



**SAN JOAQUIN**  
— COUNTY —  
*Greatness grows here.*

**Board of Supervisors**

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October 6, 2020

Honorable Xapuri B. Villapudua, Presiding Judge  
San Joaquin County Superior Court  
222 E. Weber Avenue, Room 303  
Stockton, CA 95202

Dear Judge Villapudua:

**2019-2020 Grand Jury Final Report on Homelessness in San Joaquin County**

Pursuant to Section 933.05 of the California Penal Code, please find attached the Board of Supervisors' responses to the 2019-2020 Grand Jury Final Report on Homelessness.

If you have any additional questions regarding these responses, please contact Monica Nino, County Administrator at 468-3203.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Katherine Miller", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Katherine M. Miller, Chair  
Board of Supervisors  
County of San Joaquin

KM:AC

Attachment

BOS10-04



## **ATTACHMENT**

### **Responses to the 2019-20 Grand Jury Final Report**

San Joaquin County, Case #0119 – “Homelessness in San Joaquin County – Building on a Foundation: Collaboration and Communication”

**Sections 1.0 – 4.0: San Joaquin County Health Services, Community Development, Sheriff’s Office, and District Attorney’s Office**

**Finding 1.1:**

*None of the four Designated Lead Departments has provided a plain language website that describes their efforts in addressing and limiting the impact of homelessness, leaving many San Joaquin residents with the false impression that the County and is doing little or nothing to address homelessness.*

**Response to Finding 1.1:**

Agree.

San Joaquin County concurs with the Grand Jury’s finding.

**Finding 1.3:**

*Holding Homelessness Court only in Stockton denies access to many individuals and is inconsistent with the intent of the Quality of Life Policy, which is to address and limit the impacts of homelessness in San Joaquin County.*

**Response to Finding 1.3:**

Partially Agree.

San Joaquin County acknowledges that access to transportation can be a struggle for many experiencing homelessness. San Joaquin County also acknowledges that Homelessness Court is an additional non-mandated service which goes above and beyond those typically offered by the Superior Courts, and which is being offered in the most geographically central city in the County where the majority of the region’s homeless individuals typically congregate. The Quality of Life Policy seeks to address and limit the impacts of homelessness in San Joaquin County in part through exercising authority and discretion in the application of all laws enacted to protect the health, safety and welfare of all County residents. The Policy does not contemplate any directive or suggestion to provide Homelessness Court or other services for the homeless equally in every city of the County. San Joaquin Superior Court is a judicial branch of the State of California and not the organization of San Joaquin County.

**Finding 1.4:**

*The four Designated Lead Departments are successfully prioritizing homelessness and implementing the Quality of Life Policy to address and limit the impacts of homelessness in San Joaquin County.*

**Response to Finding 1.4:**

Agree.

San Joaquin County concurs with the Grand Jury's finding.

**Recommendation 1.1:**

*By March 1, 2021, the San Joaquin Board of Supervisors develop and publish an easy-to-find, plain language website that includes a description of efforts made to address and limit the impacts of homelessness in San Joaquin County.*

**Response to Recommendation 1.1:**

This recommendation will be implemented but not by March 1, 2021.

Plans to consolidate and refine the presentation of homelessness information on the San Joaquin County website are under discussion. Multiple factors which are difficult or impossible to predict, including the ongoing implementation of homelessness data collection strategies, next point in time count (PIT) scheduled for January 2021 and the impacts of COVID-19, the County will make its best effort for completion of this initiative by end of calendar year 2021.

**Recommendation 1.3:**

*By March 1, 2021, County Board of Supervisors petition the court to expand the Homelessness Court to the Branch Courts, as recommended in the Homelessness Task Force 2015-2016 Annual Report (November 16, 2016).*

**Response to Recommendation 1.3:**

This recommendation requires further analysis.

