

2261 Elm St. Building A Napa, CA 94559 www.co.napa.ca.us

Main: (707) 299-2101 Fax: (707) 299-2199

Randolph F. Snowden Agency Director

MEMORANDUM

To:	Community Corrections Partnership	From:	Jaye Vanderhurst, LCSW, Mental Health Director
Date: 0	October 1, 2012	Re:	Request for approval of one full-time Forensic Mental Health Counselor

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Mental Health Division's forensic mental health services be expanded by one full-time position for a Forensic Mental Health Counselor – Licensed (1FTE) to increase mental health services in the jail.

Executive Summary:

Under AB 109, it is anticipated that the population in the Napa County Department of Correction's jail will change due to the potential of split sentencing and longer jail sentences as well as revocations remaining in the jail rather than returning to prison. This change in composition of jail inmates will lead to the need to establish additional treatment programs that are geared for the longer-term inmate. The addition of this position will augment the two existing mental health counselors assigned to the jail, already funded through Napa County Department of Corrections. One of the existing staff serves as a supervisor and only spends a percentage of her time in direct service delivery. It is expected that with the increase of one full time counselor, services offered will more adequately address the needs of inmates through the delivery of longer term therapy and monitoring of each inmate's well being over the course of their jail stay. As inmates adjust to the new and potentially distressing impacts that these longer jail stays may have on their lives, it is critical that the Mental Health Division be able to adequately respond to the need for services, both for the sake of the inmates and for the overall functioning of the jail itself.

One area of need that has not been fully addressed through existing mental health staff is the provision of a sufficient number of evidence-based group therapies and pro-social classes to reduce anti-social behaviors and increase likelihood of eventual successful transition into the community. The addition of this mental health counselor will increase the ability to assess all inmates who screen positive for mental health needs and to more regularly monitor those who request or receive psychiatric medications, as well as increase the overall number of services available within the jail.

Increasing the level of staffing will also provide the ability to have available in the jail mental health counselors seven days a week, and extend services to later in the evening. Currently, there are no counselors in the jail on Sundays, with crisis evaluation provided by the Napa County Mental Health Emergency Response Team on those days. It is expected that this third position will work the majority of their hours in the evenings and weekends, overlapping briefly with the Mental Health Division supervisor assigned to the jail for supervisory purposes.

Fiscal Impact

The cost for Forensic Mental Health Counselor - Licensed (1FTE) with benefits would be \$91, 260 at entry level. The salary range is \$64,147.20-76,866.00 per year steps one through five. Consideration may be given to filling this position as a two-year limited term, allowing for review and analysis of sustainability against any future changes as a result of Public Safety Realignment or changes in the jail population.

Background

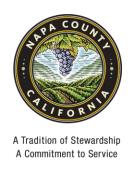
The history of forensic mental health services in the Napa County Department of Corrections has involved providing direct services to inmates, including crisis response services and supervisory oversight of the mental health services at the jail. There are currently two licensed mental health counselors who provide the following services: screening and limited assessment of mental health needs of inmates; crisis evaluation; consultation with jail staff regarding mental health issues as related to custody concerns and supportive counseling for inmates who request services. At present, these services are provided in the jail Monday through Saturday between the hours of 8:00 am and 7:00 pm, with the Napa County Mental Health Emergency Response Team covering emergency evaluations when jail mental health counselors are not on duty.

Research on accepted standards of mental health care for jail inmates provides the backdrop for the request for additional staffing. Dr. Joel Dvoskin, Diplomat in Forensic Psychology, co-authored the American Psychiatric Association publication Psychiatric Services in Jails and Prisons, Second Edition (June 2000), which sets out current guidelines for jail mental health services. He provided consultation to HHSA when evaluating services within the jail in 2007. The APA guidelines, best practice and standards of jail care indicate that inmates should be screened for mental health issues beginning with their entry into the jail setting. Assessment for mental health needs (suicidality and mental health history) is currently conducted at booking by custody staff, which is acceptable, but should be followed up by a second-level assessment by a mental health professional in any case where mental health issues are indicated. In Dr. Dvoskin's opinion, an accurate screening tool should identify approximately one-third of bookings as positive for mental health issues.

