

Inquiry into the Operation and Programs of the San Francisco Jails

June 2014



City and County of San Francisco

Civil Grand Jury 2013-2014

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CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

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THE CIVIL GRAND JURY

The Civil Grand Jury is a government oversight panel of volunteers who serve for one year.
It makes findings and recommendations resulting from its investigations.

Reports of the Civil Grand Jury do not identify individuals by name.
Disclosure of information about individuals interviewed by the jury is prohibited.
California Penal Code, section 929

STATE LAW REQUIREMENT California Penal Code, section 933.05

Each published report includes a list of those public entities that are required to respond to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court within 60 to 90 days, as specified.

A copy must be sent to the Board of Supervisors. All responses are made available to the public.

For each finding the response must:

- 1) agree with the finding, or
- 2) disagree with it, wholly or partially, and explain why.

As to each recommendation the responding party must report that:

- 1) the recommendation has been implemented, with a summary explanation; or
- 2) the recommendation has not been implemented but will be within a set timeframe as provided; or
- 3) the recommendation requires further analysis. The officer or agency head must define what additional study is needed. The Grand Jury expects a progress report within six months; or
- 4) the recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable, with an explanation.

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ISSUE

California Penal Code 919 (b)¹ instructs the civil grand jury of each county to inquire into the operations of jails within its county. During the inquiry into the San Francisco County Jails by the 2013-2014 Civil Grand Jury, four key issues emerged as subjects for this report. We found a relationship between the heavy use of overtime in the Sheriff's Department and job related injury and illness. We also looked at policies and procedures within the department and activities coordinated between the Sheriff's department and other San Francisco government departments. The jury was impressed by the Five Keys Charter School and support its efforts to bring change and opportunity to it's graduates and reduce recidivism in the jail. The jury also recommends better clarity to the new inmate orientation process and greater outreach into the community to incorporate more and varied job opportunities for graduates of Five Keys after their release.

SUMMARY

2013-2014 has been a year of both rewards and challenges for the San Francisco Sheriff's Department. Operation of the San Francisco County jail system, its programs, and support activities comprise the largest part of the department's law enforcement and public safety mission. The Department is a recognized innovator in the area of community corrections.

The San Francisco Sheriff's Department paid \$10.7 million in overtime in 2012-2013.² Required staffing minimums to operate and support the county jail system and its programs are a significant cause for the overage. The City also paid an additional \$3.5 to \$4.0 million in workers compensation claims for job related injuries and illnesses.³ Since the Department is unable to hire replacements for these long term claimants, the overall staff count available to jail operations is inadequate. For the Sheriff's Department to meet mandatory staffing, it must pay overtime because of the number of deputies currently out on long term disability.

Current policies and procedures for conducting daily activities as well as planning and preparing for emergencies should be up to date. Activities involving inter-departmental coordination would be well served by development and review of written policies and procedures, thereby creating clear, concise, and ordered rules for employees.

The inmate orientation guide can be an effective tool for communicating rules, defining daily routines, providing structure and promoting expected behaviors when its contents are presented in a way consistent with the literacy of the reader.

The Sheriff Department's Five Keys Charter School provides education programs to inmates. Graduates of Five Keys Charter School have a 44% recidivism rate compared to

¹ <http://law.onecle.com/california/penal/919.html>

² San Francisco Controllers Office Overtime Report

³ Workers Compensation Council March 3, 2014 Report. San Francisco Human Resources Department.

68% among inmates who do not participate.⁴ A possible correlation between the school and reduced recidivism warrants the creation of program advisory committees and expansion of its goals and locations.

