



County of Orange

County Executive Office

August 13, 2024

Honorable Maria D. Hernandez
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Subject: Follow-Up Responses to 2022-23 Grand Jury Reports

Dear Judge Hernandez:

Please find attached the approved follow-up responses from the County of Orange Board of Supervisors for the 2022-23 Grand Jury Reports.

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Fernandez of the County Executive Office at 714-834-7219.

Sincerely,

Signed by:


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Michelle Aguirre
Acting County Executive Officer

Enclosure

cc: 2022-23 Orange County Grand Jury Foreman
Lilly Simmering, Deputy County Executive Officer
Lisa Fernandez, Director of Performance Management and Policy
Elizabeth Guillen-Merchant, Director of Performance Management and Policy



GRAND JURY FOLLOW-UP RESPONSES 2022-23

GJ Report	Recommendation	Response	Follow up Response
<p>Gimme Shelter and a Pound of Advice</p>	<p>R3: By October 1, 2023, OC Community Resources and Orange County Animal Care should review their current staffing allocations of Animal Care Attendants to reflect NACA guidelines and to provide appropriate staffing allocations for animal care, feeding and enrichment. (F3, F4)</p>	<p>The recommendation requires further analysis. Reviewing of staffing allocations is ongoing and OCHRS, OCCR and OCAC are working collaboratively toward achieving and maintaining full staffing levels. Staff at OCAC are the program's most valuable resource. When full staffing is achieved, the staffing model will be analyzed over a six-month period and allocations will be reviewed by OCHRS in line with industry recommendations.</p>	<p>OCAC continues to work collaboratively with OCHRS toward achieving and maintaining full staffing levels with appropriate classifications. The staffing model has been analyzed and the allocations of Animal Care Attendant positions, along with other classifications which interact with and care for the animals in the shelter were reviewed. This review utilized a variety of standards, including the NACA calculator, for determining kennel staffing needs and concluded that the current staffing levels are sufficient.</p>
<p>Gimme Shelter and a Pound of Advice</p>	<p>R4: By October 1, 2023, OC Community Resources and Orange County Animal Care should review their current staffing allocations of all positions within the OCAC and reallocate resources to increase Animal Care Attendants to reflect NACA guidelines to provide appropriate staffing for animal care, feeding, and enrichment. (F3, F4)</p>	<p>The recommendation requires further analysis. Reviewing of staffing allocations is ongoing and OCHRS, OCCR and OCAC are working collaboratively toward achieving and maintaining full staffing levels. Staff at OCAC are the program's most valuable resource. When full staffing is achieved, the staffing model will be analyzed over a six-month period and allocations will be reviewed by OCHRS.</p>	<p>OCAC continues to work collaboratively with OCHRS toward achieving and maintaining full staffing levels with appropriate classifications. The staffing model has been analyzed and the allocations of Animal Care Attendant positions, along with other classifications which interact with and care for the animals in the shelter were reviewed. This review utilized a variety of standards, including the NACA calculator, for</p>



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<p>Gimme Shelter and a Pound of Advice</p>	<p>R5: By December 31, 2023, Orange County Animal Care management should review and update policies, procedures, guidelines, and practices to assure they are accurate and reflect current operating practices. (F5)</p>	<p>The recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented in the future. The County will be contracting with an independent consultant to focus concentrated efforts on review and update of policies, procedures, guidelines and practices. Although paused during the COVID-19 lockdown and post-lock down due to staffing shortages, review and update of policies, procedures, guidelines and practices have resumed. Included in the contracted scope will be identification of organizational responsibility of this function and a process for ongoing review, consideration, and introduction of new P&Ps.</p>	<p>determining kennel staffing needs and concluded that the current staffing levels are sufficient.</p>
			<p>As with all agencies, policies and procedures (P&Ps) continuously evolve. In the fall of 2023, a consultant completed an initial review and staff continue to update P&Ps in a priority sequence.</p>



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<p>Gimme Shelter and a Pound of Advice</p>	<p>R6: By June 30, 2024, the Board of Supervisors should evaluate the strategic option of creating a Joint Powers Authority for the County and fourteen contract Cities to take ownership and shared responsibility for the financial and operating policies and practices of OCAC. (F1 thru F16)</p>	<p>Requires further analysis. Agreements between the County and the 14 partner cities that contract for animal care services expire in 2026. Options for future services delivery models will be evaluated in advance of expiration of contracts.</p>	<p>The recommendation has been evaluated and was determined not to be a strategic option for the County to pursue.</p>
<p>Welcome to the Neighborhood</p>	<p>R2: By December 31, 2024, Orange County cities and the County of Orange should collaborate in their efforts to create ordinances for the regulation of group homes, including the development of model ordinances. (F6, F7, F9)</p>	<p>The recommendation requires further analysis. The County welcomes the recommendation by the Grand Jury; however, the County needs additional time to research the best forum for facilitating such a discussion with the cities. In 2022, the County created a sober living home ad hoc to study implementing a model ordinance countywide.</p>	<p>The County is actively monitoring sober living home legislation and related court cases in California. The County proposed legislation to the State SB 1334 (2023/2024), that would have specifically allowed local land use regulation of sober living homes, but the legislation was not moved forward out of committee. As these issues navigate through the court system, the County continues to collaborate with city leaders and local law enforcement agencies to evaluate strategies and regulations that ensure community well-being while complying with legal requirements. Once court rulings provide clarity, the County will</p>



