



Vision 2023

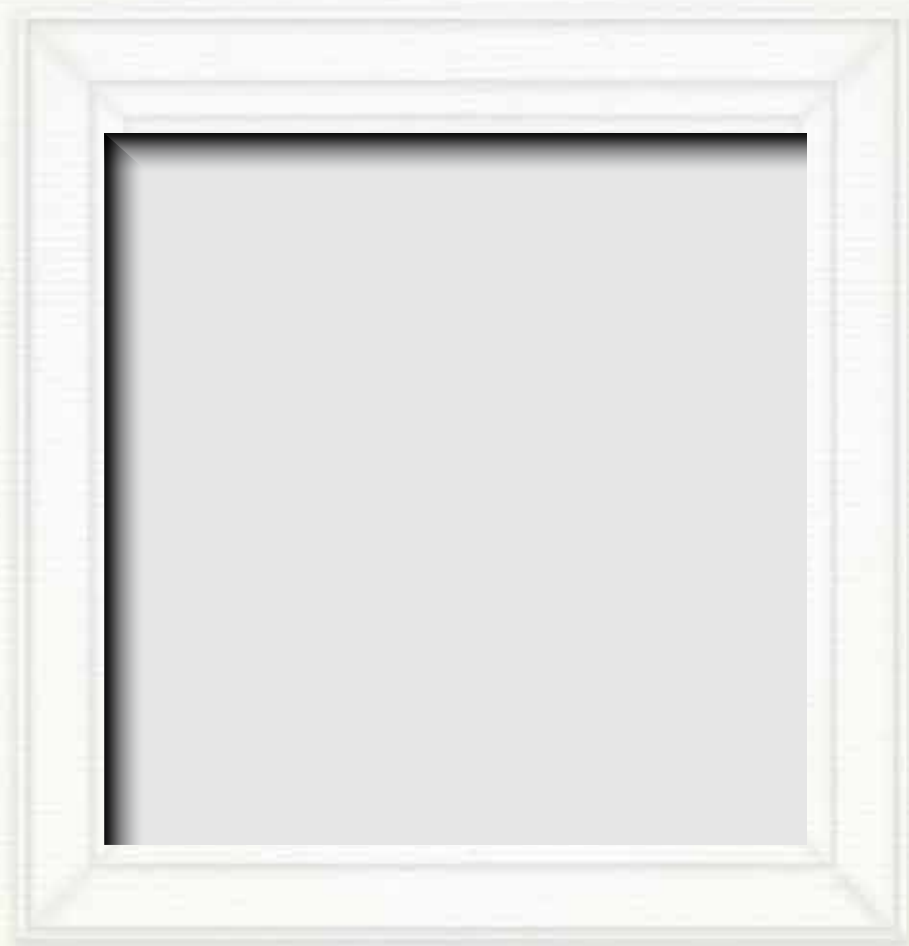
OUR PATHWAY TO SUCCESS...



**ALAMEDA COUNTY
PROBATION DEPARTMENT**

STRATEGIC PLAN

June 27, 2018



**ARTWORK FEATURED IN THIS PLAN
WAS CREATED BY YOUTH AT THE ALAMEDA COUNTY
JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER AND CAMP SWEENEY.
THE YOUTH CREATED THE ARTWORK THROUGH THEIR PARTICIPATION
IN THE CREATIVE POWER ARTS PROGRAM PRESENTED
BY THE ALAMEDA COUNTY ARTS COMMISSION
FROM 2008 THROUGH 2012.**

**THE QUOTES WITHIN THIS PLAN WERE SUBMITTED BY
ADULTS IN OUR TRANSITIONAL DAY REPORTING CENTER, AND
DESCRIBE PROBATION'S IMPACT ON THEIR LIVES.**



OUR Pledge

OUR VISION

THE ALAMEDA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT IS COMMITTED TO MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES THE SAFEST IN THE NATION.

OUR MISSION

TO SUPPORT AND RESTORE COMMUNITIES BY PROVIDING COMPASSIONATE SUPERVISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO JUSTICE-INVOLVED YOUTH AND ADULTS, AND TO PROVIDE PREVENTIVE AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES THROUGH EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

WE ARE COMMITTED TO BEING AN ORGANIZATION THAT:

- ◆ empowers staff and promotes respectful, forthright communication;
- ◆ engages collaboratively with our stakeholders and the community;
- ◆ promotes diversity and cultural awareness;
- ◆ embodies integrity and ethical conduct;
- ◆ uses research and data to inform practice;
- ◆ provides gender-responsive and trauma-informed care;
- ◆ strives for continuous process improvements through innovation driven by performance-based operations; and
- ◆ honors the belief that people can change.

Message

FROM THE CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER

ESTEEMED PROBATION EMPLOYEES, KEY STAKEHOLDERS & COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

I am pleased to present the Alameda County Probation Department's Five-Year Strategic Plan: Vision 2023. This plan aligns with the County's Vision 2026 and reflects the Department's commitment to making our communities the safest in the nation. Further, it supports our vision of providing compassionate supervision to justice-involved youth and adults by offering effective rehabilitative services.



This plan was developed by a Strategic Planning Committee ("the Committee"), consisting of a cross-section of Department employees and union representatives, over the course of seven months. As part of the process, the Committee conducted research; solicited focus group, executive management, and external stakeholder input; considered the Alameda County 2016-17 Grand Jury Report; and reviewed staff survey responses. The final product is robust and a culmination of our shared vision of service, our community partnerships, and public safety.

The final product represents a diverse set of voices and is grounded in an understanding of the interests, needs, and concerns of our staff, stakeholders, and clients. It reflects our role in the context of the larger community we serve; our vision, mission, and guiding principles; and the County's overarching Vision 2026.

Through the implementation of this plan, our Department is poised to focus its energy on strengthening our collective impact by aligning our existing practices with those proven to reduce recidivism and enhance clients' long-term success. I am confident that, through our commitment to this plan, we are charting a course that will change the lives of many and will resonate with our communities for years to come.

As a special acknowledgment, I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all of our staff and stakeholders, and in particular to the Strategic Planning Committee, for their contributions and commitment to the development of this plan.

With your support, the Alameda County Probation Department is positioned to become a stronger, healthier, and more effective organization. I am excited for this, and look forward to witnessing what I know we will accomplish together.

Sincerely,
Wendy Still, MAS

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wendy Still". The signature is fluid and cursive, matching the printed name above it.

