




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 20, 2025
Placement: Departmental Agenda
Estimated Time: 45 minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
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) 2025-2026 Public Safety Realignment Plan Addendum

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Receive a presentation on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 Public Safety Realignment Plan Addendum;
- B. Accept the Santa Barbara County FY 2025-2026 Public Safety Realignment Plan Addendum developed by the Community Corrections Partnership (CCP) and approved by the Executive Committee of the CCP;
- 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 2025-2026 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 2025-2026 Public Safety Realignment Plan Addendum approved by the CCP and the Executive Committee of the CCP on April 3, 2025. The FY 2024-2026 Plan and FY 2024-2025 budget were brought before the Board on May 14, 2024. This year, your Board is receiving the FY 2024-2026 Plan Addendum, with the FY 2025-2026 spending plan.

The FY 2025-2026 Realignment Plan Addendum highlights the collaboration between the partners of the CCP to examine and improve local Realignment efforts, which includes a balanced approach to funding programs and agency staff to benefit the diverse needs of the justice-involved populations in the County of Santa Barbara. The primary goal of CCP is 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 Addendum highlights the allocation of resources that support CCP strategies aimed at increasing public safety and promoting justice reinvestment strategies.

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 the 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.

Additionally, the Act 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 to 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.

Discussion:

On April 3, 2025, the CCP and the Executive Committee of the CCP voted to approve the FY 2025-2026 Realignment Spending Plan and the Public Safety Realignment Plan Addendum (Attachment B).

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, and innovation. The Realignment Plan Addendum outlines new initiatives, programs, and staff positions. Over the past year, the CCP continued its strategic collaboration and discussion of realignment efforts with County departments, community members, and additional stakeholders. The ongoing discussions led to a further examination of budget expenditures, process improvements, and program expansions to address the

needs of clients within the different regions of the community and to focus on fiscal prudence. The new staffing or program additions were approved by the CCP to improve victim participation in the restorative justice process, enhance programming within the jails, support data collection and evaluation, and address new legislation requirements under Proposition 36. Similar to the previous year, most of these initiatives were funded through one-time allocations from the restricted fund balances. This year marked a significant shift, as the CCP took a comprehensive approach to evaluating how future budgets may impact ongoing programs and services, which required departments to propose budget reductions or repurposing their existing allocations as opposed to asking for any funding expansions. By integrating data and analysis more intentionally, the CCP identified key initiatives for expansion in the upcoming fiscal year, ensuring that resources are directed toward strategies with the greatest impact.

The County has two distinct Restricted Fund Balances (Reserves) that can be utilized for Realignment programmatic or planning purposes. The CCP approved the allocation of Programmatic Restricted Fund Balance funds to support the following enhancements:

Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program (NRJP) Victim Witness Advocate (District Attorney's Office)

The District Attorney's one-time funding request, over the period of two years, adds one Extra-Help NRJP Victim Witness Advocate to provide emotional support to victims, help victims understand their rights, and guide them through the restorative justice process. This advocate will facilitate communication between victims and offenders, ensuring that victims feel safe and empowered to share their experiences. The advocate's involvement will enhance the support for victims and lead to more effective restorative outcomes, fostering healing and understanding for both victims and participants.

Collaborative Court Deputy Probation Officers (DPO) (Probation Department)

The Probation Department's one-time funding request, over the course of one year, adds two DPOs to support the countywide implementation of Proposition 36, within the collaborative courts. Proposition 36, which was overwhelmingly supported by voters in 2024, passed without any funding sources to establish the critical infrastructure required for success. The two Collaborative Court DPO positions will 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 will serve as treatment team members and Court Hearing Officers in the Superior Court, providing support and recommendations to the treatment team. The Probation Department indicated there would not be a request to fund these positions from the ongoing CCP budget in the future.

