




BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Submitted on:
(COB Stamp)

Department Name: Probation Department
Department No.: 022
Agenda Date: May 12, 2026
Placement: Departmental Agenda
Estimated Time: 45 minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors 
FROM: Department Director: Holly L. Benton, Chief Probation Officer
Contact Info: Spencer Cross, Deputy Chief Probation Officer
SUBJECT: Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-2028 Public Safety Realignment Plan

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Receive a presentation on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-2028 Public Safety Realignment Plan; and
- B. Accept the Santa Barbara County FY 2026-2028 Public Safety Realignment Plan developed by the Community Corrections Partnership (CCP) and approved by the Executive Committee of the CCP; and
- C. Find that the proposed actions do not constitute a "Project" within the meaning of the CEQA Guidelines pursuant to Section 15378(b)(5), in that they are government administrative activities that will not result in direct or indirect changes to the environment; and
- D. Determine that the acceptance of the FY 2026-2028 Public Safety Realignment Plan is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), finding that the activities are covered by the common sense exception that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment, and where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activities in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activities are not subject to CEQA.

Summary Text:

This item is before your Board to accept the Santa Barbara County FY 2026-2028 Public Safety Realignment Plan (Realignment Plan). The FY 2026-2028 Realignment Plan includes the FY 2026-2027 realignment budget.

The FY 2026-2028 Realignment Plan highlights all of the programs, initiatives, services and staffing that are funded through the CCP. The Realignment Plan documents the ongoing collaboration between the partners of the CCP, including County Departments that work together to improve local Realignment efforts, which includes, the Probation Department, the Sheriff's Office, Office of the Public Defender, Office of the District Attorney, Department of Social Services, Department of Behavioral Wellness, and the County Executive Office. The CCP focuses on a balanced approach to fund programs, services, and agency staff to benefit the diverse needs of the justice-involved populations in the County of Santa Barbara. The primary goal of CCP remains to reduce recidivism among individuals in the criminal justice system by providing resources and evidence-based programming while collecting, analyzing, and utilizing data to enhance and monitor the impact on the local justice community. The Realignment Plan outlines the allocation of resources that support CCP strategies aimed at increasing public safety, reducing recidivism, and promoting rehabilitation and client success.

Discussion:

On February 5, 2026, the CCP and the Executive Committee of the CCP voted to approve the FY 2026-2027 Realignment Budget and subsequently the Public Safety Realignment Plan FY 2026-2028 (Attachment B) was approved on April 2, 2026.

Realignment planning in the County has focused on a balanced approach to the allocation of Realignment funding toward jail population management, community supervision, diversion efforts, treatment programs, victim services, restorative justice, innovation and re-entry. The Realignment Plan outlines all existing initiatives, programs, and staff positions as well as expanded programs and initiatives.

Over the past year, the CCP has continued to review new and ongoing program proposals, recidivism and performance data, legislative changes, and emerging trends within the justice system. The CCP remains committed to the principles of justice reinvestment and values the collaborative partnerships between County departments and community-based organizations. To ensure a holistic approach to service delivery, during the past year, the County Health Department (County Health) was invited to participate in the CCP meetings to provide additional expertise and guidance on relevant topics. To further bolster their participation, a member of County Health was approved by the CCP to join the CCP Workgroup as a voting member. The addition of County Health supports the new direction of reentry care planning for individuals being released from jail, as they oversee the Reentry Coordinator position and will be instrumental during the upcoming year, assisting with the ongoing evaluation and reorganization of the structure of the reentry teams.

As the legislative and community corrections landscape continues to evolve, the CCP remains poised and ready to take on additional challenges and allocate funding to areas that will have the greatest impact while meeting any new mandates, policies or laws. For the upcoming fiscal year, additional staffing and program additions were approved by the CCP to enhance Holistic Defense by funding a full-time Holistic Defense Program Manager within the Public Defender's Office and two full-time Mental Health Diversion Paralegals within the Public Defender's Office. CCP funding was also approved to secure four reserved treatment beds at the Champion Center. The Champion Center beds are in Lompoc and are reserved for justice-involved behavioral health clients who are conserved

under the Lanterman Petris Short (LPS) Act or qualify for temporary conservatorship. The Behavioral Health Medical Director assesses clients within the jail or other local forensic facilities to determine appropriate placement at Champion Center, a mental health rehabilitation facility.