Chief Probation Officer
Alameda County Probation Department

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Chief Probation Officer
Alameda County Probation Department

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THIS STRATEGIC PLAN WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE without the dedication of those who participated in its development with extraordinary commitment to the County, the Probation Department, and the community we serve. These include individuals from within and outside of the Department who responded to surveys and participated in interviews and focus groups, as well as those who served on the Strategic Planning Committee or otherwise supported its work.

Wendy Still, MAS, Chief Probation Officer, provided strong leadership throughout the strategic planning process. In addition, the Alameda County Probation Department Executive Management Team played an important role in providing guidance and input into the process, and through their development of the Department's revised vision, mission, and guiding principles. Special thanks are due in particular to Margarita Perez, Policy Development and Strategic Planning Consultant, who skillfully managed every aspect of the planning process. Also, a special thanks to Monica Uriarte and Sara Debus-Sherrill for their assistance and counsel throughout the development of the plan.

The Strategic Planning Committee members represent each of the Department's divisions; a wide array of roles, responsibilities, and levels of seniority; and individuals both relatively new to the Department alongside those whose careers with the Department have spanned many years. We thank each and every member for their dedication to this work:

Ricca Alcantara	Candise Draper	Estial Lett	Jamilah Pierson	Haleh Soltani
Alison Beahan	Craig Emmons	De Andre Lewis	Rachel Ragas	Twylla
Richetta Bottom	Jessica Fort	Robert Madison	Dalen Randa	Terry-Holloway
Ed Braun	Angelica Gums	Ryan McCreary	Eric Robertson	Nancy Tran
Robert Calvin	Sherri Guzman	Carissa Pappas	Leah Rothstein	Eunique Wesley
Joe Chang	Shereen Khan	Michelle Parnala	Nai Saepanh	Shawntea Williams
Chris Chatman	Pamela Kirven	Fina Perez	Jasdeep Sandhar	Rownee Winn



Department

OVERVIEW



The Alameda County Probation Department plays a central role in maintaining and enhancing public safety and in strengthening youth and families in the seventh most populous county in California and one of the most ethnically diverse regions in the United States.¹

The Department supervises and provides case management services for over 8,500 adults through various programs and commitments from the courts, including realignment (through the Public Safety Realignment Act of 2011), collaborative specialized courts, mental health and domestic violence courts, transfers from out of the county and other states, and so forth. Although the number of adults supervised has declined since the passage of Assembly Bill 109, The Public Safety Realignment Act of 2011, and Proposition 47 in 2014,² today's probationers are typically persons convicted of more serious offenses.³ Through strong partnerships with local organizations and agencies, the Department offers a range of risk reduction and transition services to its clients, including to those supervised by the County as a result of AB 109.⁴

The Department also supervises and provides case management services to approximately 1,235 youth on formal and informal probation, in girls court, on diversion, and through intake, investigation, and on banked caseloads. Its Juvenile Hall can house 358 male and female youth, and its minimum security residential program (Camp Wilmont Sweeney) has bed space for up to 60 male youth.

The Department's annual operating budget of \$153.8 million supports 682 employees, of whom 486 are sworn peace officers.

The Department's mission of providing compassionate supervision and accountability, while delivering preventative and rehabilitative services, is carried out by four divisions:

THE ADULT FIELD SERVICES DIVISION provides supervision and specialized programming to justice-involved adults and works closely with community partners to deliver effective services. The division also conducts investigations, prepares presentence reports for the court, and represents the Department on probation matters. Specialized services yield improved results for high risk clients, including those convicted of domestic violence and sexual offenses.

THE JUVENILE FIELD SERVICES DIVISION offers rehabilitative services to justice-involved youth. Deputy Probation Officers serve in a number of roles, including youth advocate, case manager, and supervision officer. Many of the division's programs, such as truancy and pre-

¹ Alameda County's 1.6 million residents identify as White (32%), Asian (28%), Hispanic or Latino (22%), and African American (10%).

² There were 16,822 probation clients in FY 2012-13.

³ Year Five Status Update: Public Safety Realignment in Alameda County July 1, 2015 – July 1, 2016. Retrieved from https://www.acgov.org/probation/documents/PublicSafetyRealignment_Y5StatusUpdate_2016.pdf

⁴ In March 2013, the Alameda County Community Corrections Partnership Executive Committee expanded the state's definition of realignment to include all of the following: (1) individuals charged and/or sentenced to an AB 109 eligible offense; (2) individuals sentenced under PC 1170(h) to jail only or mandatory supervision; (3) Post-Release Community Supervision (PCRS) population; and (4) parole violations.

vention services, focus on diverting at-risk youth from entering the juvenile justice system. Other programs address substance abuse, keep youth actively participating in school, and reunite families.

THE JUVENILE FACILITIES DIVISION is comprised of the Juvenile Hall and Camp Wilmont Sweeney, both located in the city of San Leandro. The Juvenile Hall is a 24-hour secure detention facility that houses youth awaiting court. Juvenile Institution Officers supervise youth who receive various services, including academic programming, job training, medical care, and mental health services, among others. Camp Sweeney houses adolescent males who are ordered into the facility by the Alameda County Juvenile Court. The program model emphasizes personal growth and provides education, behavioral health, and drug treatment services. Recently, funds have been allocated by the county to construct a replacement for Camp Sweeney, which will be a campus-like facility that houses both male and female youth and offers comprehensive programming and services.⁵

THE ADMINISTRATION DIVISION is comprised of a diverse array of units that support the efficient and effective management of the Department: Administrative and Financial Services, Administrative Support Services, Human Resources, Information Technology, Human Resources and Payroll, Training, Professional Standards, and the Volunteers in Probation (VIP) program. The Training Unit offers approximately 240 courses to sworn and non-sworn departmental staff on an annual basis and ensures compliance with the Board of State and Community Corrections' Standards and Training for Corrections. Together, these units enable the operations divisions to focus on their primary role of client supervision, services, and management.

The fields of adult and juvenile probation have benefited greatly over the past decade from research that informs the strategies and practices that are most effective in achieving positive outcomes for justice-involved individuals and the community. The Alameda County Probation Department has enthusiastically embraced these evidence-based practices (EBP)⁶ in achieving its mission of equipping youth and adults with the skills and tools necessary to live successful, crime-free lives, and of protecting the community through recidivism reduction efforts.

During the past several years, the Department has made significant strides in re-establishing its effectiveness by building its service delivery in its administrative division, juvenile facilities, and juvenile and adult field operations. In addition, with the support of the Board of Supervisors, the County Administrator, and many public and private partners, the Department has effectively strengthened its collaboration with the community, labor, and its other key partners.

