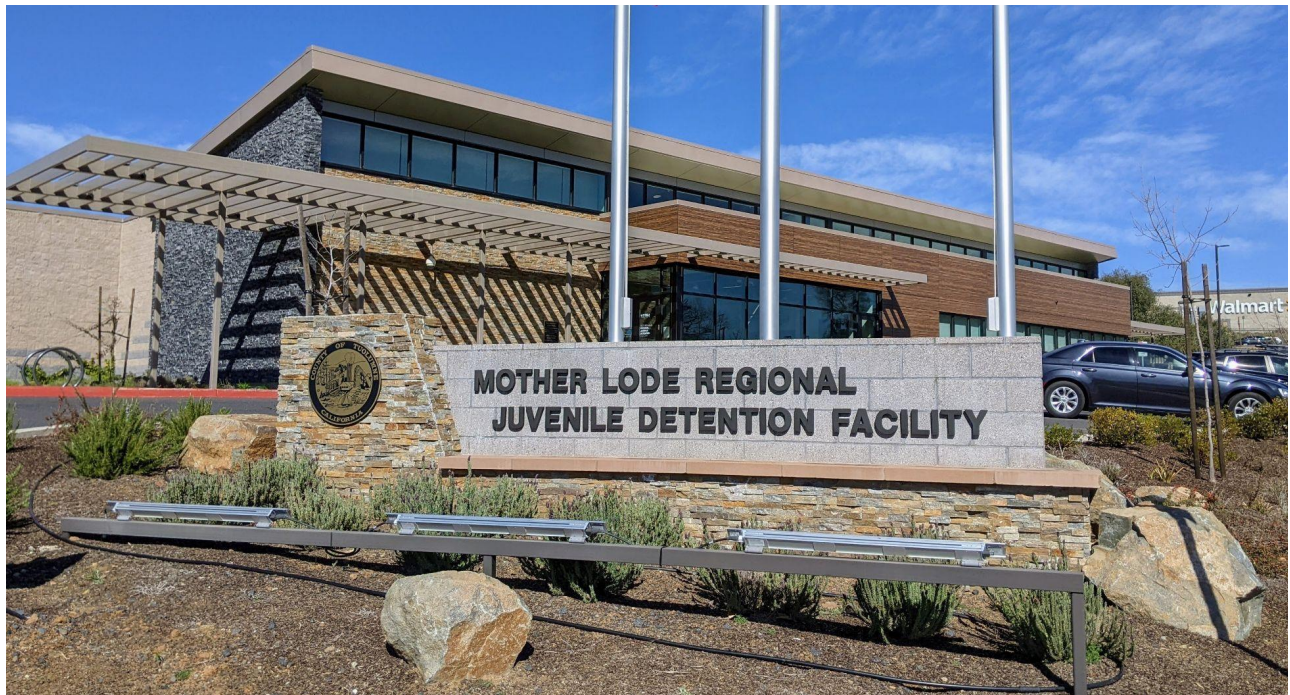


**COUNTY OF TUOLUMNE  
GRAND JURY**  
12855 Justice Center Drive  
Sonora, CA 95370



---

## **MOTHER LODGE REGIONAL JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY: a Model for Youth Detention June 14, 2022**



Mother Lode Regional Juvenile Detention Facility. Cynthia Gugg

**“The treasure of the Sierra is our children”**

## SUMMARY

The MLRJDF opened in 2017 after several decades of discussion and planning. Previously youths whose detention was ordered by the courts for delinquency or criminal behavior were detained in facilities far from the county. Long travel distances and fees were costly for the county, the courts, Probation and Children's Welfare Services staff, and especially for families. Having a local facility aids family reunification and the return of youths to their local schools and community.

The priority of the juvenile justice system is to rehabilitate rather than to punish. Juvenile crime has decreased in recent decades, but youth detention has an important role in the rehabilitation process for many youths. The majority of youth who are detained have suffered multiple traumas including abuse, neglect or exposure to violence that may have lifelong health consequences. Interventions that address the emotional, educational, behavioral needs of these youths can build resiliency, reduce recidivism and adult criminal behavior, and have been shown to be cost effective.

The Grand Jury found that MLRJDF provides an exceptional and positive environment for detained youths through trauma-informed services that encourage respect, responsibility, and safety. The on-site educational program through Gold Ridge Educational Center and the Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools provides high quality teaching and leads to educational progress for youths, despite special education needs, personal trauma, and variable lengths of stay in detention. The COVID-19 pandemic limited enrichment programs that rely on community volunteers, but these programs are now returning.

