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County of San Diego

WALTER F. EKARD
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
(619) 531-6226
FAX: (619) 557-4060

CLERK - SUPERIOR COURT
SAN DIEGO, CA
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

HELEN N. ROBBINS-MEYER
ASST. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
(619) 531-4940
FAX: (619) 557-4060

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, STE. 209, SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-2472

August 5, 2008

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SAN DIEGO
COUNTY GRAND JURY

The Honorable Kenneth So
Presiding Judge, San Diego Superior Court
220 West Broadway
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Judge So,

On August 5, 2008, the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors approved responses to the six 2007-2008 San Diego County Grand Jury reports which addressed findings and recommendations to the County of San Diego. The Board further directed that these responses be sent to your office.

The six reports for which responses are attached are titled:

- Past Grand Jurors Association Implementation Review Board
- Notification and Training in Child Protective Services
- Proud to be in County Procurement
- A Warmer World – A Challenge and an Opportunity
- Conditions and Management of Detention and Other Law Enforcement Facilities in San Diego County
- The Fire Next Time – Will We Be Ready?

Since these are all the reports issued by the 2007-2008 Grand Jury that address recommendations to the Board of Supervisors or departments under its jurisdiction, the attached material represents the County's complete response for 2007-2008. If you have any questions, please contact me at (619) 531-5250.

Sincerely,

WALTER F. EKARD

Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment

cc: Board of Supervisors

ATTACHMENT A

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSE TO 2007/08 GRAND JURY REPORT
“PAST GRAND JURORS ASSOCIATION IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW
BOARD”**

Issued January 10, 2008

Recommendation 08-04 - The 2007/2008 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the County of San Diego through its Chief Administrative Officer continue to: Provide the sitting Grand Jury with copies of the Implementation Review Committee’s reports to the County.

County Response: This recommendation will be implemented. The Chief Administrative Office staff who support the County’s Past Grand Jurors Association Implementation Review Committee (PGJAIRC) will continue the current practice of sending PGJAIRC meeting materials and the PGJAIRC annual report to the Grand Jury, via Grand Jury staff.

ATTACHMENT B

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSE TO 2007/08 GRAND JURY REPORT
“NOTIFICATION AND TRAINING IN CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES”**

Issued May 13, 2008

Findings:

1. Of the cases we examined, the Grand Jury found no record of written notification at the time of removal.

County Response: Agree.

2. Many workers are unable to absorb fully a large volume of theoretical material presented over a short period of time without being able to apply it to practical situations.

County Response: Agree.

Recommendation 08-55 – The 2007/2008 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the County of San Diego’s Health and Human Services Agency: Amend the Child Welfare Services Program Guide to include the addition of a procedure and a form to notify parents or caretaker relatives of the reason(s) why a child is being removed from their custody at the time the removal is being effected.

County Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. The social worker is required by State regulations and by the County’s Child Welfare Services (CWS) policy to conduct in-person interviews with parents to investigate the specific allegation(s) reported to the Child Abuse Hotline. That interview/investigation is a mutual exchange of verbal information in which the social worker discusses the specific concerns and risk to the child(ren), and the parents provide their account of the events or situation.

If the child is removed and a petition is filed in Juvenile Court, the parents’ responses to the allegations must be included in the “Parents/Legal Guardians Statements” section of

the Detention Report. The social worker submits the Detention Report to the Juvenile Court at the first hearing, which is held within 3 court days of the child's removal. The parents, via their attorneys, are provided copies of the Detention Report and a copy of the Petition at this time. Due to the required legal procedures, no written information can be provided to the parents at the time of removal.

The Health and Human Services Agency's Child Welfare Services (CWS) division has developed a booklet entitled "A Parent's Guide to Child Welfare Services" to help parents understand the legal process involved in a child's removal. The booklet also explains that parents will have an opportunity to present their side of the case to the Juvenile Court.

Recommendation 08-56 - The 2007/2008 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the County of San Diego's Health and Human Services Agency: Mandate that Child Protective Social Workers re-take the primary core courses of their initial training approximately one year after beginning their field casework.

County Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. Child Welfare Services acknowledges that there is a steep learning curve for new social workers that is best addressed by a combination of classroom learning and field experience.

CWS has recently convened a Social Work Training Revision Work Group composed of staff with a background in social work training and field experience. The group continues to review initial and advanced training with the goal of graduating new staff from Social Worker Initial Training with an integrated understanding of policy, practice and application in the field. The training also emphasizes mentoring and coaching. It is anticipated that with this new training structure, there is no need for social workers to re-take primary core courses.

ATTACHMENT C

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSE TO 2007/08 GRAND JURY REPORT "PROUD TO BE IN COUNTY PROCUREMENT" Issued May 20, 2008

Finding #01: After comparing County Procurement's performance metrics against other similar municipal procurement staffs, County procurement staff is at or near capacity, operating as efficiently as practical. Additional resources in terms of staffing may be required to maintain the service levels the County of San Diego has come to expect from their procurement staff.

County Response: Agree. The Chief Administrative Officer's Proposed Operational Plan for Fiscal Years 2008-09 and 2009-10 includes the addition of two additional full-time employees.

Recommendation 08-63 – The 2007/2008 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the County of San Diego Department of Purchasing and Contracting: Put in place management controls to ensure that staff workload is distributed to allow a continued high quality of service.