With the adoption and implementation of this strategic plan, the Department is poised to take its next steps to a transformative journey intended to improve the lives of those who reside within our strong, diverse communities. 🌟

⁵ The new Camp Sweeney will be built on the site of the old Juvenile Hall along Fairmont Drive. The \$65.4 million project is scheduled for completion in June 2020.

⁶ "Evidence-based practices (EBP)" are those programs or practices that have been rigorously researched, had multiple site replications, been shown to have significant sustained reductions in recidivism, and been demonstrated to have a preponderance of evidence supporting effectiveness. "Evidence-informed practices (EIP)" are programs and services that use the best available research to guide the development of their programs and that operate under the principles of effective interventions. For the purposes of this strategic plan, the term "evidence-based practices (EBP)" is used to refer to both types of practices.

Overview

THE STRATEGIC GOALS

Alameda County’s Vision 2026—particularly its focus on evidence-based justice strategies, reentry support, and support to crime victims—lays the foundation for the Alameda County Probation Department’s Vision 2023. Through the following goals and objectives, this strategic plan will serve as a roadmap for the Alameda County Probation Department as it works, over the course of the next five years, to fulfill its vision of creating communities that are the safest in the nation and of providing compassionate supervision and accountability to justice-involved youth and adults. The key to achieving these results is empowering staff, collaborating with stakeholders and the community, using research and data to inform practice, and honoring the belief that, given the appropriate opportunities and tools, people can change.

- GOAL **ONE** **A COMMITMENT TO THE SUCCESS OF EVERY CLIENT AND THEIR FAMILY**
- GOAL **TWO** **A ROBUST SYSTEM OF WRAPAROUND CLIENT SERVICES AND CONTINUITY OF CARE**
- GOAL **THREE** **A VIBRANT AND EXEMPLARY WORKFORCE**
- GOAL **FOUR** **A HIGH-FUNCTIONING, DATA-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION**
- GOAL **FIVE** **A NETWORK OF PARTNERSHIPS FOSTERING A SAFE COMMUNITY**
- GOAL **SIX** **A VICTIM-CENTERED APPROACH SUPPORTING THOSE IMPACTED BY CRIME**



**ALAMEDA COUNTY'S
VISION 2026**



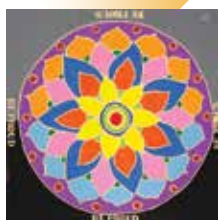
**ALIGNMENT WITH
PROBATION'S
VISION 2023 GOALS**

Safe & Livable Community	Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Thriving & Resilient Population	Goals 1, 4, 5, 6
Healthy Environment	Goals 1, 2, 4, 5, 6
Prosperous & Vibrant Economy	Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

GOAL

ONE

A COMMITMENT TO THE SUCCESS OF EVERY CLIENT AND THEIR FAMILY



Achieving the Department’s vision and mission of making our communities the safest in the nation and supporting and restoring communities by providing compassionate supervision and accountability to justice-involved youth and adults, and providing preventive and rehabilitative services through evidence-based practices and collaborative partnerships, requires a balanced approach. That approach includes the provision of accountability and crime suppression techniques along with the critically important practices that reduce the likelihood of recidivism long after supervision ends.

Research demonstrates that a 30 percent reduction in recidivism—which translates to a significant improvement in client outcomes—is possible if practices that are proven effective through research are applied with fidelity.⁷ Among those practices are behavioral interventions that help clients to change the attitudes and behaviors that lead to law-breaking behavior and to develop skills that support a successful, law-abiding lifestyle (e.g., resisting negative pressure, problem solving). They can be provided in group settings, within a structured program, or in the context of routine case management appointments by well-trained, highly skilled probation professionals. Regardless of the setting, to maximize an organization’s effectiveness, these interventions must be delivered consistently by all those with case management or programming responsibility.

⁷ See Andrews, 2007; Andrews et al., 1990.



OBJECTIVES

1A. PROVIDE CLIENTS THE TOOLS FOR SUCCESS through the use of evidence-based case management practices, including accountability measures designed to support positive behavioral change.

Risk reduction practices are critical to maximize client success. At the core of effective risk reduction is evidence-based case management. Research demonstrates the essential components of effective case management are: professional alliance (rapport between staff and clients); the use of actuarial assessments to guide the appropriate intensity and dosage of interventions; a clear focus on the most influential criminogenic needs (i.e., antisocial attitudes, temperament and coping skills, antisocial peer influence); capitalizing on client strengths;⁸ and the use of cognitive behavioral interventions by probation professionals in their one-on-one interactions with clients, and by service providers in group or individual settings.⁹ When responding to client behavior, research also indicates that case managers should use a system of rewards and sanctions in a ratio of at least four to one, respectively.¹⁰

Clients who are afforded and who utilize these services and opportunities are more likely to be successful during and following probation, including making prosocial, legal choices and prospering in the community. For these reasons, the Alameda County Probation Department seeks to strategically utilize case management strategies to ensure the development and ongoing use of individualized plans that will maximize the likelihood of individual success.

1B. JOIN WITH COMMUNITY-BASED PARTNERS to establish effective services that promote client success.

Once staff identify the services that best meet a client's case plan (and their criminogenic, responsivity, and/or stabilization needs), timely and appropriate referrals should be made. The Alameda County Probation Department already collaborates with an array of community-based organizations to provide a continuum of services and programs to probation clients. Probation professionals and service providers will engage in collaborative case management, with routine communication about the client's progress and evolving needs, and with adjustments to the case plan and delivery of services as needed. To achieve this collaborative case management approach, probation professionals must first understand the specific services available for clients; service providers must understand individual client needs and case management requirements; and all parties must have mechanisms to meaningfully exchange information in order to promote client success.

⁸ See Bonta & Andrews, 2017.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ See Gendreau, 1996.

1C. PROVIDE ALL CLIENTS with services and opportunities to support stable living and to thrive.

Clients with stabilization needs (including but not limited to homelessness; physical, behavioral, and mental health conditions; transportation and/or other socioeconomic barriers) are overrepresented in the justice system.¹¹ While research indicates that these issues are largely non-criminogenic, they can indirectly contribute to illegal activity and directly impede the effectiveness of programs and services.¹² For example, symptoms of mental illness can make it difficult for clients to sustain employment; lack of transportation can hinder access to community resources; residential instability can increase contact with antisocial peers or the likelihood of victimization; and one or more of these conditions can contribute to relapse or engagement in further delinquent or criminal activity.¹³ Given the significant numbers of clients in need of stabilization services, the Department seeks to ensure that all clients are assessed for and receive access to needed stabilization services during and following their period of supervision.