Our neighboring counties of Calaveras, Mariposa, Amador, and Inyo rely on MLRJDF as a regional resource. These counties pay for services for their detained youth and to reserve beds. These revenues and state funds defray Tuolumne County costs, which has reduced costs per youth per day to less than other out-of-home placements.

Currently, MLRJDF has the physical facilities to accommodate thirty youths, but due to staffing limitations and COVID, a maximum of sixteen youths are currently accommodated. The Grand Jury recommends the development of a recruitment plan for additional entry level juvenile correction officers and commends the leadership and staff for creating a model program of which we should all be proud.

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code, Section 929, requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>GLOSSARY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND COMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>REQUESTED RESPONSES</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>20</b>

## GLOSSARY

ACEs	Adverse Childhood Experiences, a ten-point scale developed by the CDC of types of abuse, neglect, and experiences associated with long-term health and behavioral consequences.
CAMP	Steps to Success Camp program
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CHSPE	California High School Proficiency Exam
CICO	Check In Check Out
Crossover youth	Youth involved with both Child Welfare Services (who have experienced maltreatment or have dependency needs) and the Juvenile Justice System (for delinquency or criminal activity). Also called Dual-Status Youth.
DJJ	Department of Juvenile Justice
ERMHS	Educationally Related Mental Health Services
FY	Fiscal year. For example, FY 20/21 in Tuolumne County is the budget year from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.
GREC	Gold Ridge Educational Center
4-H	A national non-profit youth development organization (Head, Heart, Hands, Health) with local affiliate programs.
IEP	Individualized Education Program
JCO	Juvenile Correctional Officer
JJC	Juvenile Justice Commission
MAYSI	Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument, a 52 question scale of behaviors, thoughts, feelings or symptoms associated with various behavioral health problems of adolescents.
MLRJDF	Mother Lode Regional Juvenile Detention Facility

PBIS	Positive Behavior Intervention and Support
STRPT	Short-Term Residential Treatment Program
Trauma-focused CBT	Cognitive Behavior Therapy approach for youth who have experienced complex trauma.
TCSOS	Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools
TLC	Tuolumne Learning Center
WIC	Welfare and Institutions Code
WellPath	Organization contracted for health services at MLRJDF and DDC.

## BACKGROUND

On April 10, 2017, the doors to the Mother Lode Regional Juvenile Detention Facility (MLRJDF) opened for business. It was the first major project completed at the Law and Justice Center property, taking more than a decade and approximately \$20 million dollars to construct. The majority of the funding came from state grants with additional assistance from the Sonora Area Foundation.

Prior to the construction and opening of the MLRJDF, Tuolumne County's response to juvenile detention was to send youth to distant facilities such as those in Bakersfield, Marysville and Nevada City.<sup>1</sup> The challenges were many: transportation, family visitation, meetings with probation officers, and costs and time of travel for families and officers. It wasn't an ideal situation, but it was the only option at the time. Discussion of having a local youth detention facility for the Foothill Region had been going on for several decades, but never came to fruition. With the opening of MLRJDF, new opportunities were possible.

There have been declines in the frequency and duration of juvenile detention across the country in recent decades. Last year the State of California approved Senate Bill 823 that will shut down state Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities by 2023 and will provide additional support to county and regional facilities. In the past, youths who were sent to the DJJ facilities were usually those with more serious offenses. Now, more of these youth, who can be detained up to age twenty-five, will be detained in local facilities.

The goal for the juvenile justice system is primarily rehabilitative, in contrast to the adult system, which has a focus on justice and punishment. The mission of MLRJDF is "... to provide for the safe and supportive detention of youth requiring secure rehabilitative services. It is guided by the belief high risk youth are capable of changing negative patterns of conduct through active participation in evidenced based and best practices programs empirically proven to promote positive change."<sup>2</sup>

MLRJDF's 484-page Policy and Procedures Manual<sup>3</sup> (available to the public on the Tuolumne County website) gives a comprehensive review of the California Code of

---

<sup>1</sup> Tuolumne County Grand Jury 2016-17. Complete 2017 Grand Jury Report.151-7 .  
<https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/1052/2017-Grand-Jury-Report>.

<sup>2</sup> Tuolumne County Government Probation Department. MLRJDF. .  
<https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/910/Mother-Lode-Regional-Juvenile-Detention>

<sup>3</sup> Tuolumne County. MLRJDF Policies and Procedures Manual 2019  
<https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/910/Mother-Lode-Regional-Juvenile-Detention>

Regulations (CCR) Title 15 standards governing all aspects of juvenile detention including discipline, health care, food, programs, staffing, training, and safety.