Collaborative Court Behavioral Wellness (BWell) Staff (BWell)

The one-time funding request submitted by BWell, over the course of one year, adds staff to support the countywide implementation of Proposition 36 within the collaborative courts. The funding allocated will add a BWell Clinician, a half-time Alcohol and Drug Service Specialist, and a half-time Administrative Office Professional (AOP). The Clinician and Alcohol and Drug Service Specialist will have specialized training, education, and experience in addiction treatment and behavioral health, to support this Collaborative Court expansion. With the recent passage of Proposition 36, prosecutors will have the discretion to charge a felony for hard drug possession after two previous drug convictions. If charged with this "treatment-mandated felony" under Health and Safety Code (HSC) 11395, the defendant would have the option of participating in substance use disorder (SUD) and/or mental health (MH) treatment. The clinical staff will complete court-ordered evaluations for those

defendants with HSC 11395 filings and agreements to an evaluation for treatment services. The addition of the AOP staff will allow for timely Medi-Cal/Medicare eligibility determination, data reporting, data sharing, enhanced collaboration, and improved stakeholder coordination. BWell presented this as a one-time request and indicated that there would not be a request made to increase the ongoing budget in the future.

Collaborative Courts Attorneys (District Attorney's Office)

The District Attorney's one-time funding request, over the period of two years, adds two Deputy District Attorney (DDA) III positions in the Collaborative Courts to provide support to the expanding caseloads and the complexities of mental health diversion, Incompetent to Stand Trial, and Proposition 36-related cases. The additional attorneys will focus on several key responsibilities within the Collaborative Courts program, including case management and review, collaboration with treatment providers, court appearances and hearings, monitoring legislative changes and compliance, and increased coordination and support.

Collaborative Courts Attorneys (Public Defender's Office)

The Public Defender's one-time funding request, over the period of two years, adds two Deputy Public Defender III positions in the Collaborative Courts to provide support to the expanding caseloads and the complexities of mental health diversion, Incompetent to Stand Trial, and Proposition 36-related cases. The additional attorneys will focus on several key responsibilities within the Collaborative Courts program, including case management, collaborative court representation, legislative compliance, and stakeholder coordination.

Jail Programming (Sheriff's Office)

The Sheriff's Office's one-time funding requests, over the course of one year, will enhance and support continued programming within the jail, specifically the Grid Alternatives Solar Training Program and the Freedom to Choose Project.

GRID Alternatives is a nonprofit organization focused on solar installation. Grid Alternatives has established job training opportunities in photovoltaic installation to inmates at the Northern Branch Jail in Santa Maria. GRID Alternatives provides practical training that helps participants develop skills for entry-level solar installation, including construction and electrical knowledge, understanding the National Electric Code, while adhering to OSHA safety standards. The program was implemented in 2024, and as of March 26, 2025, had twenty-three graduates. This funding will provide for an additional year of programming at the Northern Branch Jail. In order to evaluate the efficacy of the program, data will be collected on GRID Alternative graduates related to employment attainment in solar or related trade fields.

The Freedom to Choose (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 will acquire practical skills in empathetic communication, emotional competency, and self-responsibility. This program was implemented in June of 2023 as a self-directed correspondence model, where the clients would complete packets and send them to FTC. This funding will enhance the program by transitioning to an in-person format, which will provide a more in-depth experience for clients in the jail environment to improving participation and graduation rates.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Funding for the proposed Realignment Spending Plan will come from State revenue. Sufficient appropriations are included in the FY 2025-2026 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 2025-2026	Total
General Fund		
State – 2011 Realignment	\$23,699,504	\$23,699,504
Federal		
Fees		
Total	\$23,699,504	\$23,699,504

The Realignment Spending Plan for FY 2025-2026 is fully financed by State revenue comprised of two components: the estimated FY 2025-2026 Base allocation of \$19,652,883 for Santa Barbara County, supplemented by the utilization of the Realignment Programmatic Restricted Fund Balance (RPRFB) of \$914,221. Annual funding for ongoing programmatic operations is \$20,567,104.