BACKGROUND

Keeping with its obligations under California Penal Code 919(b), the 2013-2014 Civil Grand Jury reviewed the San Francisco County Jail system operated by the Custody Division of the Sheriff's Department. As part of that examination, members of the Jury visited:

- San Francisco County Jail 1 (SFCJ 1), the intake and release facility;
- SFCJ 2, the women's jail, six month pre-release programs for inmates returned from state custody, and the residential jail for inmates with developmental disabilities;
- SFCJ 3 and SFCJ 4, the linear design men's jails located in the Hall of Justice;
- SFCJ 5, the pod/program style men's jail located in San Bruno; and
- SFCJ 6 minimum security jail, now closed to inmates, also located in San Bruno and used for administration and training.

Jurors visited the educational programs and facilities within and outside of the jails including the Five Keys Charter High School, Five Keys Adult Programs School, and Five Keys GED and Independent Study Program. The Jury also visited the Jail Health Services facilities operated by the San Francisco Department of Public Health in San Francisco General Hospital and in SFCJ #5 in San Bruno, where medical and psychiatric services are provided. No juvenile detention facilities nor programs were reviewed.

California prison "realignment", which was mandated in 2011, reserves state correctional facilities for the most serious offenders, and directs non-sexual, non-violent offenders to community correctional facilities, such as the San Francisco County jail facility. Other inmates, unable to raise bail or qualify for alternatives to incarceration programs, are also held in custody while waiting for trial. With few exceptions, most inmates in the San Francisco County Jail will be released back into the community.

California Title 15, "Minimum Standards for Local Detention Facilities (2012)," establishes minimum standards for state and local detention facilities. The Board of State and Community Corrections ensures compliance with those standards.⁵ Staffing levels are specific to each jail facility and must be approved by the Board. Minimum standards for medical care, education, programs, library, recreation time, meals, visiting hours,

⁴ Conference proceedings (2014) 21st Annual Conference for the California Charter School Association. Achievement through Innovation. March 3-6, 2014 San Jose Convention Center. Dannie Tillman, Hart Vision Award Presentation.

⁵ California Code of Regulations Title 15, Minimum Standards for Local Detention Facilities. (2012) Rules and Regulations of Adult Institutions, Programs, and Parole. Department Corrections and Rehabilitation, State of California. Accessed on March 23, 2013.

transporting of inmates are specified. Title 15 essentially establishes what must be done to fulfill the duty of care.

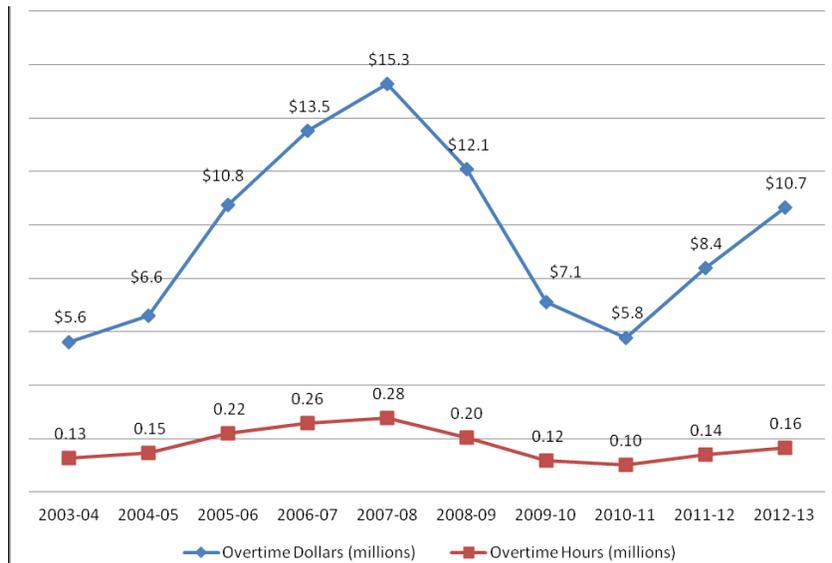
Title 15 allows the Sheriff to develop educational programs with whatever resources are available. In addition, it requires that inmates at intake and upon transfer to another jail facility receive written orientation materials