This regional facility serves other Foothill Counties including Calaveras, Amador, Mariposa, and Inyo. These counties pay for housing youth at MLRJDF through a Memorandum of Understanding with Tuolumne County, which manages and operates the facility.

Secure detention of youths who have committed law violations is under section 602 of the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) is ordered by the courts.<sup>4</sup> Youths who are already served by Child Welfare Services under section 300 of the WIC for dependency are called crossover youths or dual status youth and are served by both Probation Department and Child Welfare Services.

Youths who are detained in the Juvenile Justice System have usually suffered multiple traumas during their childhood and adolescence. A ten-point scale of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE), developed through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a standardized way of describing this trauma, and includes the experience of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect, witnessing violence in the home or community, having a family member attempt or die by suicide, or living in a household with substance abuse, mental health problems or instability due to parental separation or incarceration.<sup>5</sup> While 61 percent of adults surveyed across twenty-five states have experienced at least one type of ACE, approximately one in six of these reported experiencing four or more types of ACEs. A majority of incarcerated youths also report four or more ACEs.

High ACEs are associated with many health conditions and behaviors, including: smoking; alcohol and drug use; depression and mental health issues; obesity, heart disease and pregnancy problems; divorce, domestic violence and child abuse; school problems and truancy; and adult criminal activity and incarceration. These health and social problems are very costly to families, communities, and society. Prevention and intervention with youths may have lifelong benefits.

---

<sup>4</sup> California Legislative Information. Welfare and Institutions Code Section 602.

[https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=602.&lawCode=WIC](https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=602.&lawCode=WIC)

<sup>5</sup> What are Adverse Childhood Experiences? <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/fastfact.html>

## **METHODOLOGY**

California Penal Code §919(b) mandates that the Grand Jury in each county inspect the condition of all public prisons every year. Sections 919(a), 925, and 925a authorize the Grand Jury to investigate city and county jails and other detention facilities. The 2020-2022 Grand Jury interviewed leadership of the MLRJDF on several occasions and reviewed extensive materials provided.

The Grand Jury had the opportunity to tour MLRJDF on November 30, 2021. During the tour, they also met with staff from the school and the officers willingly answered all inquiries in a thorough manner. Members of the Grand Jury additionally conversed and interviewed selected youths who were detained at the center.

Other sources and documents:

- Email and virtual interviews with staff
- CCR Title 15
- WIC
- MLRJDF page on Tuolumne County Website
- MLRJDF Youth Orientation Handbook
- MLRJDF Policy and Procedure Manual
- Budget documents provided by staff
- 2016-2017 Grand Jury Report
- Review of key juvenile justice articles and publications

### **Confidentiality**

Grand Jury members are sworn to secrecy regarding any matter brought before them. This assures all individuals that their testimony will be strictly confidential. Each Grand Juror must keep all evidence confidential. It is a misdemeanor to violate the confidentiality of any individual or evidence brought before the Grand Jury.

### **Recusal**

The Grand Jury recognizes that a conflict of interest may arise during its investigations. In such instances the juror may ask to be recused from all aspects of an investigation. Those members do not investigate, attend interviews and deliberations, or assist in the making and acceptance of a final report that may result from an investigation.

Therefore, whenever the perception of a conflict of interest existed on the part of a member of the 2020-2022 Tuolumne County Grand Jury, that member abstained from any investigation involving such a conflict and from voting on the acceptance or rejections of any related subject.



## **DISCUSSION**

All interviewees and staff during the tour spoke with pride and enthusiasm regarding the MLRJDF and its programs. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the core educational and behavioral programs have continued, though interaction with volunteers from the community have been severely limited. In addition to the Grand Jury inspection, Tuolumne County has a Juvenile Justice Commission that conducts an annual inspection of the MLRJDF.

### **Intake and Orientation: Establishing Behavioral Goals**

During the first days of entry into MLRJDF, youths complete a comprehensive assessment that establishes norms and orient youths to the expectations in the facility, helps to define educational, health, and behavioral therapy needs, and begins a program for rehabilitation. Many youths entering the program show evidence of multiple traumas with high ACEs. A Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument-2 (MAYSI-2) questionnaire is used to identify these experiences and symptoms and to guide trauma-focused care at the facility.<sup>6</sup> This 52-question inventory is nationally used to screen youths in juvenile justice systems to identify risk for mental and behavioral health issues, alcohol/drug use and suicidal ideation at intake.

