

# NEVADA COUNTY HOLDING FACILITIES IN TRUCKEE

## Summary

The Nevada County Grand Jury is statutorily required to inspect public prisons annually within Nevada County. The Nevada County Sheriff's Office has responsibility for the management of county correctional facilities, including inmate holding facilities at the Nevada County Sheriff's Office, Truckee Sub-Station and at the Nevada County Superior Court, Truckee Branch.

The Truckee Sub-Station was built in the early 1960s and has an inmate capacity of 12. It is used to house persons arrested in the Truckee area and inmates who are transported daily from the Wayne Brown Correctional Center for court appearances. There is also an inmate holding area in the Nevada County Superior Court, Truckee Branch used to hold inmates awaiting court appearances.

The Nevada County Grand Jury is concerned about officer safety as surveillance cameras do not monitor all inmate areas and does not completely monitor the exterior of the Nevada County Sheriff's Office, Truckee Sub-Station. The Nevada County Grand Jury finds that employees and inmates may be exposed to dangerous situations as inmate workers are not always searched on return to the Nevada County Sheriff's Office, Truckee Sub-Station.

The Nevada County Grand Jury is also concerned about officer and public safety, as well as potential prisoner escape, when inmates are moved between transportation vehicles and the Nevada County Superior Court, Truckee Branch through an unsecured area.

The Nevada County Grand Jury recommends the following improvements be made as soon as possible:

- Install additional cameras to better observe the activities of inmates, both inside and outside of the facilities.
- Replace the evidence/property lockers currently in use at the Truckee Sub-Station.
- Always search inmates on their return to the Sub-Station.
- Construct high-security fenced enclosures at the Nevada County Superior Court, Truckee Branch.

## **Reasons for Investigation**

California Penal Code section 919(b) requires, “The grand jury shall inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the county.” The Nevada County Grand Jury (Jury) defines public prisons as any adult or juvenile correction or detention facility within the county.

## **Background**

The Nevada County Sheriff’s Office (NCSO) is a county sheriff’s department within the State of California as defined by the California Penal Code. The NCSO is responsible for the management of the county correctional facilities located at the Truckee Sub-Station (Sub-Station) and the Nevada County Superior Court, Truckee Branch (Court). The Grand Jury recognizes the Sub-Station also houses the NCSO law enforcement operations in the Truckee area, including dispatch services for the Truckee Police Department.

The Court is housed within a government administrative building, commonly known as the Joseph Center. The Joseph Center also houses Nevada County departmental offices. The Jury recognizes the that operation of the Joseph Center is governed by a Joint Occupancy Agreement between Nevada County and the Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts.

The Sub-Station and the Court are Type 1 facilities as defined by the Corrections Standards Authority, a sub-agency of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. The Sub-Station and the Court holding facilities are low security risk, temporary holding facilities. Inmate confinement is limited to ninety-six hours. The Sub-Station holding facility is used to house persons arrested in the Truckee area and inmates who are transported daily from the Wayne Brown Correctional Center for court appearances. The Court holding facility is used to hold inmates awaiting court appearances.

## **Procedures Followed**

On September 27, 2011 and on January 9, 2012, the Jury inspected the Sub-Station located at 10879 Donner Pass Road, Truckee, California and a holding area within the Court, located in the Joseph Center, 10075 Levon Avenue, Truckee, California. The Jury toured the facilities, interviewed representatives from the NCSO and reviewed documentation received from the following public agencies:

- Nevada County Sheriff’s Office

- California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Corrections Standards Agency

## **Facts**

### **Nevada County Sheriff's Truckee Sub-Station**

- F.A.1.** The existing surveillance camera system at the Sub-Station,
- does not completely monitor all inmate housing areas,
  - does not completely monitor the exterior of the Sub-Station.
- F.A.2.** The evidence/property lockers are made of wood, a porous material, and are located in a wall between a hallway used by inmates, staff and the public, and a locked office.
- F.A.3.** The evidence/property lockers have a non-keyed locking system on the hallway side.
- F.A.4.** There are usually two inmate workers housed in the Sub-Station.
- F.A.5.** One inmate worker, a Placer County inmate, is transported to Placer County facilities by Placer County Sheriff's Office personnel each morning and returned to the Sub-Station each evening.
- F.A.6.** The Placer County inmate is not always searched for contraband by Sub-Station personnel on return to the Sub-Station.
- F.A.7.** The second inmate worker is a Nevada County inmate responsible for meal preparation, general cleaning and other duties as assigned.
- F.A.8.** The Nevada County inmate worker has unsupervised access to the outside area adjacent to the Sub-Station, including the public library, the Court and the common parking areas.
- F.A.9.** The Nevada County inmate worker is not always searched for contraband on his return from the area outside of the Sub-Station.
- F.A.10.** Inmates and persons arrested are transported to the Sub-Station in a secure vehicle by an armed peace officer.
- F.A.11.** Inmates and persons arrested are moved from the secure vehicle and taken into the Sub-Station within a secure fenced enclosure, commonly known as a sally port.