The CCP has authorized the allocation of \$3,132,400 from the RPRFB to address specific one-time Realignment program-related expenditures, including:

- (1 EXH) NRJP Victim Witness Advocate, for two years (FY 2025-2026 through FY 2026-2027) - District Attorney's Office, \$75,200
- (2 FTE) Deputy Probation Officers (DPOs), for one year (FY 2025-2026) to serve as collaborative court officers - Probation Department, \$328,400
- (1 FTE) Practitioner I, half (.50 FTE) Alcohol and Drug Service Specialist, and half (.50 FTE) AOP II to support Collaborative Courts, for one year (FY 2025-2026) - BWell, \$307,800
- (2 FTE) Deputy District Attorney (DDA) III positions, for two years (FY 2025-2026 through FY 2026-2027) to serve as Collaborative Courts attorneys - District Attorney's Office, \$903,200
- (2 FTE) Deputy Public Defender III positions, for two years (FY 2025-2026 through FY 2026-2027) for the Collaborative Courts - Public Defender's Office, \$853,000
- GRID Alternatives Solar program within the jails, for one year (FY 2025-2026) - Sheriff's Office, \$107,400
- Freedom to Choose program within the jails, for one year (FY 2025-2026) - Sheriff's Office, \$44,000
- (1 FTE) Psychiatric Technician II (\$158,300) was moved from ongoing to one time for one year (FY 2025-2026) and will not be added to the Position Request Summary table below; and Additional Behavioral Health Services (\$191,000) - BWell, \$348,400
- NRJP's media costs for one year (FY 2025-2026) of \$25,000 and two-years Data Evaluation cost of \$90,000 (\$45,000 per year) - District Attorney's Office, \$115,000
- Main Name Index Data Consultant for one year (FY 2025-2026) - \$50,000

The amount in RPRFB is anticipated to reach \$34,000,744 by the end of the current fiscal year, with \$15,499,564 earmarked for one-time needs. This leaves an estimated \$18,501,181 available to accommodate to program requirements, inclusive of a prudent reserve of \$1,200,000.

On April 3, 2025, the CCP approved a FY 2025-2026 spending plan, which included a reduction in the funding for the Sheriff's Office and Probation Department Compliance Response Teams (CRT) by \$602,000; subsequent to budget approval, the Sheriff's Office brought forward a proposal to shift funding from within their existing Realignment allocations in the amount of \$414,900 to restore their funding to CRT to maintain the previous years' approved staffing levels. The overall reduction included one Custody Deputy assigned to the Alternative Sentencing Program. The Sheriff's Office reported that this reduction will not impact the ongoing efforts to expand the Alternative Sentencing Program. On April 23, 2025, the CCP Workgroup voted to forward this proposal to the CCP for consideration on June 5, 2025, when it is anticipated that the CCP will review this proposal. This change does not impact the total Realignment spending plan budget.

Approval of the FY 2025-2026 Public Safety Realignment Plan Addendum will not increase the General Fund contribution for the departments mentioned above.

Staffing Impacts:

The staffing impacts listed below indicate deviations of FTE positions in the proposed FY 2025-2026 Public Safety Realignment Plan Addendum in comparison to the adopted FY 2024-2025 Public Safety Realignment Plan. Changes to FTE for the upcoming fiscal year were detailed in the Fiscal Analysis.

Position Request Summary

Legal Position Title	Department	Number of FTE	Estimated Cost
Deputy Probation Officer	Probation	2.0	\$328,400
Deputy District Attorney III	District Attorney	2.0	\$903,200
Deputy Public Defender III	Public Defender	2.0	\$853,000
Practitioner I	BWell	1.0	\$168,000
Alcohol and Drug Service Specialist	BWell	0.5	\$72,400
Administrative Office Professional II	BWell	0.5	\$59,900
Total		8.0	\$2,384,900

Attachments:

Attachment A – PowerPoint Presentation of FY 2025-2026 Public Safety Realignment Plan Addendum

Attachment B – FY 2025-2026 Public Safety Realignment Plan Addendum

Authored by:

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