All youths are screened for health problems and for COVID-19 on entry. Many youths have problems with drugs and alcohol, and older youths require screening for sexually transmitted infections. They are given an orientation with emphasis on the rules and expectations, including the three behavioral goals—respectful, responsible, and safe—that are described below.

### **Education**

California compulsory education law requires everyone between the ages of six and eighteen years of age to attend school, except students who have graduated from high school or passed the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE) and obtained parental permission. MLRJDF addresses this requirement through the educational programs offered at the facility.

Individual needs—educational, medical, social, psychological, trauma, and substance abuse—are assessed at intake. Many of the youths may not have attended school regularly, are credit deficient, and have high ACE scores—all challenges for a

---

<sup>6</sup> California Evidence Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare.  
<https://www.cebc4cw.org/assessment-tool/massachusetts-youth-screening-instrument-version-2/>

comprehensive education system. Additionally, approximately 50 percent are on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) requiring special services, regular assessments, and trained staff.

MLRJDF enjoys a positive relationship with the Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools (TCSOS), which is responsible for providing education to incarcerated youth. TCSOS provides a credentialed teacher and a licensed educationally related mental health services (ERMHS) clinician. As part of TCSOS, the Gold Ridge Education Center (GREC) provides on-site education programs, and the Tuolumne Learning Center (TLC)—a community day school for expelled youth who are not a danger to others—provides continuity for youth not ready to return to their home schools. There is a full-time case manager shared by GREC and TLC who provides continuity.

The facility has adopted the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) system to encourage safe, responsible, and respectful behavior by all. Signs detailing positive behavior characteristics are posted in hallways throughout the facility. Juvenile Corrections Officers (JCOs) were invited into the PBIS training. Staff credit the PBIS program with reduced rules violations. Interviewed youth agree it has helped with behavior issues and is generally well received and very effective.

GREC, TLC and other TCSOS staff coordinate with the staff of MLRJDF and the Probation Department to provide an educational program adapted for a transient population of youth who are at high educational risk. This has allowed these youth to make educational progress at a time of high disruption in their lives. Recovery of operational costs from other counties and state school funds have reduced costs to Tuolumne County. The core curriculum is designed to meet the graduation requirements of GREC and to provide a successful transition back to their home community schools when youths are released from MLRJDF. The program has recently received a six-year accreditation through the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) that will better enable youth for entry into higher education or for military recruitment.

## **Organization and Daily Activities**

A typical day at MLRJDF begins with breakfast. All meals come from the neighboring Dambacher Detention Facility. After breakfast, youth attend school until about 2:30 p.m. They break for lunch and several other times throughout the school day. There is after school programming and, following the structured curriculum, there is downtime until dinner, which is served early at 4:30 p.m. In addition, students learn independent living skills such as hygiene, sewing, how to fold laundry, cooking, gardening, and 4H activities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the 4-H and Master Gardener programs

were continued remotely, but in-person volunteer programs and religious activities were curtailed and resumed in the last quarter of 2021. At around 5:30 p.m. all youth go to their room during shift change. There are twelve-hour shifts and this break allows staff to communicate. During the evening, youth may watch a movie, make phone calls to family, or play video games. Around 9:00 p.m. there are showers, and lights out is at 10:00 p.m.

## **CICO System**

As part of the PBIS system MLRJDF has three core behavioral expectations: **safety**—keep your body to yourself; **responsibility**—accept consequences; and **respect**—follow directions and respect yourself and others. Integrated into this is CICO (Check In Check Out), which is a score system that enables youths to earn points each day for overall conduct, attitude, and behavior. The youth start with thirty points and can lose or earn more points based on their behavior and actions. For example, a youth might lose a respect point for vulgar language. Youth are notified throughout the day when they lose points and staff try to make sure that youth know why and are given the opportunity to correct behavior. Staff implement a ten-minute refocus after four or more verbal prompts for minor behavioral expectation and rule violations. After ten minutes, staff again tell the youth why they were refocused, and talk with or counsel the youth about the behavioral expectations and rules and good decision-making. To encourage youth to participate in recreation and minimize the time a youth spends in their room, youth who refuse to leave their room during recreation times will not earn CICO points during that grading period. For a serious incident (e.g., attack on another youth) several points are lost and the ability to participate in certain activities like phone calls are curtailed. Earned accumulative points gain access to guests, special activities and events, extra phone calls, the opportunity to purchase items out of commissary (e.g., food, nicer personal care products), and the ability to keep extra letters and pictures in rooms. Youth may check out with the PM Unit JCO at the end of the day to review progress, problem-solve issues, set goals for the next day, and receive reinforcement/feedback. Weekly incentives to meet a determined number of accumulated points are available which may include a new release movie, BBQ or ice cream, a special guest, or an intramural sports game.

