 Solano County Civil Grand Jury report, "Assessment of Sheriff's Custody Division Operations," dated July 3, 2023, listed metrics demonstrating inefficiencies in the Sheriff's Custody Division, which cost the County millions of dollars each year. Expenses associated with overstaffing and a below average jail 34% occupancy rate continue as of April 2026.

The State Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) and the California Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) websites provide recommendations to increase occupancy percentages by closing dated facilities with high renovation costs. The LAO and the BSCC have real-time data to analyze trends within the state prison system and individual county jails.

The 2025-26 Solano County Civil Grand Jury decided to investigate the potential renovation costs and occupancy percentage of all three jails within the County, including strategies for increasing bed rates and security.

III. STATEMENT OF FACTS

A comparison of The Solano County Sheriff's Custody Budgets from 2017-18 to present uncovered several reasons why the metrics in the department show little or no improvement. With annual budget approvals from the Sheriff and Board of Supervisors, Solano County Custody Division continues to maintain and operate all three jails, including one jail (Claybank) with an occupancy percentage of 15% and scheduled for $13,393,000 in renovations in the next four years. In a January 1, 2023, *Daily Republic* news article, "Sheriff Wants To Develop New Police Academy in Solano," the Sheriff at the time was quoted as saying, "I have the space and the talent to do it [at the Claybank Jail Complex]," and he thought it could be adapted to help homeless residents in the right circumstances, as well.

The County's inmate population decreased by 58% from 856 inmates in 2017-18 to 501 inmates in 2024-25. However, overall budget costs continue to rise due to lack of adjustments in measurable metrics (*e.g.*, Average Daily Bed Rate, Inmate-to-Staff Ratio) and unchanged security staffing, despite these declining occupancy rates.

The Solano County Capital Facilities Improvement Program (CFIP) currently has several Sheriff/Coroner projects proposed for the next four years (2024-25 to 2028-29). The oldest of the three detention facilities, Claybank, is scheduled for $13,393,000 in renovations over the next four years. Closing, rather than renovating, the Claybank jail would align with the CDRC State recommendations to close older facilities with multi-million-dollar renovation price tags.

According to December 2025 BSCC statistics, Solano County Custody Division's occupancy rate of 32% was the lowest of all neighboring counties.

County	Occupancy Rate
Solano	32%
Contra Costa	47%
Napa	69%
Yolo	77%
Sonoma	81%

The BSCC allows for reported occupancy rate of over 100% without penalty and no minimum standard.

BSCC and other agencies conduct and publish regular jail inspections throughout the State to ensure compliance with Title 15 of the California Code of Regulations for keeping inmates in custody. The Solano County Custody Division has an excellent track record of compliance, often exceeding minimum requirements. Inspection metrics can vary depending on the size of each jail and types of jail designs, which can affect the average bed rate. The BSCC collects data from counties but does not recommend how to improve efficiencies and best practices in jails, such as reducing bed rates, adjusting security, or improving occupancy percentages to reduce budgets.

The cost of keeping an inmate in custody is generally measured by the average "daily bed rate" or the annual expense of keeping an inmate in custody. This expense is identified in the yearly County Budget as a custody workload indicator. According to the 2017-18 budget, the published bed rate was $178 per day, with the annual expense rate of $65,329 per inmate. According to the 2024-25 budget, the published bed rate had risen to $503 per day, with an annual expense of

$183,595 per inmate. In eight years, from 2017 to 2025, the cost of keeping an inmate in custody has gone up 282%.