San Joaquin County acknowledges that expanding services such as Homelessness Court for those experiencing homelessness can effectively address and limit the impacts of homelessness in the community. San Joaquin County also acknowledges the limited resources available to provide these services. The referenced Homelessness Task Force report (November 16, 2016) includes a policy recommendation from the Task Force Law and Justice Sub-committee to "expand Homeless Court to the Circuit Courts within San Joaquin County." The Task Force report does not discuss potential operational challenges to the Superior Courts in expanding this service, nor does it offer solutions to the likely cost increases associated with such an expansion. Additionally, the Task Force report fails to acknowledge that Homelessness Court is currently offered only at the offices of homeless services provider St. Mary's Dining Room, a location

which the Grand Jury report cites as ideal due to it being “a familiar and safe environment to the local homeless community.” This would indicate that Homelessness Court is not offered at the Stockton Courthouse by design. It is unclear how expanding Homelessness Court in the outlying courts would be accepted by a Homelessness Court participant, or if at all. Prior to any petition to the Superior Court, the County Board of Supervisors would need to conduct an examination of the willingness and capacity of the Court to overcome these and other challenges to expand this service, which could delay such a petition beyond the recommended completion date or preclude the need for such a petition, along with determining the demand for services is not currently being met.

## **Section 5: Joint Efforts of the Designated Lead Departments**

### **Finding 2.1:**

*One staff person is not sufficient to ensure all needs within the County are met.*

### **Response to Finding 2.1:**

Partially Agree.

San Joaquin County agrees that effective solutions to homelessness require commitment, coordination and collaboration from multiple stakeholders. San Joaquin County disagrees that there is only one staff person ensuring that all needs within the County are met. Finding 2.1 fails to include references to the other staff and resources devoted to solutions to homelessness, including from the District Attorney’s Office, Sheriff’s Office, Department of Health Care Services, and Community Development Department, all of which are highlighted elsewhere in the Grand Jury report.

### **Recommendation 2.1:**

*By December 30, 2020, the County Board of Supervisors complete an analysis to determine if additional staff is needed for the Program Administrator for Homeless Initiatives.*

### **Response to Recommendation 2.1:**

This recommendation will not be implemented.

Homelessness is a broad problem which requires community based solutions through a collaboration of committed public and private partners. Focus from a variety of sources, such as those public and private organizations contributing to the ongoing collaborative effort of the San Joaquin Continuum of Care, is necessary. The Board of Supervisors is one of several bodies acting in a leadership role on this matter and will coordinate as appropriate with other government entities, including City Leadership, non-County organizations, the County Administrator, and County Department Heads to help meet the needs of the community.

**Finding 2.2:**

*The revised San Joaquin Continuum of Care has increased collaboration between the County, the cities, and non-profit organizations, helping to improve services for the homeless.*

**Response to Finding 2.2:**

Agree.

San Joaquin County concurs with the Grand Jury's finding.

**Finding 3.1:**

*Although many residents are interested in how homelessness is being managed, only the City of Lodi has published accomplishments in plain language on its website. This lack of readily available information makes it difficult for residents to understand what is being done to address homelessness.*

**Response to Finding 3.1:**

Agree.

San Joaquin County concurs with the Grand Jury's finding.

**Finding 3.2:**

*There is a need for community-wide planning and strategic use of resources for homelessness involving all cities within the County.*

**Response to Finding 3.2:**

Agree.

San Joaquin County concurs with the Grand Jury's finding.

**Finding 3.3:**

*It is important to establish a coordinated and regional system of care for the homeless community to improve services while addressing and limiting the impact of homelessness.*

**Response to Finding 3.3:**

Agree.

San Joaquin County concurs with the Grand Jury's finding.

**Finding 3.5:**

*The leadership shown recently by the City of Stockton in working with San Joaquin County towards a shared goal of obtaining funds will streamline processes and result in improved efficiency.*

**Response to Finding 3.5:**

Agree.

San Joaquin County concurs with the Grand Jury's finding.

**Finding 3.6:**

*Stockton's leadership efforts in securing a regional strategic plan speaks to the current spirit of collaboration and communication between Stockton, San Joaquin County, and the San Joaquin Continuum of Care.*

**Response to Finding 3.6:**

Agree.

San Joaquin County concurs with the Grand Jury's finding.