This evaluation should, on average, take approximately one half hour to complete. Dr. Dvoskin estimates that for a jail our size we could see between thirty (30) and sixty (60) individuals in need of mental health services at any given time. Current mental health staff indicate that this estimate is likely to fall at the higher end of this estimated percentage, or more, not only because of realignment but also due to the proximity of Napa State Hospital, as patients from Napa State Hospital are often incarcerated at the jail when accused of violent crimes occurring at the hospital.

Another area in need of enhancement in our current program, especially with the implementation of realignment, is the ability to follow inmates who have been prescribed psychotropic medications. Dr. Dvoskin recommends that these individuals be seen weekly by a mental health professional. The current level of mental health staffing will not allow for the recommended frequency of face-to-face monitoring, particularly when mentally ill inmates may be staying for longer sentences.

In summary, adding a forensic mental health counselor will supplement the provision of services currently provided by jail mental health staff to the whole jail population, add capacity to provide longer term, evidence based treatments across a seven- day a week schedule including evening hours, offer opportunity to add a formal and informal training program on mental health issues in the jail environment and better coordinate appropriate referrals within the jail to the community, assisting with inmates' transition and engagement to eventual outpatient mental health services.



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Recommendation

It is recommended that Napa County Mental Health Court expand by one full-time (1 FTE) Mental Health Counselor-Licensed position to increase the number of participants enrolled in the Mental Health Court program, and to ensure that the addition of intensive case management is available to these probationers. Currently the program has no independent funding and is supported solely by the collaborative efforts of the agencies involved: Courts, District Attorney, Public Defender, Probation and Mental Health. The Mental Health Division supports five participants through the dedication of a ½ time Mental Health Counselor. The addition of a full time Mental Health Counselor will increase the capacity of the Mental Health Court program by ten probationers, for a total of fifteen participants eligible for the program. All fifteen will receive intensive mental health services in addition to the services that are provided by the other involved agencies.

Executive Summary:

It is anticipated that with the implementation of AB 109 the number of individuals with long term criminal histories will require increased supervision to be maintained safely in the community. Mental Health Court, coupled with the current supervision efforts of the Probation Department, will offer an alternative to incarceration. The increase of one dedicated full time Mental Health Courselor position will allow for the expansion of Mental Health Court to provide case management, assessment and supportive counseling for fifteen probationers admitted into Mental Health Court.

Fiscal Impact

The cost for Mental Health Counselor -Licensed (1 FTE) with benefits would be \$90, 235.00 at entry level. The salary range is \$63,252.80 to \$75,753.60 per year steps one through five. Consideration may be given to filling this position as a two-year limited term, allowing for review and analysis of

sustainability against any future changes as a result of Public Safety Realignment or changes in the criminal justice population.

Background

Napa County Mental Health Court has demonstrated a reduction in the number of jail days for justice-involved mentally ill inmates. The total number of jail days for participants in Mental Health Court between its inception in June of 2009 through April of 2012 was 175 days in jail. The combined total for those same individuals for the year prior to enrollment was 795 days. Mental Health Court is a strategy often used in other counties for decreasing jail days for persons who have become involved in the criminal justice system in part due to a mental health condition. Napa County has been contacted by both Yolo and Mendocino County to consider modeling their courts after our program. Implementing Mental Health Court designed to reduce recidivism, has had some additional benefits to reducing incarceration, both fiscally and in terms of quality of life for the participants. Mental Health Court has reduced the number of days that justice-involved mentally ill participants have spent in inpatient settings such as acute psychiatric hospitals and locked facilities. The cumulative total of days participants spent in these facilities in the year before enrollment was 979 days. The total days participants have spent in those settings while involved with Mental Health Court is 15 days. Homelessness also appears to have been positively impacted by the services that Mental Health Court provides. Eleven participants reported that they were homeless at the time of their enrollment and only one remained homeless (by choice) while participating in the program.

Mental health services provided to participants in the year prior to Mental Health Court enrollment totaled 326. Post enrollment, the services provided to these same participants increased to 1,410. More anecdotally, participation in Mental Health Court has brought many participants back together with family and friends long estranged due to the negative effects of incarceration and serious mental illness. They have reunited with family members not seen for years, broken away from negative associations in favor of positive relationships with friends and peers, and generally rejoined the community in more positive and meaningful ways.

As of September 28, 2012, six participants have graduated from the program and none of these graduates have had any jail days since their graduation. The average time in Mental Health Court for those that graduated was 501 days. This average does include one outlier case of 994 days- without that individual factored in the average would be 402 days.