According to BSCC statistics and Solano County published reports, Solano County has three detention facilities, with a total inmate capacity of 1,439. A detail of the inmate allocation in the jails as of April 14, 2026, showed:

Facility	Total Capacity	Population on April 14, 2026	Percentage of Capacity	Total Sections	Occupied Sections
Justice Center	689	205	30%	24	12
Stanton	365	222	61%	12	12
Claybank	385	59	15%	16	4

A photo of the Justice Center Detention Facility

A photo of the interior of the Justice Center

A photo of the Stanton Correctional Facility

A photo of the Claybank Detention Facility

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) made recommendations in a 2026-27 Budget Summary for expense reductions which align with LAO. Findings include closing jails while maintaining a significant buffer to manage unexpected jail populations, reducing operational costs by $150 million and avoiding the need for infrastructure projects at closed jails. Sheriff's Office staff verbalized concerns regarding the ability to provide sufficient separation among inmates who might have incompatible classification issues, such as gang affiliations, race, or behavioral health concerns. There appears to be more than adequate room to maintain these divisions in the two remaining facilities.

Cost metrics could be improved by leasing bed space to other counties. Leasing can generate more revenue and improve metrics by decreasing the bed rate and increasing occupancy percentage. However, leasing options are temporary, not a permanent solution.

The number of custody full time employees (FTE) per inmate has an impact on annual expenses for housing inmates and the published bed rate. Despite experiencing a 58% decline in inmate population, the Custody Division still maintains approximately 285 FTE (from 2017 to present).

The Custody Division hires 20-25 custody officers each year. Turnover is high due to retirements, promotions to Deputy, and other reasons. The LAO has suggested a one-to-three year hiring freeze so that facilities can make adjustments reassigning staff and inmates from closing facilities to current jails without laying off staff.

Staff engages with other counties to review best practices. One example: increase revenue by charging inmates more for phone services. No best practice examples were given for improving occupancy percentage, nor increasing security productivity. When asked about how the current Grand Jury could help facilitate suggestions, staff responded that they are not in need of any help.

In the 2022-23 Grand Jury report, one recommendation was to hire a professional consultant to review the Custody Division in an effort to improve the metrics of the Division. Current staff stated they had sufficient in-house expertise to manage their budget. The County Budget Analyst and Board of Supervisors review and approve the Custody Division's budget annually.

IV. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FINDING 1 – Proposed renovation of the older Claybank facility is estimated to cost over $13 million dollars and does not meet the CFIP's standard of "improving efficiency and operations improvement." Such an unnecessary expenditure would negatively impact the County's finances. As of April 4, 2026, the Claybank facility had an extremely low occupancy percentage of 15% with two other facilities available. Closing Claybank would increase the overall jail occupancy rating to 47% and still be well below 100%.

RECOMMENDATION 1A – The Board of Supervisor reject at its first opportunity the CFIP proposal to renovate the Claybank facility and save the County General Fund over $13 million dollars in capital improvements.

RECOMMENDATION 1B – Solano County close the Claybank facility within a year from the date of this report and reassign inmates and security staff to the other remaining facilities.

RECOMMENDATION 1C – Solano County perform a "warm closure" or find alternative suitable uses of the Claybank facility by December 2027.

FINDING 2 – The Solano County Sheriff's Office has hired a surplus of Custody Officers, negatively impacting the County's finances.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – By July 1, 2027, impose the LAO recommended one-to-three year hiring freeze for custody officers to align security staffing with other neighboring counties, potentially saving the County an additional $3,750,000 per year in FTE costs. A hiring freeze, plus staff attrition, promotions, and retirements would minimize undue layoffs. Reducing Custody officer positions to an acceptable level could provide adequate staffing for 600 inmates.

FINDING 3 – At the time of this report, Solano County does not lease inmate bed space to other counties, which negatively impacts metrics and revenue.

RECOMMENDATION 3 – Within six months of the date of this report, offer or lease inmate bed space to improve underperforming metrics and generate revenue. The Justice Center and Stanton facilities have sufficient capacity to house all local inmates while also leasing over 500 beds.

FINDING 4 – The Sheriff's Office has not engaged outside consultants in the last ten years to review their financial situation, which could lead to perpetuation of the current underperforming situation.

RECOMMENDATION 4A – Hire an unbiased third-party professional consultant by the end of 2026 to review the Custodial Division budget and make recommendations or suggestions to reduce their budget within three months.