## **Nevada County Superior Court, Truckee Branch (Court)**

- F.A.12.** Nevada County is the owner of certain real property located in the Town of Truckee and having a street address of 10075 Levon Avenue, commonly known as the Joseph Center.
- F.A.13.** The Court is located within the Joseph Center.
- F.A.14.** During 2008, Nevada County and the Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), entered into the following agreements:
- Transfer of Responsibility for Court Facility Agreement (TOR);
  - Joint Occupancy Agreement (JOA);
  - Memorandum of Joint Occupancy Agreement.
- F.A.15.** Under the JOA and the TOR, Nevada County and AOC agreed that:
- A portion of the Joseph Center is for the exclusive use of the Court.
  - A portion of the Joseph Center is for the exclusive use of Nevada County.
  - A portion of the Joseph Center is designated as “common area” to be utilized non-exclusively and in common by Nevada County and the Court.
- F.A.16.** The common area includes:
- The driveways, walkways and other means of access to the portion of the Joseph Center that is for the exclusive use of the Court.
  - The adjacent parking area.
- F.A.17.** Under the JOA and the TOR, Nevada County is responsible for the operation of the common area.
- F.A.18.** Inmates are transported from the Wayne Brown Correctional Center and the Sub-Station to the Court in a secure vehicle by an armed correctional officer.
- F.A.19.** At the Court inmates are removed from the secure vehicle in an outdoor, unsecured, public parking area.
- F.A.20.** This unsecured area is located in close proximity to a public library and offices frequented by the public.
- F.A.21.** Inmates are moved into the Court through an outdoor, unsecured, open walkway utilized by Court employees, Nevada County employees and the public.

## **Findings**

### **Nevada County Sheriff's Office, Truckee Sub-Station (Sub-Station)**

- F.I.1.** The Grand Jury is concerned about officer and public safety because surveillance cameras do not monitor all inmate areas and do not completely monitor the exterior of the Sub-Station.
- F.I.2.** Employees and inmates may be exposed to dangerous situations because inmate workers are not always searched on return to the Sub-Station.
- F.I.3.** The use of wood in the construction of the Sub-Station evidence/property lockers may potentially lead to the contamination, degradation, loss and/or destruction of evidence.
- F.I.4.** The lack of secure storage and control may potentially lead to contamination, degradation, loss and/or destruction of evidence/property.
- F.I.5.** The Grand Jury finds that officer and public safety are addressed as inmates are moved from vehicles and into the Sub-Station within a fenced secure area commonly known as a sally port.

### **Nevada County Superior Court, Truckee Branch (Court)**

- F.I.6.** The Grand Jury is concerned about officer and public safety, as well as potential prisoner escape, when inmates are moved between transportation vehicles and the Court through an unsecured area.
- F.I.7.** Nevada County is responsible both for the area where inmates are removed from the secure vehicle and for the unsecured walkway leading to the Court.

## **Recommendations**

The Nevada County Sheriff should:

- R.1.** Upgrade the existing surveillance camera system to ensure monitoring of all appropriate inmate areas within the Sub-Station.
- R.2.** Upgrade the existing surveillance camera system to ensure monitoring of the entire outside of the Sub-Station.

- R.3.** Always search inmate workers for contraband upon their return from outside of the Sub-Station.
- R.4.** Replace the existing wooden, non-keyed lockers with metal lockers with a keyed locking system.
- R.5.** In conjunction with the Nevada County Board of Supervisors, secure the open inmate loading/unloading area at the Court with a fenced enclosure, commonly known as a sally port.
- R.6.** In conjunction with the Nevada County Board of Supervisors, secure the open walkway area used to transport inmates into the Court with a fenced enclosure.

The Nevada County Board of Supervisors, in order to provide for the safety of the officers and the public, should:

- R.7.** Provide funding to secure the open inmate loading/unloading area at the Joseph Center with a fenced enclosure, commonly known as a sally port.
- R.8.** Provide funding to secure the open walkway area at the Joseph Center, used to transport inmates into the Court, with a fenced enclosure.