DISCUSSION

Overtime

The Sheriff's Department is required to maintain minimum staffing levels in the jails and has resorted to the extensive use of overtime to do so. The 2012/13 Controller's Overtime Report states that the department spent \$10.7 million (Figure 1) on overtime and that 50 non-exempt employees worked 31% above full time equivalency (FTE) in overtime.⁶ This exceeds the 25% overtime limit established by the city (Figure 2).⁷

Figure 1: Comparison of overtime dollars to overtime hours.
Source: San Francisco Controller 2012-2013 Overtime Report



The large amount of overtime needed to meet the minimum staffing requirements for jail operations suggests that a shortage of qualified personnel exists. In its role as a qualified public safety and law enforcement agency, the Sheriff's Department may also need to perform duties beyond jail operations (see Appendix A). The 2013 inspection report of the California Board of State and Community Corrections noted minimal staffing at the jails.⁸ While not a violation, the report concluded that this level of staffing affects the ability to maintain required programs in the jail, and if continued, this situation may

⁶ San Francisco Controller 2012-2013 Overtime Report

⁷ San Francisco Administrative Code Section 18.13-1 Maximum Permissible Overtime. Limited to 25% of the regular FTE hours

⁸ California Board of State and Community Corrections Bi-Annual Inspection and Review Report of the San Francisco County Jails. August, 2013

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become an infraction under Title 15. The report also noted that it was important to monitor which individuals are assigned to specific positions for each shift.

For the health, safety, and readiness of the Department, it needs to improve staffing or revise task responsibilities so that it doesn't exceed the City's employee overtime guideline of 25% of FTE.

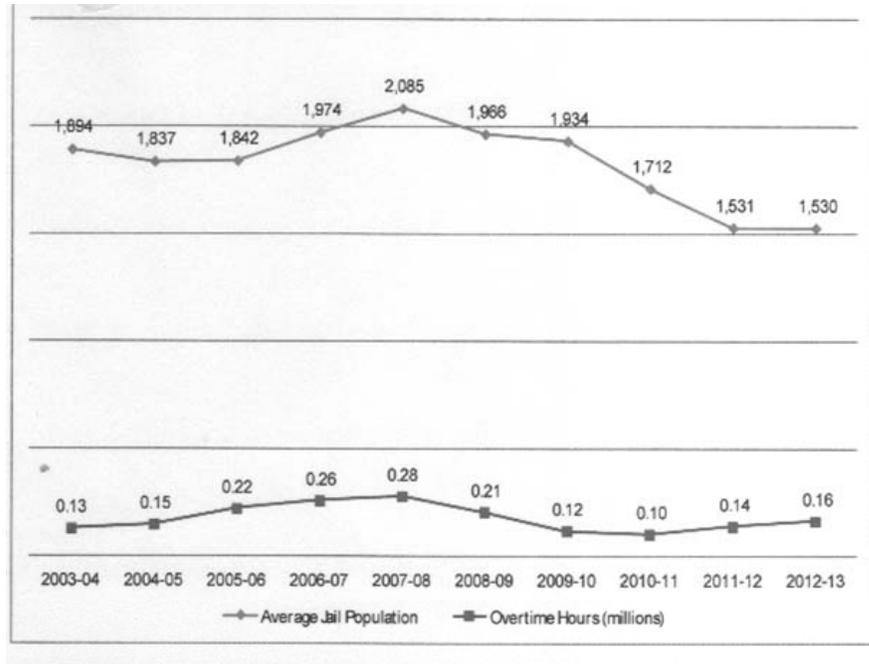
Figure 2. Departments with employee overtime exceeding the 25% limit over FTE
Source: San Francisco Controller 2012-2013 Overtime Report

The Administrative Code allows for exemptions to the default limit, which are defined below in Table A.

