

**ALAMEDA COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS'
PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, July 25, 2024
10:00 a.m.**

**Supervisor Elisa Márquez, Chair
Supervisor Nate Miley**

**Location: Board of Supervisors Chambers
County Administration Building
1221 Oak Street, Suite 512
Oakland, CA 94612**

Webinar: <https://zoom.us/j/99247500951>

SUMMARY/ACTION MINUTES

I. Updates on Reimagine Adult Justice Recommendation #34 and Proposal for Phase 2 of Pre-Trial Services Expansion

[Attachment](#)

Wendy Still, Public Safety Advisor to Alameda County Public Protection Chair and District 2 Supervisor Elisa Márquez, Honorable Thomas Nixon, Presiding Judge Alameda Superior Court, Honorable Elena Condes, Supervising Judge Alameda Superior Court and Cory Jacobs, Pre-Trial Program Manager, Alameda Superior Court, presented a PowerPoint presentation on Reimagine Adult Justice Recommendation #34 and Proposal for Phase 2 of Pre-Trial Services Expansion.

The Honorable Judge Thomas Nixon explained the significant changes in pretrial release practices. Previously, bail was the primary determinant for release, but now pretrial release is the default, with bail set at an amount defendants can afford, often zero. This has led to 2,500–3,000 individuals awaiting trial out of custody and leaving many without needed services for housing, mental health, or addiction. The proposed pretrial program will address these issues by providing judges with tailored assessments and service options to meet defendants' needs early in the process, enhancing public safety and reducing recidivism. The program's collaborative approach between courts, probation, behavioral health, and the county, emphasize its focus on human dignity and public safety.

The Honorable Elena Condes, Supervising Judge Alameda Superior Court advocates for expanding Alameda County's pretrial services through funding for treatment and case managers. Pretrial services provide critical support for individuals not deemed dangerous to the community, helping them address issues like mental health, substance abuse, housing, and more. These services provide targeted recommendations to ensure individuals receive necessary support, increasing their likelihood of returning to court and reducing recidivism. She urged the Board of Supervisors to support the pretrial programs efforts, and the shared success of individuals and the broader community.

Corey Jacobs, Manager, Alameda Superior Court Pretrial Program, updated the committee on progress and challenges in expanding pretrial release under the Reimagined Adult Justice initiative. The initiative will reduce pretrial detention, enhance public safety, and address systemic inequities by moving away from cash bail toward a risk-based approach. Successes include a pre-arraignment release process and automated risk assessments, which help judges make informed decisions. Disparities persist, as individuals with fewer financial resources or support systems face longer pretrial detention due to delays in accessing assessments, treatment, and services. Phase one of the reform has launched successfully, but further progress, including phase two implementation, requires additional funding. Ms. Jacobs urged the county to support the initiative to ensure equitable access to resources and services for all individuals.

Wendy Still, Public Safety Advisor, District 2, reported that back in March, the committee was informed about the upcoming launch of phase one of the Pretrial Service Referral System. The system went live in April at one housing unit in Santa Rita Jail and has since expanded to three units.

This collaborative effort involves the Alameda Superior Court, Alameda County Behavioral Health, and the sheriff's office. Clinicians assess individuals shortly after booking and share recommendations with pretrial staff, who then identify suitable service providers based on various factors like location, language, and transportation.

At arraignments, judges and attorneys now receive comprehensive reports summarizing individuals' needs and available resources, enabling informed decisions about pretrial release and service connections. Early implementation has shown promising results, such as connecting individuals to housing, mental health treatment, and Behavioral Health Court at their first court appearances.

Efforts to expand include hiring additional pretrial supervision officers to increase monitoring capacity and leveraging extended support from the Harvard Government Performance Lab for research and program evaluation. However, challenges remain, such as the need for community-based case management to address barriers like mental health, transportation, and childcare.

The program's early impact is inspiring, with plans to expand its reach and refine its processes for broader and more effective implementation.

Speakers

Richard Speigman, Juan and Tojo Thomas commented on the Reimagine Adult Justice Recommendation and Pre-Trial Service Expansion.

