

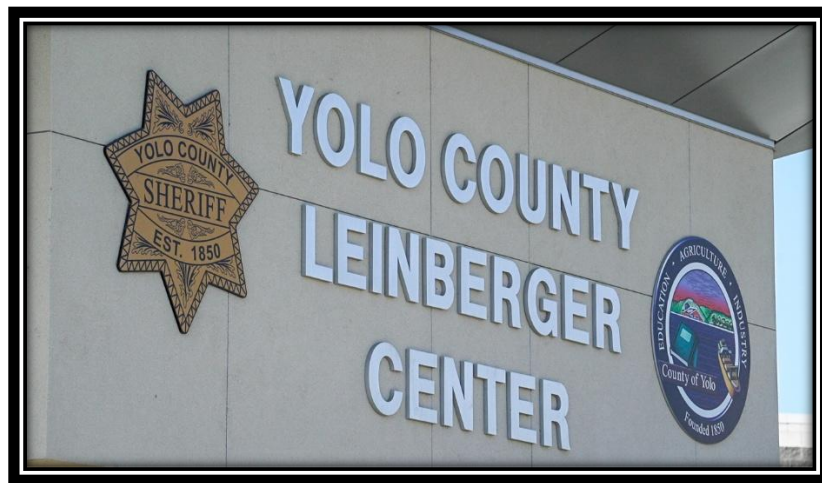


# Yolo County Civil Grand Jury

2025-2026

## Yolo County Detention Facilities Correctional Officer Staffing Issues Continue!

Released: Jun 18, 2026



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## 1 RESOLUTION

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### The Yolo County Civil Grand Jury 2025-2026

#### Approves by Resolution the Yolo County Detention Facilities Report

**WHEREAS**, the 15 members of the 2025-2026 Yolo County Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) conducted investigations and prepared an investigative report; and

**WHEREAS**, as is customary, the Grand Jury's specialized committees were each given primary responsibility for determining the investigation strategy, conducting interviews, gathering evidence, and producing reports; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** as follows:

1. The Grand Jury finds the foregoing recitals are true and correct.
2. By adoption of this Resolution, the Grand Jury hereby approves the report, with the member count as shown below.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Grand Jury this 12th day of May 2026, as follows:

AYES: 13 Jurors  
NOES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: 2 Juror

Signed,  
*Richard Zeiger*  
Richard Zeiger, Foreperson

## **2 SUMMARY**

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The 2025-26 Yolo County Civil Grand Jury inspected the Yolo County Monroe Detention Facility (MDF) and the Walter J. Leinberger Detention Center (LDC) on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The Yolo County Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF) was inspected on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

The MDF houses adult males and females and the JDF houses juvenile wards. The LDC, while complete, is only open for some administrative needs and not open to house adult inmates due to continued staffing shortages. There is still no specific timeline for opening as of the December 2025 tour date. When staffing levels improve, the LDC will house low-risk adults, with an emphasis on providing educational enrichment and life skills programs as well as a focus on the medical needs of incarcerated persons.

### **2.1 BACKGROUND**

California Penal Code section 919 (b) indicates that, “The grand jury shall inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons with the county.” To fulfill this statutory obligation, the Grand Jury visited the MDF and the JDF. The MDF is managed by the Yolo County Sheriff’s Office (YCSO), while the Yolo County Probation Department oversees the JDF.

### **2.2 APPROACH**

Before the MDF tour, the Grand Jury watched a training video developed by the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) to learn about visitor requirements and expectations. The Grand Jury also used questions developed by the BSCC related to all areas and activities within a facility to encourage a better understanding of the facility and its operations. Grand Jurors were able to add their own questions to ask, as desired.

Upon arrival at the MDF, the Grand Jury met with the facility’s Correctional Command team. An approximately half-hour discussion commenced covering many topics about jail operations as well as challenges the team faces, primarily staffing of correctional officers, and how that impacts operations.

After the conversation with the Command team, the Grand Jury toured several areas within the MDF, including intake booking and release, the healthcare wing, housing pods, recreation yards, main kitchen, laundry, central control, staff offices/training rooms, and classrooms. The Grand Jury did not formally interview anyone but did speak with several correctional officers, supervisors, and incarcerated persons.

Grand Jury members reviewed reports from earlier grand juries over the last several years in which several recommendations were made regarding visitation, inmate programs, safety features and recruitment.

### 3 DISCUSSION

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#### 3.1 GENERAL

During the four-hour tour of the MDF, the Grand Jury found that the facility was in good order. Conversations with incarcerated persons were mostly positive, with praise given for the staff, medical care, and the quality of food.