RECOMMENDATION 4B – By March 1, 2027, post position descriptions and interview for volunteer candidates to a citizen oversight committee. The goal being to provide feedback to the Sheriff's Office about performance, as well as suggestions for improvement. Appoint such committee by July 1, 2027.

V. COMMENTS

Programs which have helped reduce the population of inmates include:

Jail Based Competency Treatment (JBCT) – an in-jail program funded by the Department of State Hospitals. JBCT was designed to restore competency in individuals found Incompetent to Stand Trials and reduce the inmates' jail time waiting to be transferred to a state facility.

Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) – additional training for first-responders. CIT is intended to reduce the severity of negative and/or violent emotional events which may lead to arrest and/or incarceration.

Mobile Crisis Units (MCUs) – mobile units dispatched to scenes of behavioral health calls for service, along with first-responders. MCUs provide additional expertise in review of options, which may include choosing medical treatment or incarceration. These programs reinforce the idea of getting reduced times of incarceration or proper treatment without incarcerating individuals, thereby reducing Solano County's daily inmate population.

Although the above three programs reduced the jail populations, none of them increased the Solano Custody Division budget because these programs were funded by the CDCR, local police agencies, and the Solano County Health and Social Services Department.

VI. METHODOLOGY

Documents reviewed:

Solano County Civil Grand Jury 2022-23 report Assessment of Sheriff's Custody Division Operations dated July 3, 2023, with responses

Solano County Recommended Budgets for 2017-18 through 2024-25

Solano County Capital Facilities Improvement Program (CFIP) report under Sheriff/Coroner category for 2024-28 proposed projects

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDRC) recommendation for 2026-27 Budget summary of expense reduction

California Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) website and statewide statistical information

Legislative Analysts Office (LAO) website for jail recommendations to reduce expenses

Daily Republic article Jan 1, 2023, "Sheriff wants to develop new Academy in Solano"

Daily Republic article October 27, 2024, "Jail costs, capacity continue to flare"

Solano County Sheriff's office request for information February 2026 containing diagrams of detention facilities with staffing, average daily populations, bed rate calculations, fixed costs of facilities, needs assessment studies and vocational training (Attachment A).

Recommended budget reviews of other counties including Contra Costa, Napa, Sonoma, and Yolo.

Interviews:

Solano County Administrative staff interview

VII. REQUIRED RESPONSES

Solano County Sheriff/Coroner (All findings)

Solano County Board of Supervisors (Findings 1 and 4)

COURTESY COPIES:

Solano County Administrative Officer

Solano County Capital Improvement Program Department

Solano County General Services

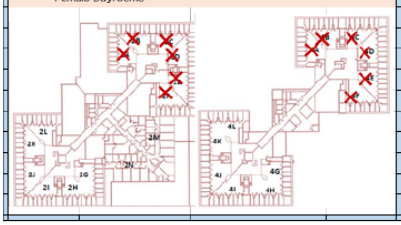
California Board of State and Community Corrections

Attachment A – Custody Totals, April 2026

JUSTICE CENTER DETENTION FACILITY

DAYROOM	BSCC RATED BEDS	INMATE CLASSIFICATION	4/14/2026
FF2A	28	CONSTRUCTION	0
FF2B	28	CONSTRUCTION	0
FF2C	29	CONSTRUCTION	0
FF2D	27	CONSTRUCTION	0
FF2E	28	CONSTRUCTION	0
FF2F	29	CONSTRUCTION	0
FF2G	28	MALE MINIMUM IQH	18
FF2H	28	MALE MEDIUM IQH	13
FF2I	28	MALE MAXIMUM IQH	11
FF2J	28	MALE MAXIMUM OVERFLOW IQH	11
FF2K	32	MALE MAXIMUM (POST 10-DAYS)	18
FF2L	32	MALE MEDIUM/MINIMUM (POST 10-DAYS)	25
FF2M	NR	MEDICAL	0
FF2N	NR	MEDICAL	11
FF2Z	5	ADSEP - ISOLATION	0
	350		
		BOOKING(NO HOUSING)	*11*
FF4A	28	CONSTRUCTION	0
FF4B	28	CONSTRUCTION	0
FF4C	27	CONSTRUCTION	0
FF4D	28	CONSTRUCTION	0
FF4E	27	CONSTRUCTION	0
FF4F	28	CONSTRUCTION	0
FF4G	28	MALE PROTECTIVE CUST. IQH	15
FF4H	28	MALE PROTECTIVE CUST. (POST 10-DAY)	20
FF4I	28	MALE PROTECTIVE CUST. (POST 10-DAY)	22
FF4J	28	FEMALE IQH	7
FF4K	28	FEMALE MEDIUM (POST 10-DAY)	10
FF4L	28	FEMALE MAXIMUM/MINIMUM (POST 10-DAY)	12
FF4Z	5	MEDICAL ISOLATION	0
	339		
	689	JCDF Inmate Count	265
	Rated Beds		30%
	OP Beds	59%	350