## **Boys Council and Girls Circle**

Boys Council and Girls Circle are evidenced-based programs that have continued to be offered at MLRJDF throughout COVID-19. These programs are structured support groups designed to foster self-esteem and help boys/girls maintain authentic connections. It is a safe place where they can share their feelings verbally and

creatively as they gain a deeper understanding of themselves and those around them. This program does not provide counseling but gives youths a place to give and receive support from their peers.

The Boys Council aims to promote boys' natural strengths, support healthy development, build assets, and deconstruct harmful masculinity beliefs on their journey to manhood. Rigid beliefs and norms about masculinity are harmful to the health, safety, relationships, and opportunities of boys and young men. These beliefs lead to heightened violence, school dropout, physical and sexual risk-taking, substance abuse, sexual violence, crime, and accidents amongst teen boys.<sup>7</sup>

The Girls Circle is designed to increase positive connection, personal and collective strengths, and competence in girls. It aims to counteract social and interpersonal forces that impede girls' growth and development by promoting an emotionally safe setting and structure within which girls can develop caring relationships and use authentic voices. Gender-responsive themes and topics are introduced through creative and focused activities which relate to the girls' lives, such as being a girl, trusting ourselves, friendships, body image, goals, sexuality, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, competition, social media, and decision-making.

## **Health and COVID Response**

Health screening is supported by WellPath, which provides health services for both the MLRJDF and the DDC. A part-time nurse is available for youth needs. As of February 2022, less than half of the staff have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Only a few youth have been vaccinated. Although vaccines are offered through public health, parental or guardian permission is required and is not often obtained. The facility generally limits capacity to sixteen and houses youths in single rooms. Masking, social distancing, and reducing volunteer programs have also been effective in reducing COVID-19 risks. Though there have not been severe outbreaks of COVID in this facility, the Grand Jury is still concerned that low vaccination rates represent a potential vulnerability for the youths and vaccination should be actively encouraged.<sup>8,9,10,11</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Sabo, D. (1999), *Understanding Men's Health: A Relational and Gender Sensitive Approach*, Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies, Working Paper Series, NO. 99.14: Boston, MA

<sup>8</sup> Barnert E. COVID-19 and youth impacted by juvenile and adult criminal justice systems. *Pediatrics*. 2020 Aug;146(2): e20201299.

<sup>9</sup> DJJ roadmap to reopening - February 2022.

<https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/juvenile-justice/djj-roadmap-to-reopening-february-2022/>

<sup>10</sup> Burrell S, Wilber S. COVID-19 and California's detained youth: vulnerable and overlooked. *Calif. J Politics and Policy*, 13(1). doi 10.5070/Pcjpp13154575. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/446204fq>

<sup>11</sup> California Department of Public Health. Statement on timeline for COVID-19 vaccine requirements in schools. PH22-073. April 14, 2022. <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OPA/Pages/NR22-073.aspx>

## **Security**

On October 8, 2021, a detainee escaped from the MLRJDF. Fortunately, the individual was located in Sonora and was recaptured by the Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office and detained again two days later. Security weaknesses that may have contributed to the escape were identified, and a grant was applied for and awarded to address the issues. The MLRJDF facilities maintenance department is planning to implement security upgrades soon. Since the facility was constructed with other grant funding (SB 81 specifically), there are several steps required to make any changes to the facility. It requires collaborating with the Board of State and Community Corrections, California Department of Correction and Rehabilitation, and the State Public Works Board.

## **Capacity and Program Costs**

Our neighboring counties of Calaveras, Mariposa, Amador, and Inyo rely on MLRJDF as a regional resource. These counties pay for services for their detained youth and to reserve beds. These revenues and state funds defray Tuolumne County costs, which has reduced costs per youth per day to less than other out-of-home placements.

After opening in 2017, there were reports in the Union Democrat of low utilization and the high cost of the facility. As the facility has become fully staffed and established in the region, the daily census has increased and the costs per day have declined. As shown in Table 1, the utilization of the facility has increased. The average daily population has grown from 5.6 in 2017 to 13.4 in 2021.