From the previous 2024-2025 Grand Jury tour on December 9, 2024, there were 271 incarcerated persons at the MDF, 23 of which were female. At their follow-up meeting on May 9, 2025, there were 259 incarcerated persons, 24 of which are female. Currently, as of 03/10/2026, the MDF has 259 people incarcerated (229 male inmates and 30 female inmates).

#### 3.2 STAFFING CHALLENGES

In conversations with the MDF Command team, staffing levels are not where they should be, and this is an ongoing issue. In 2021 the MDF and LDC received a staffing analysis conducted by Justice Planners. Justice Planners, per their website at [www.justiceplanners.com](http://www.justiceplanners.com) is “a criminal justice and corrections consulting firm that provides technical assistance, project management, standards compliance, training, analyses and audits of jails, detention centers, county prisons, courts and community-based organizations. With over 35 years of experience, the staff at Justice Planners is committed to improving the image and professionalism of corrections. In this analysis the Justice Planners recommended an increase in full-time employees (FTE) of 37%. Along with Justice Planners recommendation for staffing the agency also reviews documents from California Title 15 - Minimum Standards For Local Detention Facilities, the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) and American Correctional Association (ACA) use Standards. Command staff advised they are working on this issue by incrementally increasing the staffing levels to the recommended levels. The incremental increase is to reduce the burden on the county budget. Listed below are the numbers recommended by Justice Planners along with what is currently allocated and how many are currently filled:

| Positions            | Recommended FTEs | Allocated FTEs | Filled FTEs |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Commander            | 1                | 1              | 1           |
| Lieutenant           | 3                | 3              | 3           |
| Sergeant             | 12               | 10             | 10          |
| Corporal             | 0                | 0              | 0           |
| Correctional Officer | 147              | 120            | 96          |

In reference to the above numbers and inmate population, The Yolo County Sheriff's Office was issued a consent decree by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California on August 4, 1987, concerning overcrowding conditions at the jail in Yolo County, California. The consent decree provided that in order to maintain the inmate population cap, and notwithstanding California state law, the sheriff was authorized to extend the California Penal Code section 4024.2 work program to incarcerated inmates. The document basically states that qualifying inmates may be released early.

The Grand Jury report from 2024-25 stated that on December 9, 2024, the Sheriff's Office reported that there were 98 correctional officers employed, and in May 2025, there were 94 correctional officers employed. As of February 24, 2026, there are 95 correctional officers employed with 34 in the following phases of the hiring process:

- Voice Stress Analysis/Pre-Background: 17
- Background Process: 15 (Many do not pass this process)
- Psychological Evaluation (after background): 1
- Completed Hiring Process: 1

Command staff further advised that there are 27 additional prospects in the following application process:

- BSCC written exam process: 19
- Upcoming Correctional Officer Interview: 8

Due to the staffing shortage, there is a lot of forced overtime. On December 9, 2024, according to Command staff, 500-600 hours of overtime per week is required for adequate coverage. In a follow up conversation in May 2025, the number of overtime hours per week was less, at 350 hours. Currently overtime is now down to 180 hours per week. Command staff advised that this dramatic drop in overtime is due to the Sheriff's Office and the county having adopted a more proactive approach to employees on extended leave. This approach has dramatically reduced the overtime numbers and encouraged employees to return to work. The sheriff's office has also established a reputable and effective peer support team which provides help with early intervention, resource navigation and proactive engagement to encourage return to work. Additionally, several correctional officers still serve in our armed forces reserve and national guard components that were on active-duty orders and have since returned.

In the discussion of staffing levels, the Command team broached the subject of the lower than Statewide average pay rate for Yolo County correctional officers, forcing some applicants to take the same position in adjacent counties (i.e., Napa) where the pay is higher.

The latest information the Grand Jury found is that the starting salary for a correctional officer 1 in Yolo County is between \$66,144 and \$80,392 a year. This translates to an hourly wage range of \$31.80 to \$38.65. In Napa County, CA, a starting salary for a correctional officer I/II typically ranges from \$88,608 to \$115,169.60 annually, which translates to \$42.60 - \$55.37 per hour. Currently,

Yolo County is offering a \$10,000 signing bonus and Napa County is offering a \$15,000 signing bonus.

### **3.3 CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES**

Another challenge discussed with the Command team over the last couple of year was the long hiring process in place for Yolo County correctional officers. The Command team did advise that they have been able to reduce the time it takes to hire Correctional Officers, but they are still having difficulty in getting enough qualified candidates.

### **3.4 NIGHTTIME AND EARLY MORNING RELEASE OF INCARCERATED PERSONS**

The previous Grand Jury discussed the topic of nighttime release of incarcerated persons based on public concern for the safety of the releasees, especially females, without access to public transportation. MDF Command team noted that they still do not offer rides to releasees who lack access to transportation. There is still no community volunteer programs to assist in transportation for released people after hours. The MDF Command team is still trying to work with groups to assist with this issue. They did advise that they are under strict guidelines to release persons in-custody when their time is up. They advised that release parties can stay inside the main entrance and are not forced out onto the street.