Table A. Employees Exceeding 25% Maximum Annual Overtime Per Employee				
Department Code	Employees Above the Default Limit	Employee Exemptions	Non-Exempted Employees Above the Default Limit	Average Overtime % of Total Hours Worked
Municipal Transportation Agency	647	587	60	38%
Fire	377	285	92	37%
Public Health	68	-	68	46%
Sheriff	50	-	50	31%
Juvenile Probation	12	-	12	35%
Fine Arts Museum	7	-	7	30%
Police	6	2	4	40%
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission	6	2	4	32%
Recreation and Parks	6	-	6	37%
General Services Agency-Technology	6	-	6	30%
Public Works	3	-	3	33%
Airport	2	-	2	27%
Grand Total	1,190	876	314	35%

Figure 3 shows overtime hours rising while jail population is shrinking

Figure 3: Jail Population and Overtime Use (hours in millions)



Injury & Illness Compensation

In addition to overtime costs, the cost of job related injury and illness is significant in the Sheriff's Department (Figure 4, next page). Department worker's compensation expenditures in the first two quarters of FY 2011/12 and FY2012/13 were \$2.2M and \$1.95M, respectively.

In March 2014, the Sheriff's Department reported that there were 23 deputies on family or medical leave who are expected to return to work, and an additional 35 deputies on long term leave for job related illness or injury who are not expected to return to work. The Department has a duty of care to deputies who have been injured or become ill as a result of the job. The Jury understands that these individuals have been potentially affected in ways deeply personal that cannot be reduced to accounting terms. However, the people of the City and County of San Francisco need these public safety positions to be filled with employees who are able and ready to perform their duties.

Figure 4: Six Month Workers Compensation Expenditures: Top Ten Departments.⁹

Department	FY2011/12 Q1&Q2 Expenditures	FY2012/13 Q1&Q2 Expenditures	FY2013/14 Q1&Q2 Expenditures
Police	\$4,917,185	\$4,881,159	\$5,342,724
Dept. Public Health	4,332,198	3,956,113	4,055,398
Fire	3,344,712	2,673,549	2,651,419
Recreation & Parks	1,224,434	1,062,493	876,519
Dept. of Public Works	917,971	642,755	623,678
San Francisco Airport	602,338	569,740	813,282
PUC-Water	777,547	742,172	992,026
Juvenile Probation	707,455	458,029	527,062
Sheriff	1,273,196	2,195,218	1,954,895
Human Services	847,663	855,488	1,170,721

To fulfill its duty of care to those whose injury or illness is job related, the City has a workers compensation division that administers for medical care, continuation of income, rehabilitation, returning to work or placement into a new position. Unfortunately, it is difficult to fill positions held by deputies who are not expected to return to work. The result is a staffing shortage that means further overtime and fatigue for the remaining workforce.

Injured workers have a limit of temporary disability for 104 weeks and 45 days of medical treatment if still employed. Once temporary disability runs out, an employee may apply for advances on retirement or other monies available in the system.

Comparisons of expenditures for work related injury and illness, overtime, with jail population suggest systemic issues. The cyclical problem of injury/illness, understaffing and mandatory overtime to meet minimum staffing requirements may result in fatigue and errors. Command and supervisory staff can and should promote a culture of safety by including safety topics in conversations and actively seeking and rewarding participation in safe practices and procedures. The consulting services of the Work Force Development Division of the City's Human Resources Department would be an excellent source for promoting safer workplace practices. Maintaining a roster of active employees sufficient to meet staffing requirements for jail operations is essential for the proper execution of the Department's duties and the well-being of its employees.

Five Keys Charter School

The Five Keys Charter School is an excellent implementation of an important rehabilitation program in the San Francisco County Jail. The program has won support from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges for its adult education programs

⁹ San Francisco Department of Human Resources.

and was named charter school of the year 2014 by the California Charter School Association.^{10,11} The school is renewing its charter with the San Francisco Unified School District to award high school diplomas. By embracing a theme of restorative justice, the school develops its curricula to work with learners on taking steps forward from wherever they are. Graduates of Five Keys Charter School have a 44% recidivism rate compared to 68% among inmates who do not participate.