### **Responses**

Nevada County Sheriff: Findings 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 and Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 –  
Due Date: August 6, 2012

Nevada County Board of Supervisors: Findings 6 and 7 and Recommendations 7 and 8 – Due  
Date: September 5, 2012

COUNTY OF NEVADA  
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July 18, 2012

The Honorable Thomas Anderson  
Presiding Judge of the Nevada County Grand Jury  
Nevada County Courthouse  
201 Church Street  
Nevada City, CA 95959

Re: Board of Supervisors' Responses to the 2011-12 Nevada County Civil Grand Jury Report,  
*Nevada County Holding Facilities in Truckee*

Dear Judge Anderson:

As required by California Penal Code Section 933, the Board of Supervisors hereby submits its responses to the 2011-2012 Nevada County Civil Grand Jury Report, dated June 7, 2012, entitled *Nevada County Holding Facilities in Truckee*.

These responses to the Grand Jury's Findings and Recommendations were approved by the Board of Supervisors at their special meeting on July 17, 2012. The Responses are based on either personal knowledge, examination of official County records, information received from the Sheriff, the County Executive Officer, or the Board of Supervisors and County staff members.

The Board of Supervisors would like to thank the members of the 2011-2012 Grand Jury for their participation and effort in preparing their Reports, and their participation in the Grand Jury process.

Sincerely,

Ted S. Owens  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

cc: Keith Overbey, Foreman, Grand Jury  
Keith Royal, Sheriff  
Rick Haffey, County Executive Officer

950 Maidu Avenue, Suite 200, Nevada City CA 95959-8617  
phone: 530.265.1480 | fax: 530.265.9836 | toll free: 888.785.1480 | email: [bdofsupervisors@co.nevada.ca.us](mailto:bdofsupervisors@co.nevada.ca.us)  
website: <http://www.mynevadacounty.com/nc/bos>

NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS RESPONSES TO

2011-2012 Nevada County Civil Grand Jury Report

DATED July 6, 2012

Responses to findings and recommendations are based on either personal knowledge, examination of official county records, review of the responses by the County Executive Officer, or testimony from the Board of Supervisors and county staff members.

**A. RESPONSES TO FINDINGS 6 and 7**

**Nevada County Superior Court, Truckee Branch (Court)**

**F.I.6.** The Grand Jury is concerned about officer and public safety, as well as potential prisoner escape, when inmates are moved between transportation vehicles and the Court through an unsecured area.

**Disagree**

**The Sheriff is committed to providing the highest level of safety and security to employees, the public and inmates and is committed to mitigating risk at every opportunity within the County's existing resources.**

**F.I.7.** Nevada County is responsible both for the area where inmates are removed from the secure vehicle and for the unsecured walkway leading to the Court.

**Agree**

**B. RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS 7 and 8**

**R.7.** Provide funding to secure the open inmate loading/unloading area at the Joseph Center with a fenced enclosure, commonly known as a sally port.

**The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable in the current fiscal environment.**

**R.8.** Provide funding to secure the open walkway area at the Joseph Center, used to transport inmates into the Court, with a fenced enclosure.

**The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable in the current fiscal environment.**



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**NEVADA COUNTY  
SHERIFF'S OFFICE**



**KEITH ROYAL  
SHERIFF/CORONER  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR**

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July 5, 2012

Honorable Judge Tom Anderson  
Presiding Judge of the Grand Jury  
201 Church Street  
Nevada City, Ca. 95959

RE: Response to 2011-2012 Nevada County Sheriff's Office Truckee Sub-station and Superior Courthouse Holding Facility.

Dear Honorable Judge Anderson:

Please accept my response to the Grand Jury Report dated June 7, 2012 on the Nevada County Sheriff's Office Truckee Sub-Station and Superior Courthouse Holding Facility, as follows:

**FINDINGS:**

1. The Grand Jury is concerned about officer and public safety because surveillance cameras do not monitor all inmate areas and do not completely monitor the exterior of the Sub-station.

**Partially Agree**

**We are unable to completely monitor inmate housing areas due to privacy issues with cameras as the cells incorporate toilet commodes. These housing areas are visually monitored and checked by Sheriff's Office personnel hourly.**

**Added Surveillance cameras on the exterior of the building could assist Sheriff's Office personnel in monitoring the inmate workers while they are outside the facility.**

2. Employees and inmates may be exposed to dangerous situations because inmate workers are not always searched on return to the Sub-Station.