**Table 1. Average Daily Population and Bookings for MLRJDF**

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Average Daily Population</b>	<b>Total Bookings</b>
April 10, 2017*-December 31, 2017	5.6	48
January 1, 2018-December 31, 2018	7.9	77
January 1, 2019-December 31, 2019	11	125
January 1, 2020-December 31, 2020	13.2	72
January 1, 2021-December 31, 2021	13.4	86

*\*First booking at the facility.*

Tuolumne County tracks two different costs per youth in secure detention at MLRJDF:

- Total Cost = Total annual expenditures
- Net Cost = Total annual expenditures minus revenue collected from neighboring counties, the state of California, and other sources

As shown in Table 2, the total cost per day per youth in secure detention has decreased since the facility first opened from \$574 in Fiscal Year 2017/2018 (FY 17/18) to approximately \$350 per day from FY 19/20 to present. By comparison, out of home placement at a Short-term Residential Treatment Program (STRPT) ranges between \$461-\$471 per day. MLRJDF is often able to stabilize youth and provide them with high level treatment services.

When the reimbursements from the state and other counties are considered, the net costs to Tuolumne County (TC) per youth per day in secure detention at MLRJDF have also declined, from \$452 per day in FY 17/18 to \$180 per day in FY 20/21. Calculations for the current fiscal year are not yet complete.

The average length of stay for youth at MLRJDF varies with the changing population but is increasing over time (Table 2). In the past year, a majority of youth stayed twenty-eight days or less (forty-nine youths or 65 percent), 25 percent (nineteen) stayed 29-90 days, 5 percent (four) stayed 91-180 days, and 4 percent (three youths) stayed 181 days or more. One reason for increasing length of stay is that there are more youth

in secure detention locally who are categorized under 707 (b) offenses, which are more serious and violent crimes.

**Table 2. Average length of stay and costs per day for youths**

<b>Fiscal Year (July-June)</b>	<b>Average Length of Stay</b>	<b>Total cost per youth per day</b>	<b>Net TC cost per youth per day*</b>
FY 17/18	42.8 days	\$574	\$452
FY 18/19	48.37 days	\$490	\$417
FY 19/20	55.7 days	\$361	\$287
FY 20/21	76.1 days	\$333	\$180
FY 21/22	65.5 days <sup>†</sup>	\$354 <sup>††</sup>	\$228 <sup>††</sup>

\* Net cost = Expenditures minus revenues; costs that must be covered by county discretionary funds

<sup>†</sup> Average length of stay for the first 3 quarters of the current fiscal year.

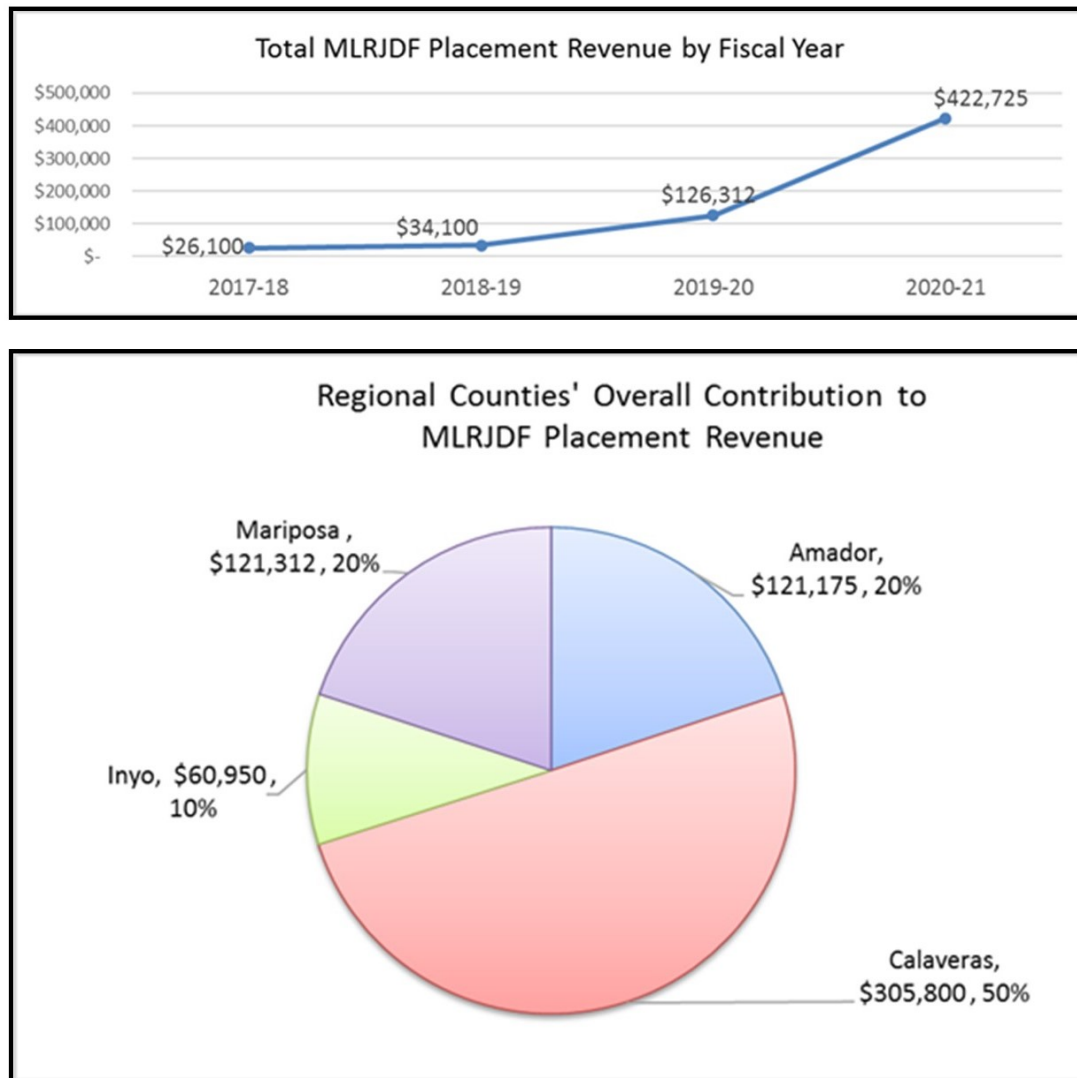
<sup>††</sup> Partial year cost information