In addition, the CCP approved the addition of programs and staffing using restricted fund balance as one-time allocations. The County has two distinct Restricted Fund Balances (Reserves) that can be utilized for Realignment programmatic or planning purposes. The following allocations of Programmatic Restricted Fund Balance funds were approved by the CCP for upcoming fiscal years as follows:

Re-Entry, Early Access, and Diversion for You (READY)

The Public Defender's Office received approval for one-time funding for the READY program. READY provides an assessment of needs, connection to services, and representation at the earliest stage of criminal proceedings to reduce the harm of pretrial incarceration. Specifically, the READY program was implemented to swiftly meet the needs of individuals booked in jail on misdemeanor and low-level felony charges. The READY team assesses the individual's needs, community ties, employment, and family situation within the first 48 hours of incarceration. This stage is critical as information gathered at this time has the potential to positively impact the outcomes at the arraignment hearing. Preliminary data, as analyzed by UCSB, demonstrates that since READY's inception, on July 1, 2024, nearly 98% of clients were interviewed within 48 hours of arrest, accounting for weekends and holidays. From July 1, 2024, through December 31, 2025, the READY team interviewed 529 people booked into the Northern Branch Jail. The one-time funding was approved to continue the READY program for 3 additional years, FY 2026-2027 through 2028-2029.

Victim-Witness Program Assistant for Domestic Violence Cases

The District Attorney's Office received approval for one-time funding over three years (FY 2026-2027 through 2028-2029) for a Victim Witness Program Assistant (advocate position) to support the increased volume of cases on Domestic Violence caseloads in North County. The advocate position performs a variety of supportive functions, and one example is the facilitation of transportation of victims from Santa Maria to Lompoc, ensuring that victims have reliable access to court hearings. This commitment to logistical support reflects the District Attorney's commitment to remove barriers that could hinder victims pursuit of justice, including when court hearings are held in a different city than where the victim lives. Prior to the District Attorney's expansion request for the advocate position, the surge in domestic violence referrals had exceeded capacity of existing staff, leading to delays in initial victim contact, safety planning, and submission of time sensitive victim impact information to the courts. Without timely intervention, the potential for gaps in service could exist at the most critical junctures of the criminal justice process, such as arraignment, when the court is reviewing the need for a criminal protective order.

Jail Programming – Freedom to Choose

The Sheriff's Office received approval for one-time funding, over the course of one year (FY 2026-2027), to fund the Freedom to Choose Project (FTC). The FTC Project is a non-profit program focused on the positive transformation of incarcerated individuals through compassionate, experiential education with a goal to reduce violence and disciplinary conduct within the jail. FTC is designed as an evidence-based and culturally responsive program, which utilizes cognitive-behavioral approaches, emotional intelligence development, resilience building, and techniques aimed at trauma and violence reduction. Participants acquire practical skills in empathetic communication, emotional competency, and self-responsibility. This program was originally implemented in June of 2023 as a self-directed correspondence model, where the clients would complete packets and send them to FTC. However, the program has been reimaged, and the funding will be used to support an

in-person format for clients in jail. In FY 2026-2027 the Sheriff's Office plans to establish a baseline percentage of program graduates with no new bookings within six months of release from incarceration. In addition to monitoring outcomes of those who successfully complete the program, FTC will use pre and post program surveys to measure participant learning objectives and behavior change.

Proposition 36 Deputy Probation Officers (DPO)

The Probation Department received approval for one-time funding, over the course of one year (FY 2026-2027), to fund two DPOs to support countywide operations of Proposition 36 within the collaborative courts. Passed in 2024, Proposition 36 established the Treatment Mandated Felony Act, codified in Health and Safety Code Section 11395, for individuals who are charged with being in possession of a controlled substance and who have prior convictions for drug related offenses. Proposition 36 affords treatment options for the specified population, supports recovery and is intended to reduce recidivism, while improving long-term outcomes through comprehensive evaluations and personalized care plans. The two DPO positions provide case management, case plan support, assistance with acute and criminogenic needs, and other support to improve client success, recovery and connection to community-based services. The DPOs serve as treatment team members and Court Hearing Officers in the Superior Court, providing support and recommendations to the treatment team. Proposition 36 was passed without any funding sources for Probation Departments and therefore did not establish the critical infrastructure required to allow for the monitoring of individuals to help ensure successful completion of the program requirements.