**Partially Agree**

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ANIMAL CONTROL, 14647 MCCOURTNEY ROAD, GRASS VALLEY, CA 95949 (530) 273-2179  
CORRECTIONS: P.O. BOX 928, NEVADA CITY, CA 95959-0928 - (530) 265-1291  
TRUCKEE: P.O. BOX 699, TRUCKEE, CA 96160 - (530) 582-7838  
KEITH.ROYAL@CO.NEVADA.CA.US

*Rec'd  
7/11/2012  
KR*

**Sheriff's Office personnel randomly search inmate workers and their housing areas. Additionally, there are cameras that monitor areas common to inmate workers and general inmate population to ensure no contraband is being held or passed between the inmates.**

3. The use of wood in the construction of the Sub-Station evidence/property lockers may potentially lead to the contamination, degradation, loss and/or destruction of evidence.

**Disagree**

**The Sheriff's Office is not aware of any successful challenges to the evidence chain of command in the Sub-Station. The facility is access controlled as to who is allowed within the facility. Additionally, the lockers are in full view and monitored by dispatch via CCTV. Dispatch is staffed with Sheriff's Office employees 24 hours a day and the likelihood of an evidence locker breach is extremely unlikely.**

**However, should funding become available in the future, the Sheriff's Office would consider remodeling of the lockers.**

4. The lack of secure storage and control may potentially lead to contamination, degradation, loss and/or destruction of evidence/property.

**Disagree**

**The patrol sergeant assigned to the Truckee Sub-Station is responsible for the timely transfer of booked evidence from Truckee to the main evidence storage facility in Nevada City. The Truckee patrol sergeant is the only one who has access to the Truckee lockers once evidence is placed into them. The Sheriff's Office is not aware of any successful challenges to the evidence chain of command in the Sub-Station. The facility is access controlled as to who is allowed within the facility. Additionally, the lockers are in full view and monitored by dispatch via CCTV. Dispatch is staffed with Sheriff's Office employees 24 hours a day and the likelihood of an evidence locker breach is extremely unlikely.**

**However, should funding become available in the future, the Sheriff's Office would consider remodeling of the lockers.**

5. The Grand Jury finds that officer safety and public safety are addressed as inmates are moved from vehicles and into the Sub-Station within a fenced area commonly known as a sally port.

**Agree**

**As stated, inmates are brought from vehicles into the Sub-Station through the use of the vehicle sally port.**

2/1/14

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Upgrade the existing surveillance camera system to ensure monitoring of all appropriate inmate areas within the Sub-Station.

**The Sheriff's Office will look into increasing the number of surveillance cameras within the Sub-Station should a future funding source be identified in the future. Additionally, with the upgraded cameras installed at the Wayne Brown Correctional Facility, we will look into the feasibility of using the replaced cameras to supplement the Sub-Station as a cost saving measure.**

2. Upgrade the existing surveillance camera system to ensure monitoring of the entire outside of the Sub-Station.

**The Sheriff's Office will look into increasing the number of surveillance cameras on the exterior of the Sub-Station should a future funding source be identified in the future. Additionally, with the upgraded cameras installed at the Wayne Brown Correctional Facility, we will look into the feasibility of using the replaced cameras to supplement the Sub-Station as a cost saving measure.**

3. Always search inmate workers for contraband upon their return from outside of the Sub-Station.

**This recommendation will not be implemented as it is not reasonable to search the inmate worker every time they enter any the Truckee Sub-Station. We simply do not have the staff to implement this procedure. Sheriff's Office staff randomly search inmate workers and their housing areas. The inmate workers assigned to the Truckee Sub-station are low-level offenders and therefore a low security risk.**

4. Replace the existing wooden, non-keyed lockers with metal lockers with a keyed locking system.

**The recommendation will not be implemented as it is not reasonable as referenced in our response to the grand jury findings. We feel our current evidence procedures and storage facilities are adequate to maintain the chain of custody. At such time as new lockers rise to the level of priority that can be accommodated by our allocated budget, we will consider ordering new evidence lockers for the Truckee Sub-Station.**

5. In conjunction with the Nevada County Board of Supervisors, secure the open inmate loading/unloading area at the court with a fenced enclosure, commonly referred to as a sally port.

**The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable in the current fiscal environment.**

6. In conjunction with the Nevada County Board of Supervisors, secure the open walkway area at the Joseph Center, used to transport inmates into the court, with a fenced enclosure.

**The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable in the current fiscal environment.**

The Sheriff's Office would like to thank the members of the 2011-2012 Grand Jury for their participation and effort in preparing their reports. We are committed to providing the highest level of safety and security to our employees, the public, and inmates.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Royal', written in a cursive style.

Keith Royal  
Sheriff-Coroner

cc: CEO's Office  
Board of Supervisors

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