1D. PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES for all clients to successfully transition home.

Completing one's probation term and leaving the support and accountability that supervision provides can, for some, have harmful effects. Some clients may find themselves subject to increased pressure from peers and associates to return to illegal activity; others may simply find that the lack of structure is unsettling or that it jeopardizes their sense of confidence. The Probation Department strives to address these concerns by routinely developing individually tailored transition plans for all clients preparing for discharge from supervision. Client transition plans will delineate supportive services appropriate to each individual's circumstances and needs, including the identification of a network of supportive and prosocial family members and friends, and a relapse prevention plan. In addition, provided clients are willing to access non-mandatory services in the community, case managers can ensure other, supportive relationships are in place to which clients can turn on a regular or as-needed basis.



1E. ALIGN CASELOAD AND WORKLOAD SIZE to maximize client success.

Matching caseload size to client risk level (e.g., low, moderate, or high risk to reoffend) and/or specialized populations (e.g., domestic violence perpetrators, among others) is an important strategy for improving client outcomes. Some researchers have examined the impact of reducing caseload on recidivism.¹⁴ While more research is needed in this area, most studies have concluded that caseload/workload size can directly impact probation professionals' ability

¹¹ See Lurigio, 2011.

¹² Despite some evidence that mental illness may have a criminogenic impact for women (Van Voorhis, Wright, Salisbury, & Bauman, 2010), the preponderance of the literature conceptualizes mental illness as a non-criminogenic need.

¹³ See Lee, Tyler, & Wright, 2010; Lutze et al., 2013.

¹⁴ See Bogue et al., 2005; Taxman, Yancey, & Bilanin, 2006.



to effectively engage in risk reduction activities. Further supporting the importance of considering workload and caseload size is research that indicates that effective one-on-one interactions necessitate approximately 20 minutes or more per appointment to maximize the impact of the intervention.¹⁵ The American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) recommends caseload guidelines for probation departments that seek to maximize reductions in recidivism using evidence-based case management approaches.¹⁶ The Alameda County Probation Department will join an emerging national trend in the probation industry to work towards caseload sizes that approximate the APPA guidelines.

1F. CONSISTENTLY APPLY core correctional practices.

Knowing what works to help clients be successful—that is, core correctional practices—is critically important, but these practices are only effective when they are implemented properly and with consistency. Successful implementation depends on equipping and empowering staff with the knowledge, skills, and tools to interact meaningfully with clients and to impact behavior change. This is accomplished by providing staff with training that focuses on knowledge development (such as the risk-need-responsivity principles and the eight principles of effective intervention) and skill acquisition (such as motivational interviewing and utilizing skill practice and similar cognitive behavioral interventions). It is equally important to provide training and coaching to supervisors and managers to ensure that they are sufficiently prepared to support, encourage, guide, and mentor staff to consistently utilize core correctional practices. Research demonstrates that the clients of staff who receive this type of performance feedback and who are afforded opportunities for ongoing improvement through training and coaching have better outcomes than those who do not have these opportunities.¹⁷ Vision 2023 will include a series of activities that will provide line staff with training and skill practice in the core correctional practices, with a specific focus on building the capacity of mid-level supervisors to coach and mentor staff in these core areas.

1G. ENSURE THAT CLIENTS HAVE ACCESS to a full continuum of services, including front-end diversionary and restorative opportunities.

An effective juvenile and criminal justice system expands traditional intervention services to include diversionary and restorative justice programs and services. Diversionary programs provide clients opportunities to address the behaviors that led to their involvement in illegal activity and to prevent future crime. In addition, they lessen the fiscal burden associated with traditional case processing (e.g., law enforcement, prosecution, defense, court officials).



¹⁵ See Bonta, Ruggie, Scott, Bourgon, & Yessine, 2008.

¹⁶ See Burrell, 2006.

¹⁷ See Robinson, Van Benschoten, Alexander, & Lowenkamp, 2011.



Goal

ONE
continued

Restorative justice programs and processes encourage clients to build empathy for their victims and support reparation for the harms caused by their behavior. Diversionary and restorative programs can also provide clients the opportunity to avoid the stigma associated with an official record of their behavior, which can impede education, employment, housing, and other essential reintegration strategies. The Department can maximize its impact on public safety by aiding in the development of a full continuum of services, including front-end diversionary interventions and restorative programs and services in lieu of traditional case processing.

1H. ENSURE A FAMILY-CENTERED APPROACH to all client services.

Research indicates that clients are more likely to be successful when their families are engaged in their programming and services.¹⁸ Family is defined as a group of people bonded by affection, shared values, and traditions; these relationships may form through birth, blending, adoption, or non-traditional means. The Probation Department seeks to examine its policies and practices to eliminate barriers to a family-centered approach to client services; increase its capacity to effectively engage families in the support of their loved ones' success; improve the well-being of not just clients but also their families; and engage families in decision-making related to their loved ones whenever feasible and appropriate.

OUR ADULTS REFLECT ON THE DAY REPORTING CENTER:

“It has been helpful to work from journals. It makes me think and examine my past behaviors and actions and create new behaviors that will keep me focused on positive growth and becoming a better mother to my children.” —Anonymous

The well-being of the children of arrested and incarcerated parents is a priority of the Probation Department. It is well recognized that having an arrested and/or incarcerated parent can have an impact on a child’s physical and mental health, social behavior, and educational prospects.¹⁹ In addition, the emotional trauma that may occur and the practical difficulties of a disrupted family life—including financial hardships—can be compounded by the social stigma children may face as a result of having a parent arrested or incarcerated.²⁰ Further, some incarcerated parents face termination of parental rights as a result of children who are in the foster care system beyond the time allowed by law. Probation officers will be trained to identify and respond effectively to a child, present or not present, whose parent is arrested, and the Department will enhance its collaboration with

child welfare services and other key partner organizations in order to reduce the potential trauma experienced by a child who witnesses a parent’s arrest and the separation caused by the arrest. Whenever possible, the child should be diverted from official custody and be placed with a responsible caregiver. While the goal of these practices is to minimize the child’s trauma, they will also maintain the integrity of the arrest and the safety of officers, suspects, and other involved individuals.

¹⁸ See International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2014; Katsiyannis & Archwamety, 1997; Mendel, 2010.

¹⁹ See Peterson, Fontaine, Kurs, & Cramer, 2015.

²⁰ See La Vigne, Davies, & Brazell, 2008.