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<p>Welcome to the Neighborhood</p>	<p>R4: The County of Orange and Orange County cities should create a Task Force that includes representatives from OC cities, unincorporated areas, and other entities as appropriate and charge it with the responsibility of developing a plan to generate awareness among State legislators and regulators of the need for improved regulations and management standards to ensure health and safety for Group Home residents. To be implemented by July 1, 2024. (F2, F10, F11)</p>	<p>This recommendation requires further analysis. Individual Supervisors are already collaborating with stakeholders in their districts where these issues are relevant. The County regularly informs state legislative leaders on the need for reform. In 2022, the California Sober Living and Recovery Task Force was established by the City of Mission Viejo, with the goal of working collaboratively to address issues related to the proliferation of sober living and recovery homes. Impacted cities, state officials, and law enforcement have joined that growing task force and they began meetings in 2023. The County Board of Supervisors formed the “Group Home/Sober Living Ad Hoc” in 2022 to explore issues related to Sober Living Homes in Orange County, including the effectiveness of current policies, and the potential need for updated policy recommendations for the County and other</p>	<p>take action to address these concerns effectively, including creating ordinances, as permissible.</p>
			<p>Since this report was issued, the Board of Supervisors has reviewed, and no Task Force will be established. The Board has supported or sponsored four bills related to sober living home reform and held multiple advocacy meetings with the County’s legislative delegation members, policy committees and legislative leadership.</p>



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<p>Welcome to the Neighborhood</p>	<p>R5: Orange County cities and the County of Orange should modify code enforcement report data collection forms to include a searchable field that enables the identification of a residence operating as a group home. To be implemented by July 1, 2024. (F5, F7, F11)</p>	<p>local jurisdictions.</p> <p>This recommendation requires further analysis. The County welcomes the recommendation by the Grand Jury; however, the County needs additional time to research the best forum for facilitating such a discussion with the cities. In 2022, the County created a sober living home ad hoc that can be refocused to study the implementation of this recommendation. Unless a group home is reported to the County, there is no feasible way to determine whether homes are being used as group homes. Once a group home is identified, code enforcement can track this data. Moreover, a searchable field allowing for certain homes to be identified as group homes may create animus towards residents when the best solution may be voluntary compliance with the County's ordinance.</p>	<p>Without reporting to the County, it is impractical to ascertain if homes are being utilized as group homes. Once a group home is identified, code enforcement may monitor this information. Furthermore, implementing a searchable field to identify certain homes as group homes may unfairly stigmatize residents, while voluntary compliance with the County's ordinance remains the preferred approach.</p>



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<p>Russian Roulette: Fentanyl in Orange County</p>	<p>R2: By July 1, 2024, the Orange County Board of Supervisors, the Orange County District Attorney, and the Orange County Sheriff should lobby the California State Legislature to add fentanyl to the list of drugs subject to penalty enhancements in felony drug convictions and to add statutory authority for judicial admonishments when drug dealers and traffickers are convicted of fentanyl-related crimes. (F4, F5, F6)</p>	<p>The recommendation requires further analysis. Since 2016, The Board of Supervisors has supported fifteen bills on fentanyl legislation at both the State and Federal level. Most recently supporting HR 467, the Halt All Lethal Trafficking (HALT) of Fentanyl Act, that would permanently place fentanyl-related substances into Schedule 1 of the Controlled Substances Act – the strictest level of control currently in place by the Drug Enforcement Administration. In regard to specifically adding fentanyl to the list of drugs subject to penalty enhancements in felony drug convictions and add statutory authority for judicial admonishments when drug dealers and traffickers are convicted of fentanyl-related crimes, the Board of Supervisors will need to work with OCSD and District Attorney to determine whether to implement or not.</p>	<p>Since this report was issued, the Board of Supervisors has supported or sponsored two bills related to fentanyl treatment and prosecution and held multiple advocacy meetings with the County’s legislative delegation members, policy committees and legislative leadership.</p>