Additional improvement to involve local community resources and to create a positive acceptance of participation in educational improvement in the inmate's local neighborhood is an additional step that the Jury believes can improve efforts to provide a better future for Five Key graduates.

Policy and Procedure Documentation

During the process of inspecting policy documents, jurors noted that new process documentation could benefit from internal review and amendment. These policy documents include:

1. Department of Public Health, Jail Health Services Policy and Procedure for night time staffing in jail health services at SF General as regards SFPD or SFSD responsibilities to guard inmates admitted to general wards.
2. Station Transfer Unit Policy and Procedure with SFPD for each station.
3. Station Transfer Unit Policy and Procedure for transfer of custody where triage for non-emergency intoxication or medical care is required.
4. Establish policy and procedure for transfer of custody to SFSD at SF General Hospital.

Implementation of the pilot project for the Station Transfer Unit should include ongoing review and necessary revision of policy and procedures to assure safe and efficient practices and include station specific questions. The Department of Public Health (DPH) should be included in the development of policy and procedure involving individuals who are intoxicated or need assessment for medical and/or psychiatric care.

Inmate Orientation

The Sheriff's Department emphasized the quality of orientation provided for new and transferred inmates to the City Jail. During the intake process, one-to-one instruction was provided along with an Orientation Manual describing rules of conduct and safety. The Jury found, however, that the orientation materials are too sophisticated for many inmates in the jail.

¹⁰ Western Association of Schools and Colleges Site Visit Report to Five Keys Charter School

¹¹ Conference proceedings (2014) 21st Annual Conference for the California Charter School Association

Educators from the Five Keys Charter School had stated to the Jury that academic assessments identify many inmates to have a reading level at 4th or 5th grade. A grade level analysis of a block of text taken from the San Francisco County Inmate Orientation Guide (Appendix B) shows the text to be written at a 10th or 11th grade level. Figure 5 shows the outcome of the text analysis.

To help inmates better understand the information about jail procedures and rules, the orientation booklet needs to be revised to be aligned with inmates' reading ability.

Figure 5: Readability Formula results from a passage taken from the San Francisco Sheriff's Department Inmate Orientation Materials

Readability Formula	Grade
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	10.5
Gunning-Fog Score	14.2
Coleman-Liau Index	13.3
SMOG Index	10.3
Automated Readability Index	10.4
Average Grade Level	11.7

Source: Readability-score.com Text Readability Statistical Analysis Site

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1: More than 50 deputies are presently out on long term disability. Their positions are being held, preventing the hiring of new deputies. This results in serious overtime costs and additional responsibilities and workload for staff. The City has a policy of limiting the time an employee receives temporary disability payments, which leads to eventual permanent disability status and financial closure, thereby opening up positions for new hires.

Recommendation 1a: The City's policy for limited-time temporary disability payments should be followed for the Sheriff's Department, thereby eventually moving any work injury claim to permanent disability status and financial closure of those claims, opening positions for new hires.

Recommendation 1b: The Board of Supervisors should request an audit conducted by the Budget and Legislative Analyst of payments made on behalf of the Sheriff's Department for workers compensation claims and related overtime costs.

Recommendation 1c: The Sheriff's Department should review its safety programs with the Workforce Development Division, analyze the cause of worker injuries, and update safety education programs for both staff and inmates.

Recommendation 1d: Communication between the Sheriff's Department and the appropriate City personnel in the Worker's Compensation Division who adjust workers' compensation claims should occur on a regular basis to review ongoing status of all outstanding claims.

Finding 2: Title 15 requires that jails establish policies and procedures for conducting daily activities and that it plans and prepare for emergencies. This is particularly necessary during times of transfer of custody or when custody duties are shared between departments.