A ROBUST SYSTEM OF WRAPAROUND CLIENT SERVICES AND CONTINUITY OF CARE

Transitioning from a secure placement, detention, or correctional setting to the community can be a complex endeavor for juvenile and adult clients and their families, particularly given the length of time some people are away from home. Many have damaged or lost their ties to their families and supportive others and need family reunification services. Others have significant mental health treatment and/or medication needs, or needs for safe, affordable, and sustainable housing, educational or employment services, and/or substance abuse relapse prevention support. Still others experience collateral consequences as a result of prior delinquent or criminal behavior, which may restrict access to employment and educational opportunities, some living environments, and/or governmental benefits. Taken together, these conditions can have a profound impact on the lives of those seeking to return to and stabilize in the community. At the same time, communities are safer and families are more likely to remain intact or reunite when the justice system and broader community provides supportive opportunities to reentering individuals.



Consistent with Alameda County’s Vision 2026 public safety goal of reentry support— which promotes reducing reentry barriers, developing wraparound services, supporting family reunification, leveraging community partnerships, and providing employment and other pre-release opportunities—the Probation Department recognizes the nature and breadth of needs among its clients and strives to provide a comprehensive approach to reentry that begins upon entry and follows clients through their reentry and discharge.

OBJECTIVES

2A. PREPARE CLIENTS FOR REENTRY, from the point of their entry through their final discharge.

Planning for reentry should begin upon placement, detention, or confinement, and include specific discussion around, and plans to establish, housing, family support, aftercare, medication, relapse planning, education, employment, finances, mental health services, and other needs. Given that the period of time when individuals are at highest risk to violate conditions of supervision is between the first 72 hours²¹ to six months²² following release, throughout a client's placement period—and particularly as reentry is approaching—the Department will pay close attention to building a reentry plan with front-loaded services that provide structure and support during this critical post-release period. During the pre-release phase, departmental staff will engage in collaborative case planning with their partners (those working with clients within the custodial setting and those community service organizations positioned to provide supportive services outside of the custodial setting) to develop individually tailored case plans that address the unique and specific needs of reentering clients.

2B. PROVIDE CLIENTS effective wraparound services and programs tailored to their criminogenic needs.

Individuals are at greater risk of returning to illegal behavior when their criminogenic needs are not attended to. These needs can be positively impacted when clients develop practical skills designed to counteract the triggers and conditions that initially contributed to their delinquent or criminal activity. Evidence-based programs can be highly effective when administered with fidelity and through a wraparound approach.²³ Some of the programs that provide the greatest impact in terms of risk reduction are those that build problem solving, coping, and other cognitive skills alongside those that support the development of healthy family and peer relationships. In addition to providing a seamless reentry process, the Alameda County Probation Department strives to work with its state and local governmental and non-governmental partners to ensure that a robust system of impactful wrap-around services is available to all reentering clients.



²¹ See Ball, Weisberg, & Dansky, 2008.

²² See Petersilia, 2003.

²³ With wraparound services, case management is provided in a seamless way by a team of individuals from multiple disciplines and informal social networks. This service delivery system is characterized by ongoing communication, coordination, and joint case planning.



2C. ENSURE CLIENTS ARE AFFORDED the opportunity for safe and sustainable housing.

One of the most challenging obstacles to success for adults returning to the community is access to safe, affordable housing. National research indicates that a significant percentage of adults who are released end up in homeless shelters or in temporary living arrangements following their reentry.²⁴ Adults who entered homeless shelters following incarceration were seven times more likely to abscond than those who had a more stable form of housing.²⁵ These issues are exacerbated for those who suffer from mental illness and those convicted of some specific behaviors, such as sexual assault, that result in further restrictions on access to housing. Even when housing is located, it may not be suitable or sustainable given the fact that the income of so many clients returning to the community is insufficient to cover housing costs, particularly in the Bay Area. Youth face their own unique obstacles, including but not limited to parents and relatives who are transient due to their own challenges with stable living. Addressing the issue of safe and sustainable housing for underage youth, transition-age youth (clients between the ages of 18 and 25), and adults is a priority for the Department. The success of individuals returning to the community will rest in large measure on the ability of the Probation Department, along with its community-based partners, to identify and secure appropriate, safe, and affordable housing for all of its clients.



2D. OFFER OPPORTUNITIES to address stabilization needs for all clients upon reentry.

In addition to housing, clients face other significant challenges that can thwart their efforts to successfully return and remain home. These include the ability to find, secure, and maintain employment in light of a criminal record; the absence of work skills, or skills that have not kept pace with the evolving work world; and the need for educational and vocational training, as well as life skills specifically supportive of adapting to today's world. Compounding these barriers are the unique challenges some individuals face, such as post-traumatic stress among reentering veterans, difficulty adapting to the role of parents for mothers and fathers who have been separated from their children, and the financial constraints associated with the struggle to earn a living wage. The Probation Department recognizes these challenges and, through its Vision 2023 plan, seeks to expand the stabilization services and opportunities afforded to individuals returning to the community in order to ensure a smooth, successful reintegration for all.



²⁴ See Visher, Yahner, & La Vigne, 2010.

²⁵ See Travis, 2001.

GOAL

THREE

A VIBRANT AND EXEMPLARY WORKFORCE

The Alameda County Probation Department’s greatest asset is its staff. The Department’s Vision 2023 will capitalize and build upon this strength by recruiting, hiring, and effectively preparing staff to meet their professional responsibilities; acknowledging and rewarding staff members’ contributions to the Department’s vision and mission; providing professional development opportunities to ensure an intellectually challenging and growth-oriented workplace; supporting career advancement; and providing a safe, healthy, and supportive work environment for all. An exemplary workforce is high-functioning and positions the Department for exceptional outcomes in support of its mission. This goal builds on high-quality training and professional growth opportunities already in place. It also builds upon the strengths of our staff, who are passionate about their work and resilient in their efforts, and who consistently strive to achieve excellence.



OBJECTIVES

3A. PROVIDE AN ENVIRONMENT of emotional and personal support and safety.

“Safety” is defined as “freedom from harm or danger” and includes physical safety and the less tangible form of safety, emotional safety. Physical safety pertains to the physical environment (work sites); the risks posed by the nature of the work employee’s conduct; and, where relevant, the availability of appropriate, functioning equipment. Emotional safety has at its root a sense of feeling valued: accepted and appreciated, recognized and respected. While individuals employed by public safety agencies can face increased exposure to physical danger, all employees can be exposed to environments where emotional safety is at risk.



