

Orange County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

July 16, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

Hall of Administration

MEETING MINUTES

Attending Voting Council Members: Supervisor Andrew Do (First District, Chair), Supervisor Doug Chaffee (Fourth District, Vice Chair), Jess Rodriguez (District Attorney), Martin Schwarz (Public Defender), Bryan Prieto (Probation), Joe Balicki (Sheriff-Coroner), Frank Kim (County Executive Office), Honorable Joanne Motoike (OC Courts), Honorable Maria Hernandez (OC Courts), Stu Greenberg (Tustin PD)

Department Attendees: Paulette Chaffee (Fourth District), Kim Engelby (County Executive Office), Veronica Carpenter (First District), Nick Pham (First District), Lilly Simmering (County Executive Office), Al Jabbar (Fourth District), Carma Lacy (OC Community Resources), Meghan Medlin (Medlin Workforce & Reentry Solutions LLC), Annette Mugrditchian (Health Care Agency), Rachael Osborn (County Executive Office), Peter DeMarco (County Executive Office), Catherine Stiver (Probation), An Tran (Social Services Agency), Carol Urie (Returning Home Foundation), Paul Walters (District Attorney), Rich Koenig (Sheriff-Coroner), Christine Snapper (Social Services Agency), Liz Guillen-Merchant (County Executive Office), Shawn Nelson (District Attorney), Lauren Barich (Seal Beach PD), Cheryl Sannebeck (Probation), Jeff Puckett (Sheriff-Coroner), Erin Winger (Health Care Agency), Julie Perkins (County Executive Office), Marya Forster (Probation), Michelle Aguirre (County Executive Office), Honorable Thomas Delaney (OC Courts), Ray Grangoff (Sheriff-Coroner), Brandy Miller (County Executive Office), Christine Tolbert (State Council on Developmental Disabilities), Crystal Null (Sheriff-Coroner), Lisa Sato (Probation), Rachael Vargas (Child Support Services), Renato Izquieta (Child Support Services), Maria Arzola (Child Support Services), James Harman (County Counsel), Anil Kukreja (County Executive Office), Tamika Williams (District Attorney), Dr. Clayton Chau (Health Care Agency), Natalie Dempster (Health Care Agency), Irfan Khan (Health Care Agency), Adil Siddiqui (Health Care Agency), Jason Park (Sheriff-Coroner), Ronnetta Johnson (Waymakers),

- I. **Call to Order/Introductions/Opening Remarks:** Meeting called to order by OCCJCC Chair Supervisor Andrew Do. Supervisor Do provided opening remarks.
- II. **Review and Approval of Minutes:** Meeting Minutes of May 21, 2020, were approved. The motion was made by Bryan Prieto and second by Martin Schwarz.

- III. Rebranding OC CARES:** The new logo for OC CARES was shared by OCCJCC Chair Supervisor Andrew Do and the process to develop was shared. OCCJCC members were invited to provide feedback.
- IV. Care Plus Program/SOCDIS Presentation:** A presentation was made on the Care Plus program by Lilly Simmering. The Public Protection cohort was implemented on June 30, 2021, and the applicable multi-disciplinary team will work on defining the high utilizers.
- V. Quarterly Update on 2025 Vision:** A brief update on the current status of the implementation of the 2025 Vision for the period of April to June 2021 was provided by Kim Engelby. Direction was requested and provided to revise the Juvenile and TAY Pillar's goals and action items to ensure the needs of that population for prevention, courts, in-custody and reentry are addressed.
- VI. OCCJCC Comments:** A brief update on the subsequent discussions (1) between the Public Defender's Office and the Courts and (2) the Corrections Cohort prioritization of high utilizers was requested for the next OCCJCC meeting.
- VII. Public Comments:** There was one public comment that was missed in error. Carol Urie CEO: Returning Home Foundation, submitted a comment on the implications of the pending CPUC interim phone rate reduction and impact on post-incarceration care. The full statement letter submitted is attached.
- VIII. Date of next meeting:** August 20, 2021, 9:00 a.m., County Administration South or virtually.



Returning Home Foundation

A 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Corporation

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Research has shown that communication to family and loved ones is integral to the success of incarcerated people, facilitating re-entry into the community, reducing recidivism, and promoting positive parent-child relationships.

Much has happened recently to rates in jails and prisons to facilitate this communication but which may impact our Orange County jails.

On May 23, 2021, the FCC approved a plan for lower INTERstate rates: Prison phone calls cannot **exceed 12 cents per minute**, and jail phone calls cannot exceed 14 cents per minute. There is a cap and definition of ancillary fees as well. The cap only is binding for States.

The California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) started investigating telecommunication and rates for those incarcerated in California jails and prisons after the Governor vetoed SB555 stating reduced rates would impact our Inmate Welfare Funds (IWF's) and the programs that are supported by those funds,

And, on July 12, 2021, they published their Proposed Decision for INTRAstaterates entitled **Adopting Interim Rate Relief for Incarcerated Person's Calling Services**. This decision adopts interim caps on intrastate rates of 7 cents per minute for debit, prepaid calls and collect calls. It applies to all telephone corporations providing Incarcerated Person's Calling Services (IPCS) in the state of California. Full text is made available on the link below.¹

Interestingly Illinois is way ahead of us. In 2016, they negotiated with Securus the lowest rate in the country at that time at less than 1 cent a call.

In June 2021, Connecticut became the first state to make all **prison telecommunication free**: phone, video-calling, templates, texting. Inmates will get 90 minutes of phone calls at no charge and the cost will be provided by the taxpayers.

In March 2021 the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and GTL signed a 6 year contract for phone calls in CA State Prisons for 2.5 cents per minute for Intrastate calls and 15 minutes of free phone calls every two weeks. It includes access to tablets and video calling.

Unfortunately, the CDCR reduction of rates does not apply to county jails, and one third of all persons incarcerated in California are in County Jails. The Inmate Welfare Funds (IWF's) in those jails must earn their income to pay for programs from mark-ups on commissary items and from commissions paid by the phone companies on calls made by those incarcerated. A clear Catch-22. Penal Code 4025 below. ²

Three counties in California have taken a different approach to the problem. San Francisco has had free phones for over a year, and beginning July 1, 2021 San Diego has joined them. All local, long distance and international calls from San Diego County Sheriff's Department jails will be free with unlimited phone calls per day. In May, Los Angeles City Council introduced plans to explore free phones and also eliminate steep markups on basic items sold in jail commissaries.

The important difference is that **these three counties did not look to the IWF Funds in their jails to pay for the free phone calls.** The Counties themselves, after considering the value of reduced rates to those incarcerated, to the community and to public safety, made the decision to negotiate and pay for telecommunications from the County Budgets.

Again: Research supports the fact that communication between those incarcerated or detained and those in the community is one of the most Important evidence-based programs we can offer that determines successful reentry and reduced recidivism. Reduced recidivism translates to reduced jail population with commensurate budget reductions making funds available for the free telecommunications program instead of incarceration.

Orange County can have our free calls and our IWF too.

Yours truly,

Carole Urie-Chickering
CEO and Founder

We are a stakeholder in CPUC's Order Instituting Rulemaking to Consider Regulating Telecommunications Services Used by Incarcerated People

¹ <https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/SearchRes.aspx?docformat=ALL&docid=392632776>

² https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=4025.&lawCode=PEN