Recommendation 2a: The Sheriff's Department should review and update all policies and procedures for conducting daily activities, and planning and preparing for emergencies every 2 years.

Recommendation 2b: Inmates admitted to general wards at San Francisco General Hospital must be guarded. Procedures for both nighttime and daytime staffing should be immediately reviewed and all policy and procedure documents updated.

Recommendation 2c: Inmates are transferred between SFPD stations and when necessary, to San Francisco General Hospital. Procedures for any transfers should be clarified and established as a policy and procedure document.

Recommendation 2d: During transfers, inmates may be intoxicated or needing minor medical care. Procedures for handling this situation should be clarified with the Department of Health to establish a policy and procedure document.

Finding 3: Title 15 requires that inmates at intake and upon transfer to another jail facility receive written orientation materials. Current guidelines for incoming inmates regarding safety, behavior standards, and daily routines need to be reviewed for content and appropriate level of reading ability.

Recommendation 3a: The Sheriff's Department should review and revise its written Orientation Guide for incoming inmates regarding safety, behavior standards, and daily routines.

Recommendation 3b: Appropriate reading level should be ascertained and applied to the guidelines in Recommendation 3a.

Finding 4: Title 15 states that if other public provisions are not available to educate those held in custody that the Sheriff can develop education programs with whatever resources are available. The accomplishments of the Five Keys Charter School have proven noteworthy. The recidivism rate is 44% for program graduates, compared to 68% for inmates who do not participate in the program.

Recommendation 4a: An Advisory Committee of educators and industry professionals should be organized to advise each Five Keys program on further development of goals and practices to expand student attendance, academic studies, and job preparation.

Recommendation 4b: Further outreach into the community should be accomplished to incorporate more and varied job opportunities for graduates of Five Keys after their release.

RESPONSE MATRIX

FINDING	RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSES REQUIRED
<p>Finding 1: More than 50 deputies are presently out on long term disability. Their positions are being held, preventing the hiring of new deputies. This results in serious overtime costs and additional responsibilities and workload for staff. The City has a policy of limiting the time an employee receives temporary disability payments, which leads to eventual permanent disability status and financial closure, thereby opening up positions for new hires.</p>	<p>Recommendation 1a: The City’s policy for limited-time temporary disability payments should be followed for the Sheriff’s Department, thereby eventually moving any work injury claim to permanent disability status and financial closure of those claims, opening positions for new hires.</p> <p>Recommendation 1b: The Board of Supervisors should request an audit conducted by the Budget and Legislative Analyst of payments made on behalf of the Sheriff’s Department for workers compensation claims and related overtime costs.</p> <p>Recommendation 1c: The Sheriff’s Department should review its safety programs with the Workforce Development Division, analyze the cause of worker injuries, and update safety education programs for both staff and inmates.</p> <p>Recommendation 1d: Communication between the Sheriff’s Department and the appropriate City personnel in the Worker’s Compensation Division who adjust workers’ compensation claims should occur on a regular basis to review ongoing status of all outstanding claims.</p>	<p>Sherriff’s Department</p> <p>Board of Supervisors</p> <p>Sheriff’s Department Department of Human Resources</p> <p>Sherriff’s Department Department of Human Resources</p>

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FINDING	RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSES REQUIRED
<p>Finding 2: Title 15 requires that jails establish policies and procedures for conducting daily activities and that it plans and prepare for emergencies. This is particularly necessary during times of transfer of custody or when custody duties are shared between departments.</p>	<p>Recommendation 2a: The Sheriff’s Department should review and update all policies and procedures for conducting daily activities, and planning and preparing for emergencies every 2 years.</p> <p>Recommendation 2b: Inmates admitted to general wards at San Francisco General Hospital must be guarded. Procedures for both nighttime and daytime staffing should be immediately reviewed and all policy and procedure documents updated.</p> <p>Recommendation 2c: Inmates are transferred between SFPD stations and when necessary, to San Francisco General Hospital. Procedures for any transfers should be clarified and established as a Policy & Procedure document.</p> <p>Recommendation 2d: During transfers, inmates may be intoxicated or needing minor medical care. Procedures for handling this situation should be clarified with the Department of Health to establish a policy and procedure document.</p>	<p>Sherriff’s Department</p> <p>Sherriff’s Department Department of Public Health</p> <p>Sherriff’s Department San Francisco Police Department Department of Public Health</p> <p>Sherriff’s Department Department of Public Health</p>