A survey conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) directly links job satisfaction to feelings of safety. Forty-eight percent (48%) of those surveyed indicated that their job satisfaction is affected by their sense of safety.²⁶ Department staff acknowledge the importance of this goal: in one recently administered departmental survey, “ensuring staff safety” was a top priority for both sworn supervisors and sworn line staff.

Given the importance of physical and emotional safety to the well-being of all departmental employees, the Department’s Vision 2023 will include strategies to address staff members’ safety in the workplace.

3B. CREATE AND MAINTAIN a thriving, healthy organizational culture.

“Organizational culture” is the collection of attitudes, values, beliefs, behaviors, and practices that define an organization. Organizational culture is affected by a variety of factors that can impede or enhance organizational success. Two pillars of a healthy workplace are a spirit of camaraderie and a sense of physical and emotional wellness; they both contribute to positive morale and work productivity.

Team spirit—the sense of camaraderie—is built on the foundation of a shared vision and organizational goals, and on a commitment to attaining them. It is further enhanced by formal and informal opportunities for meaningful social interaction within the organization.

Employee physical and emotional health affects not only the individual but the organization as a whole in terms of increased productivity and revenue and decreased health care costs. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the use of effective workplace programs and policies can reduce health risks and improve the quality of life for workers.²⁷ The CDC promotes a comprehensive approach to employee wellness, including a variety of interventions that simultaneously address multiple risk factors and health conditions that contribute to both employee and organizational health.

The Probation Department’s efforts will include strategies to build esprit de corps through large and small, formal and informal, management and line staff-led team-building activities. Further, opportunities to discuss and work together to build and carry out plans to achieve the Department’s mission and goals generally—and the goals and objectives in this plan specifically—will further solidify the Department’s sense of team. Finally, steps will be taken under this plan to encourage and support the health, fitness, and wellness of all departmental staff.

OUR ADULTS REFLECT ON THE DAY REPORTING CENTER:

“It has allowed me to think outside the box and get my life in order. Because of the resources they have, it’s allowed me to have a roof over my head, medical treatment, provided me a lawyer for my SSI case, as well as fed me on numerous occasions. Because of the TDRC, I have been free for almost a year. (THAT’S BIG.)”
—Anonymous

²⁶ See SHRM, 2016.

²⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/workplacehealthpromotion/index.html>

3C. RECRUIT, HIRE, TRAIN, AND RETAIN staff of the highest caliber.

An exemplary workforce is not possible without systems in place to recruit individuals who are motivated to achieve the organization’s vision and mission and who possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively contribute to the organization’s success. Through



its Vision 2023, the Alameda County Probation Department seeks to continue to develop a robust, proactive recruitment plan, including ensuring that employment with the Department is viewed as a desirable and fulfilling career opportunity. Further, the Department seeks to create a comprehensive career planning process that will ensure employees receive the proper training to meet the demands of their positions; support team spirit through cross-training; increase retention of the most skilled and

committed employees; and prepare employees for promotional advancement. And, although staff development and retention will be a major focus, equally important will be succession planning efforts that take into account the anticipated attrition of a seasoned workforce.

3D. CREATE A CULTURE of learning and professional development.

Key to a highly successful and growth-oriented workforce is the professional development of staff. Professional development is a dynamic process that continues throughout one’s career. It enhances employees’ capacity to carry out the Department’s vision and mission through their individual roles and responsibilities; supports employee retention; and prepares staff for advancement within the organization. Over the coming five years, the Department seeks to instill a culture of lifelong learning through professional development opportunities. The Department will identify job-specific core competencies; establish and make available associated training tracks; and utilize strategic methods to assess and address all employees’ professional development needs.





3E. ESTABLISH A CULTURE that acknowledges and rewards excellence in the workplace.

Employee recognition has long been regarded as an important aspect of organizational health and performance. For example, research demonstrates that organizations that focus on employee recognition are 12 times more likely to have positive business results²⁸ and experience lower levels of frustration among staff.²⁹

In an effort to acknowledge and support the contributions of departmental staff—and create a culture of recognition—the Department seeks to identify strategies to both formally and informally acknowledge staff members’ contributions to achieving the Department’s vision, mission, and goals.

3F. SUPPORT PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT through formal and informal evaluation, feedback, and accountability measures.

Employee performance evaluations are a critical tool in the operation of a successful organization. Formal evaluations that are conducted meaningfully and in a timely manner serve both the individual and the organization. Done well, they reinforce each person’s role in the overall mission of the organization and provide an opportunity for give and take between employee and supervisor about the specific steps that can be followed to improve and advance one’s skills and position within the organization.

Equally important is routine, informal feedback that serves to reinforce recognition of an employee’s strengths and to create opportunities for coaching and mentoring in areas in which the employee is able to further develop. Through this plan, the Department seeks to bolster its performance evaluation systems—both formal and informal—to ensure that they are conducted at every level of the organization; are documented and monitored to be certain they are timely, meaningful, and fairly and equitably administered; and are used to support employees to hone their skills and improve their performance.



²⁸ See Bersin & Associates, 2012.

²⁹ See SHRM/Globoforce, 2012.

Goal

FOUR

A HIGH-FUNCTIONING, DATA-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION

High-performing organizations prioritize the establishment of systems and structures designed to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. Such organizations formulate clear policies and procedures and ensure that employees throughout the organization understand and follow them as a matter of routine. They also place a premium on metrics that enable the objective assessment of the organization’s success in terms of the achievement of its performance targets, while building and maintaining systems that support ongoing research and evaluation. Finally, high-performing organizations encourage a culture of learning whereby all staff—regardless of their position or responsibility within the organization—seek to understand and embrace emerging knowledge and information that supports their own improvement and that of the organization as a whole.



OBJECTIVES

4A. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT a set of comprehensive policies and procedures.

Strong, healthy organizations are managed under a system of written, deliberately crafted, thoughtfully implemented, and strategically monitored policies and procedures. Written policies and procedures establish departmental expectations and provide staff with clear direction; they also ensure consistent practices across and within units and divisions and provide a mechanism for holding employees accountable throughout the organization. Vision 2023 will result in the development and adoption of comprehensive policies and procedures. Staff expressed strong support for this, ranking it as a high priority in the focus groups and departmental survey.



4B. DEVELOP A COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE throughout the Department that provides for the timely, complete, and accurate exchange of information.

Organizational development literature demonstrates that effective communication is critical to any organization’s success.³⁰ Effective, free-flowing communication has been shown to increase employee morale, productivity, and commitment. Routine, clear communication between management and staff—both verbally and in writing—is critically important for clarifying expectations and their rationale. However, the ability to communicate up through the ranks and across the organization is equally important, particularly as it relates to employees having the opportunity to openly share their ideas and concerns. Staff focus groups revealed that while communication is improving significantly under the current administration, it remains a top concern and there is more that can be done to improve the flow of information.