During FY 20/21 there were expenses of \$1,456,992, of which 84 percent were for salaries and benefits.<sup>12</sup> Revenues were \$669,977, which included \$287,015 from state revenue and \$380,938 from other governments. Revenues from other counties have increased as they have referred more youth to this excellent program (Figure 1). State revenues also increased from \$179,338 to \$387,015 during this time period. Tuolumne County contributions in FY 20/21 were \$787,015. The Steps to Success juvenile CAMP program will yield additional state revenues and two state grants provide \$100,000 in service enhancements this year without impacting the general fund.

Counties in the region served by MLRJDF pay Tuolumne County to reserve beds for their youth requiring secure detention. Calaveras County reserves two beds and the other three counties in the region reserve one bed each. In FY 21/22 these counties paid \$150 per bed per day (\$54,750/year for each reserved bed) and \$175 per day for additional beds; rates for FY 22/23 are currently being negotiated.

<sup>12</sup> County of Tuolumne. Mother Lode Regional Juvenile Detention budget 0001-203220.  
<https://stories.opengov.com/tuolumnecountyca/published/i65JjNxep> accessed March 8, 2022

**Figure 1. Revenue sources from regional counties**



The core of the staff who interact with youths at MLRJDF are classified as Juvenile Correctional Officers I/II with salary ranges from \$22.05/hour at entry level to \$29.74/hour at the top step. Senior Juvenile Correctional Officers have a salary range from \$26.92 to \$32.86 per hour. The current facility has a capacity of thirty youth, but accommodation of more than sixteen youth in MLRJDF will require additional correctional officers. Recruitment of Juvenile Correction Officer I/II positions may be



hampered by noncompetitive wages, though promotions of staff in the past year appear to have contributed to retention of existing staff.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup>Government Compensation in California (GCC) website.

<https://www.google.com/url?q=https://publicpay.ca.gov/Reports/Department.aspx?departmentid%3D10692%26year%3D2020&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1646753172325659&usq=AOvVaw1K7mDkprwGPkyijajGpqVX>

# **FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND COMMENDATIONS**

## **Findings**

**F1:** The Grand Jury found that MLRJDF provides an exceptional and positive environment for detained youths that has reduced recidivism and fostered rehabilitation through their trauma-informed services and a focus on respectful, responsible, and safe behavioral goals.

**F2:** Despite the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic, a motivated and creative staff have adapted and maintained high quality educational programs and behavioral health treatment.

**F3:** The COVID-19 pandemic reduced programs offered by volunteers, including religious, gardening, recreational, and other activities that have negatively impacted enrichment programs.

**F4:** A gap in security is evidenced by the escape of one youth. A successful grant application for security upgrades is noted.