Purpose:

- Report progress
- Advocacy or Education**
- Request Public Protection Committee Recommendation or Position
- Other:

This item was informational only and required no Committee action.

II. Juvenile Justice in Alameda County – Prevention, Intervention, and Services

[Attachment](#)

Dante Cercone, Deputy Chief Probation Officer, Alameda County Probation Department, presented a PowerPoint presentation on Juvenile Justice in Alameda County – Prevention, Intervention and Services.

Front-end services for youth include the Transition Center, court officers, investigations, and intake units. Services also include placement and foster care; probation officers manage youth placed out of home due to safety concerns. Community supervision covers youth across North, Central, and South counties, including transitional-age youth (18-25).

Arrests and probation referrals have decreased significantly since 2018. Most referred youth are male (82%), predominantly African American (52%) or Latino (32%). 88% of youth return home, with only 7% in secure facilities. The programs use risk and needs assessments to tailor services that are focused on evidence-based practices and progress monitoring. Services offered include academic support, career training, mentoring, and parenting classes through a network of 20+ community providers.

Pretrial supervision offers case management, legal advocacy, and mental health referrals. Community supervision provides intensive behavioral health and substance use case management, wraparound services, and probation officer support.

Most youth are placed with resource families or in therapeutic programs offering high-level services like trauma-focused therapy and substance use counseling. Extended foster care (AB 12) supports youth up to age 21 with housing, education, and independent living skills.

Juvenile services mapping is underway to provide a comprehensive view of available county-wide resources.

Purpose:

- Report progress
- Advocacy or Education**
- Request Public Protection Committee Recommendation or Position
- Other:

This item was informational only and required no Committee action.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tuan commented on the need to address public safety issues, with concerns about gun violence, property damage, and community impacts such as residents being unable to work due to their cars being damaged. He suggests collaboration between law enforcement and the community to address these challenges.

Tom, a resident of District 3, expressed support for Sheriff Yesenia Sanchez's July 2nd letter and the reforms implemented under her leadership. There is a significant decline in the jail population and related issues, attributing these improvements to the sheriff's reforms. He urged the supervisors to reconsider the oversight board structure and noted the importance of community representation through the Municipal Advisory Councils (MACs) and advocated for their involvement in shaping oversight related to the sheriff's office.

George, Alameda County resident, commented on recent violence in the Asian Community, where approximately 30 Asian seniors were assaulted, robbed, and beaten at a senior center. Only half reported the incidents to the police, as many elders do not speak English and are afraid to come forward. The County needs to protect seniors and improve public safety for everyone. He supports Sheriff Sanchez's reforms and requests that these concerns be included in the agenda for the next public committee meeting.

Chuck Moore, resident of Castro Valley, commented on the sheriff's oversight board development. He expressed concerns about the current oversight structure, noting that the unincorporated area of Castro Valley relies heavily on the sheriff's department but has limited representation on the oversight board. He noted a perceived bias against ex-law enforcement participants while allowing formerly incarcerated individuals on the board. In addition, he questioned the need for special counsel for the oversight group and raised concerns about funding, citing a \$60 million deficit and the need to prioritize essential services like mental health, homelessness, and senior care.

Kelly Abreu expressed concerns about the rising costs of ambulance services in Alameda County, citing a recent grand jury report. Initially, under a previous contractor, prices increased at about 3% annually, aligning with inflation. After the county approved a new ambulance contract, costs skyrocketed with an annual growth rate of 13% over four years. He urged the Board of Supervisors to prioritize controlling ambulance service costs.

Marc Crawford expressed agreement with Chuck Moore's earlier comments and emphasized the need to give more deference to the recently elected sheriff, particularly regarding her proposed changes outlined in a letter to the Board of Supervisors. Crawford advocated for the oversight board to be implemented in a more cost-effective manner initially and revisited later if adjustments are needed.

Tojo Thomas, a Castro Valley resident, and member of the MAC (Municipal Advisory Council), expressed his opposition to the establishment of an oversight committee for law enforcement. He argued that the elected Sheriff Sanchez, should serve as the oversight authority. He advocated for giving Sheriff Sanchez a chance to lead without additional oversight.