Background:

The Public Safety Realignment Act (Assembly Bill 109) (Act) was implemented on October 1, 2011, as a means to address overcrowding in California's prisons and to assist in alleviating the State's financial crisis. The Act transferred responsibility for specific inmates and parolees from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to counties. Populations brought under the supervision and responsibility of local county jurisdictions include the Post Release Community Supervision (PRCS) population, and the Post-Sentence Supervision (PSS) population. PRCS include individuals who exited from prison after serving a commitment for a non-violent, non-serious felony and who are deemed not to be high-risk sex offenders. PSS consists of non-violent, non-serious, non-sex offenders (NX3) who have served their prison sentences locally and are subject to a mandatory period of supervision as ordered by the Superior Court.

The Act also expanded the role of the CCP as established in the California Community Corrections Performance Incentives Act of 2009 (Senate Bill 678) and created a seven-member Executive Committee from at-large CCP members. Realignment planning in the County of Santa Barbara is overseen by the CCP—a collaborative, inter-agency partnership of representatives who maintain oversight of the shared goals, objectives and outcomes. Further support of the CCP is provided by a Workgroup that meets monthly to review the progress and performance of funded strategies, pilot programs, and previously approved enhancements or expansions of services.

Since the passage of the Act in 2011, a plan for implementing Realignment in Santa Barbara County has been presented to the Board of Supervisors annually for approval and adoption. The Public Safety Realignment Plan (Plan) is revised in full every two years and modified by an addendum in the second year of the Plan. The FY 2025-2026 Realignment Plan Addendum and budget were last brought before the Board on May 20, 2025. The plan being presented today is a full Realignment Plan for FY 2026-2028.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Funding for the proposed Realignment Budget comes from State revenue. Sufficient appropriations are included in the FY 2026-2027 Recommended Budget and future fiscal year funding will be

included in the department’s future requested budgets, subject to Board approval. There is no additional cost to the General Fund.

Fiscal Analysis:

Funding Source	FY 2026-2027	Total
General Fund		
State – 2011 Realignment	\$24,029,402	\$24,029,402
Federal		
Fees		
Total	\$24,029,402	\$24,029,402

The Realignment Budget for FY 2026-2027 is fully financed by State revenue comprised of three components: the estimated FY 2026-2027 Base allocation of \$19,805,693 for Santa Barbara County, supplemented by FY 2024-2025 Growth funds of \$128,800, and further supported by the utilization of the Realignment Programmatic Restricted Fund Balance (RPRFB) of \$1,925,609. Annual funding for ongoing programmatic operations is \$21,860,102.

The CCP has authorized the allocation of an additional \$2,169,300 from the RPRFB to address specific one-time Realignment program-related expenditures as discussed above, including:

- READY Program, 3 years (FY 2026-2027 through FY 2028-2029) – Public Defender’s Office \$1,659,800, \$526,000 in FY 26-27.
- (1 FTE) Victim Witness Program Assistant for Domestic Violence, 3 years (FY 2026-2027 through FY 2028-2029) - District Attorney’s Office, \$436,900, \$139,300 in FY 26-27.
- Freedom to Choose program within the jails, for one year (FY 2026-2027) - Sheriff’s Office, \$44,000 in FY 26-27.
- (2 FTE) Deputy Probation Officers (DPOs), for one year (FY 2026-2027) to serve as Prop 36 officers - Probation Department, \$361,300 in FY 26-27.

Additional one-time RPRFB expenditures include:

- DA Collaborative Courts (2.0 FTE) - \$445,000 in FY 26-27
- PD Collaborative Courts (2.0 FTE) - \$437,200 in FY 26-27
- NRJP VW Program Associate EXH - \$36,500 in FY 26-27
- Main Name Index (MNI) Data Consultant for one year (FY 2026-2027) - \$50,000
- Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program media costs for one year (FY 2026-2027) - District Attorney’s Office, \$55,000
- Expansion of the evaluation contract of \$50,000 to be used for approved evaluations
- Annual training allocation of \$25,000 to be used for approved CCP training

The amount in the RPRFB is anticipated to reach \$34,506,455 by the end of the current fiscal year, with \$16,410,788 earmarked for one-time needs. This leaves an estimated \$18,095,667 available to accommodate program requirements, inclusive of a prudent reserve of \$1,800,000.

Attachments:

Attachment A – PowerPoint Presentation of FY 2026-2028 Public Safety Realignment Plan

Attachment B – FY 2026-2028 Public Safety Realignment Plan

Contact Information:

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