Female Dayrooms



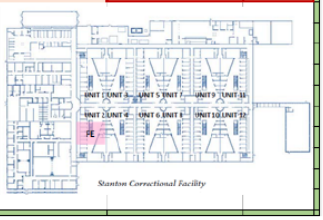
CLAYBANK DETENTION FACILITY

DAYROOM	BSCC RATED BEDS	INMATE CLASSIFICATION	4/14/2026
2 1 A	18	UNOCCUPIED	0
2 1 B	18	UNOCCUPIED	0
2 1 C	18	UNOCCUPIED	0
2 1 D	18	UNOCCUPIED	0
2 1 E	18	MINIMUM	15
2 1 F	18	MINIMUM	16
2 1 G	18	MEDIUM	13
2 1 H	18	MEDIUM	15
2 1 I	18	EMPTY COVID19 PRECAUTIONS	0
2 1 J	18	EMPTY COVID19 PRECAUTIONS	0
2 1 K	18	EMPTY COVID19 PRECAUTIONS	0
2 1 L	18	EMPTY COVID19 PRECAUTIONS	0
2 1 M	24	EMPTY COVID19 PRECAUTIONS	0
2 1 N	24	EMPTY COVID19 PRECAUTIONS	0
2 1 O	24	EMPTY COVID19 PRECAUTIONS	0
2 1 P	24	EMPTY COVID19 PRECAUTIONS	0
2 1 Q	18	MEDIUM (w/GENSEP-ADSEP)	0
2 1 R	18	MEDIUM (w/GENSEP-ADSEP)	0
2 1 S	18	MINIMUM	0
2 1 T	16	TBD	0
Z1	1	DISO /QUAR / ISO	0
Z2	1	DISO /QUAR / ISO	0
Z3	1	DISO /QUAR / ISO	0
	385		
		(NO HOUSING)	*0*
	385	CDF Inmate Count	59
	Rated Beds		15%
	OP Beds	31%	190

Female Dayrooms

STANTON CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

UNIT	BSCC RATED BEDS	INMATE CLASSIFICATION	4/14/2026
UNIT 1	24	MAX / ADSEP	16
UNIT 2	26	FE MED / MIN	9
UNIT 3	25	MAX / ADSEP	23
UNIT 4	26	MAX / ADSEP	16
UNIT 5	33	JBCT/ADSEP	9
UNIT 6	33	PC / ADSEP	19
UNIT 7	33	PC / ADSEP	22
UNIT 8	33	PC / ADSEP	18
UNIT 9	33	MEDIUM	24
UNIT 10	33	MEDIUM / ADSEP	23
UNIT 11	33	MEDIUM	23
UNIT 12	33	MEDIUM	20
	365		
		(NO HOUSING)	*0*
	365	SCF Inmate Count	222
	Rated Beds		61%
	OP Beds	61%	365
	*Female Dayrooms	Total Inmate Count:	486



Attachment A shows, for the Justice Center Detention Facility, the Claybank Detention Facility and Stanton Correctional Facility, data for the categories: Dayroom, BSCC Rated Beds, and Inmate Classification. It also includes graphic floorplans of each jail.