OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF
YOLO COUNTY

140 TONY DIAZ DRIVE, WOODLAND, CA 95776

(530) 668-5280 WWW.YOLOCOUNTYSHERIFF.COM

TOM A. LOPEZ
SHERIFF ~ CORONER
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR

MATTHEW DAVIS
UNDERSHERIFF

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July 29, 2025

To: Foreperson
Yolo County Civil Grand Jury
120 W. Main St, Suite A
Woodland, California 95695

To: Honorable Timothy Fall
Superior Court of California, County of Yolo
1000 Main Street
Woodland, California 95695

Re: Yolo County Detention Facilities – Correctional Officer staffing challenges are ongoing

Foreperson and Honorable Timothy Fall:

The following is the response of the Yolo County Sheriff's Office to the 2024-25 Grand Jury report titled, "Yolo County Detention Facilities – Correctional Officer staffing challenges are ongoing."

FINDINGS

F-1: Correctional officer hiring and staffing is a serious challenge for MDF.

The Sheriff's Office concurs with this finding.

F-2: The MDF should have 120 officers; at the time of inspection, they had 98. At a follow-up meeting in May 2025, they had 94 Correctional Officers due to a handful of recent retirements.

The Sheriff's Office concurs with this finding.

F-3: Due to the staffing shortage, there is a lot of forced overtime.

The Sheriff's Office concurs with this finding. Although it should be noted that overtime is filled voluntarily as much as possible.

F4: Understaffing at the MDF is creating the need to release inmates because the jail has reached capacity.

Per MDF leadership, in 2024, a total of 18 individuals were released under the consent decree. The individuals released were in different stages of their court proceedings or serving time when released. The individuals released were determined to be the most suitable for release based on the consent decree criteria.

The Sheriff's Office concurs with this finding.

F5: Applying for the correctional officer position is a long process. Some applicants have accepted a job elsewhere due to the length of time it takes to get through the application process, and if in corrections, they may take a similar job with higher pay in neighboring counties.

The Sheriff's Office concurs with this finding.

F6: The pay scale for the Yolo County correctional officer is lower compared to other adjacent counties.

The Sheriff's Office partially concurs with this finding. The pay scale for Yolo County employees is negotiated via the collective bargaining process with the County.

F8: According to MDF Command staff, approximately 10% of applicants pass the background check.

The Sheriff's Office disagrees with this finding. In 2024, 42% of completed correctional officer applicants passed background checks and were ultimately hired.

F9: The 2024-25 Yolo County Grand Jury received two complaints about female inmates being released in the middle of the night, or early hours of the morning, when public transportation is not available.

The Sheriff's Office shares the concern. While the Sheriff's Office cannot dictate the time of day whereupon an individual becomes eligible for release, they are provided with the option to voluntarily remain in custody until daylight hours if they so desire.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>

R1:

• While the Yolo County application process for correctional officers has recently been updated and streamlined, the 2024-25 Grand Jury suggests finding more ways to speed up the process, including but not limited to, offering the written exam more frequently than every six weeks.
• Utilizing eSoph for more background searches and tasks could be another potential way to speed up the hiring process.
• If candidates apply for a correctional officer position at other California agencies that use eSoph, consider sharing the background data to avoid replicating the search for the same data.

The Sheriff's Office shall continue to work closely with the Yolo County Human Resources Department to streamline the hiring process where possible and to continually evaluate the process as a whole.

Unfortunately, the sharing of background data is not a viable option. The information must be independently verified in order to maintain the integrity of the investigation. The background files are also confidential in nature. Additionally, the Sheriff's Office is a certified agency by California Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.) and as such required to conduct forty-hour background checks on every applicant.

R2:

• The Grand Jury recommends that there are some safeguards put in place for releases that occur during the middle of the night or early morning when no public transportation is available, such as establishing a network of community volunteers who are willing to be on call to assist the individual with transportation to their destination.
• Additionally, the Grand Jury suggests establishing a safe place for releasees to wait inside or outside the MDF, especially when the release occurs in the middle of the night or early morning and when public transportation is not available.

Fortunately, safeguards are already in place. While the Sheriff's Office cannot dictate the time of day whereupon an individual becomes eligible for release, they are provided with the option to voluntarily remain in custody until daylight hours if they so desire.