OUR ADULTS REFLECT ON THE DAY REPORTING CENTER:

“It has shown me that there are people that care and will help me get on the right track.”
—Anonymous

The Department’s Vision 2023 contemplates establishing protocols for determining the types of information to be exchanged among employees, the most effective communication strategies for each type, and methods to monitor the success of these efforts, including but not limited to employee satisfaction with departmental information flow.

4C. STRENGTHEN SYSTEMS and reporting structures throughout the Department to support data-driven decision making and accountability.

“Data-driven decision making” is defined as “the practice of basing decisions on the analysis of data rather than purely on intuition”³¹ or, as has been commonplace in the justice field, experiential knowledge. The challenge for most justice system agencies is that they have archaic and non-integrated data systems that were designed more for single-agency operational purposes than for strategic and multidisciplinary decision making. Nonetheless, conducting business in the day of evidence-based practices and decision making demands timely and robust data, as well as systems that support multi-organization data exchanges.

Through the Department’s efforts under Vision 2023, data systems that produce timely, reliable, and pertinent information about core operational activities and identified performance outcomes will be established. Further, quality assurance protocols will ensure accurate and timely data capture, while data dashboards and other reporting processes will provide individuals—both internal and external to the Department—with information to ensure accountability and achievement of identified performance targets.

³⁰ See Finney, Stergiopoulos, Hensel, Bonato, & Dewa, 2013.

³¹ See Provost & Fawcett, 2013, p. 53.

4D. INVEST IN PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND STRATEGIES supported by the latest advancements and best practice research.

Evidence-based organizations are those that stay abreast of contemporary research and modify their service delivery system in accordance with current literature and practice. Indeed, research is ever-evolving, and programs and services once deemed as investment-worthy may since have been demonstrated to fall short or to fail entirely.³² To become truly evidence-based, the Department will establish a research division that will be, in part, responsible for following criminal and juvenile justice literature and emerging practice and supporting the Department in keeping pace with an evolving field. However, responsibility for understanding research will also rest with the staff as a whole, who have an obligation to know and understand the research related to their profession. As such, under this plan, steps will be taken to further advance the Department as a learning community, where emerging knowledge in the field is not relegated to a few but, instead, is shared and applied by many. This will position staff to continually assess the Department’s investments—fiscal and otherwise—to ensure that the best possible programs and services are employed.

4E. ESTABLISH PERFORMANCE MEASURES and continuous quality improvement processes for all departmental divisions and contracted programs and services.

Research has demonstrated that well-constructed performance measures and careful attention to programmatic implementation result in positive outcomes, including reductions in recidivism.³³ For example, research conducted on drug courts demonstrates that those



programs that modified their services based upon information derived through quality assurance processes produced substantially better outcomes, including significant cost savings.³⁴ The most common method for assessing programmatic effectiveness is through the use of objective evaluation tools.³⁵ The Alameda Probation Department seeks to work closely with its community-based partners to use these and other tools to deliver the best possible services for clients.

³² See, for instance, Washington State Institute for Public Policy’s benefit–cost analysis of Scared Straight (<http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/BenefitCost/ProgramPdf/114/Scared-Straight>).

³³ See Lipsey, 2009; Taxman & Belenko, 2012.

³⁴ See Carey, Finnigan, & Pukstas, 2008.

³⁵ Several validated tools are available for this purpose. These include the Correctional Program Assessment Inventory (CPAI; <http://thejrc.com/wwi-measuring.asp>), the Correctional Program Checklist (CPC; https://www.uc.edu/corrections/services/program_evaluation.html), and the Standard Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP; <http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/juvenile/spep>).



Furthermore, the Alameda County Probation Department is committed to establishing performance measures associated with its core functions and activities; monitoring the collection of these data to ensure data accountability and integrity; and ensuring the fidelity of Department-provided and Department-sponsored programs and services through continuous quality improvement processes. These efforts will enable staff to identify areas of strength in the Department’s programs and services and, where needed, adjust activities to improve outcomes. This was a key priority for external stakeholders who provided input into this plan.

4F. UTILIZE ROBUST, MEANINGFUL DATA to evaluate outcomes against departmental performance measures.

Once robust data systems are in place, performance measures are established, and quality assurance and continuous quality improvement strategies are implemented to support ongoing improvements in programs and services, the Department will be positioned to conduct—or partner with others to conduct—research to determine whether Department-provided or Department-supported programs and services are achieving their desired ends. Recognizing the national research—and the potential for overall risk reduction of 30% or greater—the Department will establish and strive to achieve the best possible outcomes for those it serves.

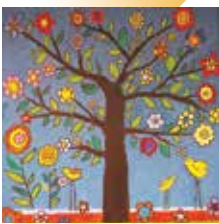
OUR ADULTS REFLECT ON THE DAY REPORTING CENTER:

“Because of my program, when I look at my daughter she touches a place in my heart I never knew existed. She is able to see me in a different light now.” —D.S.



A NETWORK OF PARTNERSHIPS FOSTERING A SAFE COMMUNITY

While crime often results in harm to individuals, it also disrupts the fabric of a community. Crime jeopardizes community members' perception of safety and their sense of well-being. It also diverts public monies that might otherwise support its residents, for example, by improving local infrastructure, educational opportunities, investments in the arts and humanities, and supportive care for the impoverished and elderly. In this way, crime prevention and crime reduction efforts benefit the entire community, yet experience demonstrates that no single entity alone can prevent or reduce crime.



High-functioning justice systems have as their hallmark collaborative partnerships among those who affect, or are affected by, crime. Through these partnerships, and the effective use of technology and deliberative problem solving processes, justice systems seek to overcome the limitations of traditional and non-systematic approaches. Research demonstrates that such efforts can result in significant improvements in justice system outcomes.³⁶

OBJECTIVES

5A. COLLABORATIVELY ENGAGE with justice system and community partners to advance a shared vision of public safety.

The Probation Department's capacity to positively influence the lives of its clients will be significantly increased through meaningful collaboration with its justice system partners. The Department seeks to engage with its partners in a structured, deliberate process aimed at developing a shared understanding

³⁶ See Andrews, 2007; Bonta & Andrews, 2017; Przybylski, 2008.



of each party's roles and responsibilities; building a common language to describe the justice system; articulating a public safety vision for their community and, in so doing, developing consensus around their values and goals; jointly creating policies and practices to achieve their goals; and, together, monitoring performance and identifying methods to further improve systemwide outcomes.