### **3.5 HOUSING PODS**

The Grand Jury was able to inspect an unoccupied cell and noted the bed, the toilet, and the sink area were functional and adequate. They have upgraded the tablets that are issued to incarcerated people, which allows them to roam around while they schedule and participate in virtual visits as well as to file grievances, order items from the commissary, and even purchase approved movies and books.

### **3.6 PROGRAMS**

The MDF programming is run by a dedicated and caring staff member. The classrooms looked professional and clean. The educational and support curriculum includes literacy classes for high school graduation equivalency, food handling training for work in the kitchen, a pre-release Medical Application Program, an In-custody Reentry Program, and others. Staff continues to pursue future programs to assist incarcerated subjects to improve themselves for real world jobs upon their release.

### **3.7 JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY**

The Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF) housed 18 people on the day of the tour (November 20, 2025). The Grand Jury had brief conversations with several juveniles, indicated that the care they receive in the facility is very good.

JDF has two newer programs since the last grand jury tour. They have initiated a cat program where wards who are feeling “down” can mingle with kittens that are brought over from the Yolo County Animal Shelter to bring up their spirits. According to JDF staff this program has been highly successful. The other program for wards is a bicycle repair shop that is inside the facility and teaches wards about bicycle repair and maintenance. The bicycles are donated by the West Sacramento Police Department. This program has also been highly successful with the wards.

## **4 FINDINGS**

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The Grand Jury makes the following findings:

- F1. Correctional officer hiring and staffing is still a serious challenge for MDF.
- F2. The MDF should have 120 officers; at the time of inspection, they had 98. At a follow-up meeting in May 2025, they had 94 correctional officers due to a handful of recent retirements. They currently have 95 (soon to be 97) correctional officers.
- F3. Due to the staffing shortage, there is a still quite a lot of forced overtime.
- F4. Understaffing at the MDF is creating the need to release inmates because the jail has reached capacity. Per MDF leadership, and the previous Grand Jury report, in 2024, a total of 18 individuals were released under the consent decree. In 2025 this number dropped to 6. The individuals released were in different stages of their court proceedings or serving time when released. The individuals released were determined to be the most suitable for release based on the consent decree criteria. (Re: Yolo County Jail NA (E.D. Cal.) | Civil Rights Litigation Clearinghouse)
- F5. Applying for the correctional officer position is a long process. The county has improved on the time it takes for the application process but still loses candidates to other surrounding counties with higher pay.
- F6. The pay scale for the Yolo County correctional officer continues to be lower compared to other adjacent counties.

## **5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Grand Jury makes the following recommendations:

- R1. While the Yolo County application process for correctional officers has been updated and streamlined, the 2025-26 Grand Jury suggests finding even more, innovative ways, to speed up the process.

## **6 COMMENDATION**

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### **6.1 MONROE DETENTION FACILITY:**

The facility is clean and orderly, and the care of the incarcerated persons appears humane and thoughtful. MDF staff is doing a good job despite the staffing challenges. The Grand Jury, once again, found that the programs director is very passionate about his role and works tirelessly to provide incarcerated persons access to education and enrichment and continues to search for useful programs for all the incarcerated persons in the facility.

### **6.2 JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER:**

A commendation for the excellent educational opportunities that are provided – both high school and college curriculum.

The JDC staffing levels are good, especially with the low number of wards.

The JDC staffing levels continue to be at a good level and the staff appears dedicated to working with the wards and continue to come up with innovative programs to keep the wards engaged

## **7 RESPONSES**

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Recommendations from a Civil Grand Jury are not binding on the public agency being investigated. However, the governing body of any entity must respond to the Civil Grand Jury findings and recommendations within 90 days of report issuance, and an elected official or agency head must respond to the Civil Grand Jury findings and recommendations within 60 days. The next year's Civil Grand Jury may then evaluate and report on the required responses.

### **7.1 REQUIRED RESPONSES**

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 933(c) and 933.05, the following responses are required from the following elected county officials within 90 days of receipt of this report:

| <b>Entity</b>                           | <b>Findings</b> | <b>Recommendations</b> |
|---|-----------------|------------------------|
| <b>Yolo County Board of Supervisors</b> | F1-6            | R1                     |
| <b>Yolo County Sheriff's Office</b>     | F1-6            | R1                     |

Responses must be submitted to the presiding judge of the Yolo County Superior Court in accordance with the provisions of Penal Code section 933.05. Responses must include the information required by Penal Code section 933.05.