

1989-90 Grand Jury

LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

The role of this committee is to investigate citizen and inmate complaints relating to law enforcement and to investigate penal institutions and programs within Alameda County.

Juvenile Facility - Broadway

Purpose:

To investigate the adequacy of the Juvenile Facility at 4th Street and Broadway in Oakland.

Methodology:

The site was visited on several occasions by members of the Grand Jury; interviews were held with the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court, the Chief Probation Officer and members of their staff; inspections were made of juvenile cells and personal interviews were conducted with a number of detained youths; a meal served to juveniles was sampled.

Analysis:

This facility is old and appears to be utilized beyond its original intent, which was to serve as a limited-use and limited-time detention facility. This facility is lacking, or has minimal means to provide for the care of male juveniles.

The following inadequacies have been observed:

- a. Lack of toilet facilities for individual cells requires that youths request a staff member to release them from their cells and take them to the restroom. This places an added burden on the staff and youths are often not provided relief until an unconscionable period of time has elapsed;

- b. Food is often served lukewarm or cold;
- c. The State requirement that detained youths be given the opportunity to continue their education is not being met;
- d. The area available for recreation is severely limited; physical recreation is restricted to one hour in the evening.

Findings:

The juvenile detainment site at 4th and Broadway is deficient in basic toilet facilities, food service, educational programs and recreational opportunities.

Recommendation #90-25:

- a. That the existing facility be phased out.
- b. That a detailed study be made to utilize other available sites.
- c. That a plan be developed to replace the existing facility.