METHODOLOGY

To prepare for and support our inquiry, an extensive review of academic, professional, and news literature was engaged. The jury reviewed and cataloged a great many documents, policies, and records from the Sheriff's Department. Jurors observed operations and facilities at each of the jails, jail health services, and educational programs. We interviewed Command Staff in the Sheriff's Department as well as in the San Francisco Police Department. We spoke with deputies and supervisors, counselors, educators, health care providers and inmates.

Wherever possible the jury turned to California Title 15 as the primary reference for questions about jail facilities and operations as they arose.¹² For example when an inmate complained about fewer opportunities to shower, Title 15 informed us that inmates should be permitted to shower upon arrival at a new housing facility and every other day thereafter. Inmate shower opportunities had been reduced from daily to every other day when the Sheriff's Department implemented water conservation efforts arising from declaration of drought conditions statewide.

¹² California Code of Regulations Title 15, Minimum Standards for Local Detention Facilities. (2012) Rules and Regulations of Adult Institutions, Programs, And Parole. Department Corrections and Rehabilitation, State of California. Accessed on March 23, 2013

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APPENDIX A

California Government Code 26600-26610 provides for the duties of Sheriff, a few of which are presented below:

- The Sheriff shall lead disaster relief
- Preserve the peace, and prevent insurrection
- Lead and sponsor public safety and crime prevention activities
- Investigate crimes throughout the county
- Arrest and take to court any person who has committed or attempted to commit a crime
- Be the sole operator of the county jail and keep its inmates in safe custody
- Engage in rehabilitation for those who have, or are at risk of, committing crimes, and the suppression of delinquency
- To serve warrants, notices, and process of service for, and to protect, the courts,
- Carry out orders of the public health authority when in the interest of the community
- To engage in search and rescue
- To recruit assistance to fulfill these duties

It should also be noted that the Sheriff has full jurisdiction within the City and County of San Francisco.

APPENDIX B

Text from the San Francisco County Sheriff's Department Jail System Prisoner Orientation entered into <https://readability-score.com/> on April 20, 2014.

Passage tested for reading grade level.

Rules of Conduct for County Jail Inmates

The following pages list the rules of conduct for county jail inmates. Violations of these rules may result in loss of privileges, (including visiting, phone use, and recreation), disciplinary isolation, loss of good time/work time credits, and denial of SWAP and early release. They may also be reported to probation parole, and the department of correction and rehabilitation officials. Further, violations of these rules may be referred to the district attorney for prosecution as a criminal offense. These rules are posted in the housing areas of each jail.

Appeal of disciplinary penalties. Inmates have the right to appeal the decision of the hearing officer to the facility commander or designee who shall either affirm or reverse the decision within 48 hours of the appeal.

Inmates have the right to appeal loss of time to the custody chief deputy. The appeal will be answered within 5 days of the receipt by the custody division chief deputy or their designee.

Each jail may have additional rules of conduct particular to the facility, or rules that are part of the jail programs, classes, or special events. These rules, and all staff orders and directions must be followed immediately at all time.

Readability Formula	Grade
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	10.5
Gunning-Fog Score	14.2
Coleman-Liau Index	13.3
SMOG Index	10.3
Automated Readability Index	10.4
Average Grade Level	11.7

Source: [Readability-score.com](https://readability-score.com/) Text Readability Statistical Analysis Site