**F5:** Occupancy rates are being optimized and costs per youth per day are lower than some alternative placements, saving the county costs for detained youth.

**F6:** Increasing occupancy to full capacity will require recruitment and retention of additional Juvenile Correction Officers through competitive wage scales and opportunities for advancement.

## **Recommendations**

**R1:** The Tuolumne County Grand Jury recommends continued work with the Department of Public Health, parents or guardians of youths, staff, and prospective volunteers to develop and implement appropriate COVID-19 mitigation measures that will allow a return to enrichment activities that are currently curtailed by September 30, 2022. (F3)

**R2:** The Tuolumne County Grand Jury urges implementation of security upgrades by December 31, 2022. (F4)

**R3:** The Tuolumne County Grand Jury recommends that county Human Resources conduct a review of the salary structure, particularly for entry level staff, at MLRJDF by December 31, 2022. (F6)

**R4:** The Tuolumne County Grand Jury recommends that MLRJDF develop a multi-year plan for accommodation of additional youth and a corresponding staff recruitment plan for additional juvenile correction officers by December 31, 2022. (F6)

## **Commendations**

**C1:** The MLRJDF is to be commended for an exceptional, quality program. This is a model of best practices for juvenile justice and addresses the multiple traumas suffered by youths who are detained. Tuolumne County is commended for finally meeting the longstanding need to have these services in the county. (F1, F2)

**C2:** The coordination between the staff of MLRJDF/Probation Department, GREC, and TCSOS to provide an educational program adapted for a transient population of youth who are at high educational risk has allowed these youth to make educational progress at a time of high disruption in their lives. (F2)

**C3:** The Tuolumne County Grand Jury commends MLRJDF for its efficient operations and reduction in costs to Tuolumne County through securing funding from regional counties and the state. (F5)

## **REQUESTED RESPONSES**

### **Required Responses**

Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933(c), responses to all Findings and Recommendations are required from the Board of Supervisors within 90 days.

### **Invited Responses**

Although not required under Penal Code Section 933(c), the following responses are invited:

- Chief Probation Officer - Findings F1-F6 and Recommendations R1-R3 within 60 days
- Superintendent MLRJDF - Findings F1-F6 and Recommendations R1-R3 within 60 days
- Human Resources Director - Finding F6 and Recommendation R3 within 90 Days

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Adverse Childhood Experiences

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/index.html>

Cohen J, Mannarino A, Kliethermes M, Murray L. Trauma-focused CBT for youth with complex trauma. *Child Abuse Negl.* 2012 June ; 36(6): 528–541.

doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2012.03.007.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3721141/> accessed 2/20/2022.

Juvenile Facility Education Program Review and Evaluation. 2021 MLRJDF Education Program Review. August 11, 2021

Juvenile Justice Commission Annual Inspection Juvenile Halls, Special Purpose Juvenile Halls and Camps 2020-2021. February 25, 2021.

One Circle Foundation. Models and Best Practices.

<https://onecirclefoundation.org/models> accessed 3/1/2022

County of Tuolumne. Mother Lode Regional Juvenile Detention budget 0001-203220.

<https://stories.opengov.com/tuolumnecountyca/published/i65JjNxep> accessed March 8, 2022

Pearce L, et.al. A rapid review of early guidance to prevent and control COVID-19 in custodial settings. *Health Justice.* 2021 Dec; 9:27.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8518275/>

Tuolumne County Grand Jury 2018-2019 Report on MLJDF

<https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/12824/Mother-Lode-Juvenile-Detention-Center-Report>

Union Democrat. Bishop teen arrested after escaping Sonora Juvenile Hall. October 11, 2021.

[https://www.uniondemocrat.com/news/article\\_e6e1318a-2ab8-11ec-8176-eb25257fbd2f.html](https://www.uniondemocrat.com/news/article_e6e1318a-2ab8-11ec-8176-eb25257fbd2f.html)

Fox news: October 9, 2021.

<https://fox40.com/news/local-news/sheriffs-office-18-year-old-escapes-juvenile-detention-center-last-seen-in-downtown-sonora/>

## 2020-2022 TUOLUMNE COUNTY GRAND JURY

### Mother Lode Regional Juvenile Detention Facility (MLRJDF)

I authorize the 2020-2022 Tuolumne County Grand Jury MLRJDF Report to be released on or after the date of my signature.

DATED this 8th day of June, 2022

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laura L. Krieg", is written over a horizontal line.

LAURA LESLIE KRIEG  
Assistant Presiding Judge