5B. SHARE AND EXCHANGE DATA and information to demonstrate that Alameda County will be the safest in the nation.

Critical to the achievement of the justice system's goal of a safer Alameda County—and the Probation Department's vision of having the safest communities in the nation—is the establishment of methods to measure and report on systemwide activities and performance.

The Department seeks to engage with its collaborative partners to identify meaningful systemwide performance measurement data; establish routine methods for partners to gather and share data and information; engage with research partners throughout the county and elsewhere to assess the effectiveness of systemwide risk reduction and client success strategies; collectively assess performance; and create opportunities for further improvement if performance standards are not met.

OUR ADULTS REFLECT ON THE DAY REPORTING CENTER:

“It taught me what's more important and that's my family.” —Anonymous

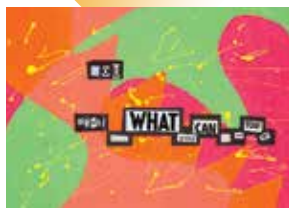
5C. IMPROVE the Probation Department's service delivery system, outcomes, and client satisfaction through the utilization of technologically advanced interactive methods.

The ultimate mission of the Alameda County Probation Department is to improve public safety outcomes through its delivery of services to its clients, their families, and the community. The Department is committed to effectively utilizing technology to achieve this objective. Specifically, the use of technologically advanced interactive methods will allow the Department to streamline and automate business processes (i.e., program referral processes and two-way feedback); facilitate the exchange of information between staff, clients, and providers; collect and manage data; and assess client satisfaction.



A VICTIM-CENTERED APPROACH SUPPORTING THOSE IMPACTED BY CRIME

Crime’s greatest impact is upon those directly harmed—its primary victims. But crime also affects an array of others. Secondary and tertiary³⁷ victims include the significant others of both victims and perpetrators, and those in the broader community who suffer from the fear, neighborhood decimation, social disruption, and financial consequences crime can and often does produce. Many probation clients themselves may also have been crime victims.



Restorative justice is a widely recognized approach to victim restoration and healing; its tenets assert that those who engage in criminal behavior have an obligation to restore, to the degree possible, those impacted by their behavior.³⁸ By adopting a victim-centered approach, the Department commits to fulfilling its responsibility to hold clients accountable to those harmed by their actions, and to provide compassionate and sensitive support to victims.

Individuals unfamiliar with the justice system process, including but not exclusive of the probation process, indicate that it can be confusing, intimidating, impersonal, and, at times, even retraumatizing.³⁹ The Department can contribute to the restoration of primary and secondary victims—and the advocates who support them—by sharing information about the probation process; developing victim safety plans; establishing systems to maximize the collection of restitution; providing service referrals (e.g., victim–client mediation); and offering opportunities for meaningful input into departmental policies that impact victims, such as assisting in the development of programs (e.g., victim impact panels), and case-specific practices.

³⁷ Primary victims are those directly harmed by crime. Secondary victims are those closely associated with a victim, such as a victim’s significant others. Tertiary victims are those who are more generally and indirectly affected by the harms of victimization (e.g., fear, costs of crime).

³⁸ See Zehr, 2005.

³⁹ For more information, see Office for Victims of Crime, Training and Technical Assistance Center, at <https://www.ovcttac.gov/taskforceguide/eguide/1-understanding-human-trafficking/13-victim-centered-approach>.



OBJECTIVES

6A. BOLSTER VICTIM SUPPORT through a comprehensive, victim-centered infrastructure within the Department.

The needs of victims vary based upon the individual and their unique circumstances. Most commonly, victims want to be and feel safe, to be afforded the opportunity to recover from the trauma associated with their experience, and to regain a sense of control over their lives. The Probation Department is positioned to support victims by providing information about their perpetrator's case and about their own rights; developing safety plans that take into consideration their specific needs; and supporting other efforts to restore victims from the harms experienced.

The Department seeks to build an infrastructure to facilitate supportive services that are both victim-centered and trauma-informed. Such an infrastructure may result in a mechanism to better identify primary and secondary victims; provide additional staff sensitivity training; create advocacy roles or the assignment of advocacy responsibilities; enhance notification and information dissemination processes; modify policies or procedures; and/or improve data collection and performance measurement around restitution collection and victim satisfaction with probation services.

6B. EXPONENTIALLY INCREASE the rate of restitution collection.

Traditional means of restitution collection tend to result in relatively low rates of collection. Alameda County has employed industry-standard tools and practices, such as providing an array of payment options, specialized restitution collection work functions, and the use of civil judgment. Nonetheless, the Department seeks to significantly increase the rate of restitution collection by creating a task force responsible for augmenting historical collection practices with new, innovative strategies. These strategies may include, among others, wage garnishment and service projects that generate monies that are contributed to a restitution fund.

6C. IN PARTNERSHIP with governmental and non-governmental entities, strengthen the system of care for victims.

Victim service and other community-based organizations provide a diverse array of services. Through rapport-building and culturally sensitive and trauma-informed approaches, they assess victim needs and provide critical support to survivors.⁴⁰ The Department seeks to become a strong partner in victim advocacy and support by enhancing its engagement with its juvenile justice, criminal justice, and community-based partners. In this way, it can advance the current system of victim care, with the specific aim of increasing communication and coordination, reducing duplication, streamlining information collection and referral processes, expanding cross-disciplinary training, and improving victim-specific and restorative justice programming.

⁴⁰ There are different reasons to use the term "victim" or "survivor." The term "victim" is commonly used within the juvenile and criminal justice process as a legal term referring to an individual who suffered harm as a result of an illegal act; it gives individuals particular rights within the justice system. The term "survivor" is often used by victim advocates as a means of recognizing an individual's personal journey in overcoming victimization.

PARTNERS

THE ALAMEDA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ITS MANY PARTNERS, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO:

- BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
- COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE
- SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, ALAMEDA COUNTY, CRIMINAL AND JUVENILE COURTS
- DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
- PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE
- HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY
- SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY
- PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
- SHERIFF'S OFFICE
- OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
- JUVENILE JUSTICE DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COMMISSION
- OAKLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT
- COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD
- COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS PARTNERSHIP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
- PROBATION PEACE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION
- TEAMSTERS
- SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION
- ALAMEDA COUNTY MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
- COMMUNITY & FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS
- VICTIM ADVOCATES

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**ALAMEDA COUNTY
PROBATION DEPARTMENT**