

1987-88  
Grand Jury

Various written records and memoranda were examined.

**Findings:**

Sanitarians of Alameda County have a lower level of pay than surrounding Bay Area counties according to testimony.

The County has been forced to fill the vacancies of Sanitarian positions with trainees.

Alameda County is one of the few counties in the Bay Area that has a training program meeting the California State registration requirements.

Due to the lower level of pay, Sanitarians, upon completion of training and the State registration process, seek employment in areas with higher salaries.

Alameda County policy and objectives regarding restaurant inspections is to conduct an average of four inspections per year with a variable frequency of two to six times a year. The lack of personnel has brought the inspection level in Alameda County down to less than twice a year in some districts.

**Recommendation #44: That the Alameda County Director of Personnel develop a more aggressive recruitment program for Sanitarians.**

**Recommendation #45: That the Board of Supervisors establish competitive salaries for Registered and Senior Sanitarians in order to attract and retain qualified Sanitarians.**

**Snedigar Cottage**

**Purpose:**

To investigate the lack of health care services for severely mentally and emotionally disturbed children at Snedigar Cottage.

**Methodology:**

On March 9, 1988, members of the Health Committee of the Alameda County Grand Jury, along with Judge Wilmont Sweeney, toured the juvenile facilities in Alameda County.

**Findings:**

After visiting Snedigar Cottage which is on that site, the Grand Jury became concerned for the welfare of the mentally and severely emotionally disturbed children placed in the care at this facility.

There is not an adequate mental health program existing at Snedigar Cottage. Some of the children housed at this facility require a high degree of mental health care on a 24-hour basis.

Because of the difficulties in placing these children in a suitable facility, it is sometimes necessary to keep them at Snedigar Cottage for several months.

The present staff works to meet the needs of the children at Snedigar Cottage. Unfortunately, their training in mental health care is limited since the cottage is designed and staffed to be a custodial facility and not a treatment facility.

The staff at Snedigar Cottage appear to be a group of highly dedicated, conscientious and courageous individuals who operate under the most difficult of circumstances because of the extremely disturbed state of many of their charges.

In April 1988, the Board of Supervisors authorized the Mobile Crisis Response Van to be available to the staff of Snedigar Cottage for professional psychiatric back up for children of the Cottage. Under present funding restrictions, this crisis team is only available on week days from 4:00 p.m. until midnight. The children of Snedigar Cottage frequently are in need of psychiatric assistance seven days a week.

The 1984-85 Grand Jury recommended action on this problem. The 1987-88 Grand Jury feels that the situation is dangerous and that action is overdue.

**Recommendation #46:** That the Board of Supervisors provide the support and care these severely emotionally disturbed children need to assure their safety and well being at Snedigar Cottage.

**Recommendation #47:** That a joint letter from the Mental Health Department and the Social Services Agency be sent to all psychiatric or mental health treatment facilities advising them that no child will be accepted at Snedigar Cottage unless Children's Specialized Services, Mental Health, is notified in advance and agrees to accept the child at Snedigar.

**Recommendation #48:** That the Board of Supervisors direct the development of a written policy and procedure with Highland Hospital Psychiatric Services for discharge planning with Snedigar Cottage.

**Recommendation #49:** That the Board of Supervisors increase the Mental Health clinician staff at Snedigar from a half time to full time in order to provide crisis intervention, diagnostic evaluations, placement evaluations, staff consultation, and milieu programming, Monday thru Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Snedigar Cottage.

**Recommendation #50:** That Snedigar Cottage staff utilize the existing Mobile Crisis Response Van for coverage from 4:00 p.m. until midnight, Monday thru Friday.

**Recommendation #51:** That the Board of Supervisors increase the staff of the Mobile Crisis Response Van by an additional one and one-half people in order to provide coverage from 4:00 p.m. - 12:00 p.m. on weekends.

**Comments:**

On April 12, 1988, the Board of Supervisors approved as short range solutions, recommendations #47, #48, and #50 and recommendations #49 and #51 are under consideration.

We would support and encourage the Health Care Services Agency, the Social Services Agency and the Board of Supervisors in their interest and efforts to provide an in-patient mental health care facility for the children of Alameda County.

## **Female Health Care at Santa Rita County Jail**

### **Purpose:**

Review specific health care issues affecting the female inmates at Santa Rita County Jail.

### **Methodology:**

The Grand Jury toured and inspected the medical facilities at Santa Rita. We also attended and participated in a workshop on issues affecting women inmates at Santa Rita.

Various health care practitioners, the Director of Health Care Services Agency and the Sheriff of Alameda County were interviewed.

### **Findings:**

The medical services at the Santa Rita County Jail are available during limited hours.

Effective February 8, 1988, Highland Hospital began to provide prenatal and gynecological services on site at Santa Rita.

There are too few health education and recreational programs for female inmates.

A well attended family planning training program has been made available to the female inmates.

There is a lack of communications between the assigned medical personnel and the Sheriff's Department personnel at the jail.

The Board of Supervisors have authorized a contract for health care services at Santa Rita with a private medical services firm effective July 1, 1988.

**Recommendation #52: That the Sheriff's Department expand the hours for medical services for female inmates at Santa Rita.**

**Recommendation #53:** That the Sheriff's Department continue and expand the availability of prenatal and gynecological medical services at Santa Rita.

**Recommendation #54:** That the Sheriff's Department conduct topical remedial health care educational programs at Santa Rita.

**Recommendation #55:** That the Sheriff's Department hold periodic joint staff meetings between medical staff personnel and Sheriff's Department personnel to foster and encourage cooperative efforts in the performance of their respective duties.

**Recommendation #56:** That the Sheriff continue the excellent family planning program for the female inmates and a similar program be developed for the male inmates.

**Comments:**

It is hoped that the private medical services firm authorized by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors be made aware of the recommendations of this report.

The following letter was sent to  
the Board of Supervisors . . . . .



## GRAND JURY

County of Alameda

April 13, 1988

The Honorable Edward R. Campbell  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors  
Administration Building  
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairman Campbell and Board Members:

On March 9, 1988, members of the Health Committee of the Alameda County Grand Jury, along with Judge Wilmont Sweeney, visited and toured the juvenile facilities in Alameda County. Our concern is directed at Snedigar Cottage which is on that site, with regard to the welfare of mentally and severely emotionally disturbed children who are placed there in shelter care.

Currently there is not an adequate mental health program existing at that facility to provide the level of care needed, on a 24-hour basis, for children of this type who are being held in protective custody for whatever reason.

Because of the difficulties involved in achieving appropriate placement of these children in a suitable facility, it has been necessary to keep them at Snedigar Cottage, in some instances, for several months.

The staff at Snedigar Cottage appears to be a group of highly dedicated, conscientious and courageous people who operate under the most precarious of circumstances because of the extremely disturbed state of many of their charges.

The present staff works to meet the needs of the children at Snedigar Cottage. Unfortunately, their training in mental health care is limited since the cottage is designed and staffed to be a custodial facility and not a treatment facility. We were advised that some medical services are made available through the Mental Health Guidance Clinic.

Board of Supervisors  
April 13, 1988  
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The 1984-85 Grand Jury recommended action on this problem. The 1987-88 Grand Jury feels that the situation is dangerous and that action is overdue.

The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors take measures necessary to provide the support these severely emotionally disturbed children need to assure their safety and well being.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Gilda H. Feller".

Gilda H. Feller  
Foreman, Alameda County Grand Jury

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