

**San Benito County Response to
2025/26 Grand Jury Report
(Dated June 9, 2026)**

GRAND JURY FINDINGS:

Grand Jury Finding #1:

Staffing shortages exist within the Sheriff's Department. The Department is unable to attract and maintain adequate staffing.

Response to Grand Jury Finding #1:

The County generally concurs with the response submitted by the Sheriff's Office. The County recognizes that it is challenging to recruit and retain employees and that the Sheriff is also unable to staff much needed ancillary and support assignments to improve efficiency and safety. While the Sheriff's Office is currently staffed for minimum operational needs, the Board of Supervisors and the Executive Office have taken significant steps to address these issues. As such, there has been a significant investment in a new communications system, and the Board of Supervisors will be considering new and enhanced recruitment and retention incentives and benefits at its meeting of September 1, 2026. The Board of Supervisors and the Executive Office are committed to protecting and preserving public safety in San Benito County within the fiscal constraints faced by rural counties. The County will continue to work with its legislative representatives to take advantage of all state and federal grant opportunities.

Grand Jury Finding #2:

A new radio system has been purchased but has yet to be implemented.

Response to Grand Jury Finding #2:

The County generally concurs with the response submitted by the Sheriff's Office. The Board of Supervisors and the Executive Office have taken significant steps to address this issue. As such, there has been a significant investment in a new communications system, and it is expected that the new system will be operational in the coming months. The Board of Supervisors and the Executive Office are committed to protecting and preserving public safety in San Benito County within the fiscal constraints faced by rural counties. The County will continue to work with its legislative representatives to take advantage of all state and federal grant opportunities.

Grand Jury Finding #3:

The intake reception area of the Curtis J. Hill Rehabilitation Center is non-ADA compliant.

Response to Grand Jury Finding #3:

The County generally concurs with the response submitted by the Sheriff's Office.

Grand Jury Finding #4:

The Sheriff's Department requires additional staffing when transferring inmates and detainees.

Response to Grand Jury Finding #4:

The County generally concurs with the response submitted by the Sheriff's Office. San Benito County Sheriff's Office custody policy number 535, and operations policy number 904 outline proper procedures for the transportation of incarcerated and detained persons.

Grand Jury Finding #5:

The BSCC report non-compliance (1056 - The use of Sobering Cells)- Incarcerated persons were held in sobering cells longer than 12 hours without hourly safety checks.

Response to Grand Jury Finding #5:

The County generally concurs with the response submitted by the Sheriff's Office. The Grand Jury's finding does not accurately reflect the BSCC's report. The BSCC finding was: "Incarcerated persons held in sobering cell longer than 12 hours with hourly safety checks without an evaluation by health care staff." The BSCC found that a few individuals were placed in sobering cells, but their welfare was still assessed at least once every hour. The individuals in discussion were not placed in sobering cells due to their intoxication but rather placed there out of an abundance of caution so they could be more closely monitored by correctional and medical staff due to experiencing medical or mental health issues not arising to the level of being needed to be placed in a safety cell. BSCC found that even though these individuals in discussion were not placed in a sobering cell due to intoxication, they still needed their welfare assessed at least once every 30 minutes rather than the once an hour that occurs in regular housing.

GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Grand Jury Recommendation #1:

The Civil Grand Jury recommends that the County invest in retention incentives or other programs for existing officers within the next nine months.

Response to Grand Jury Recommendation #1:

The recommendation is in the process of being implemented. The Board of Supervisors and the Executive Office have worked with the Sheriff to create incentives that have helped slow the departure of staff and has attracted new people to apply. These include; longevity calculations that include all law enforcement experience, not just county time, paid medical benefits with no employee contribution, and the ability to work out for one-hour on-duty. The incentive package will be presented to the Board of Supervisors for approval at its meeting of September 1, 2026.

Grand Jury Recommendation #2:

The Civil Grand Jury recommends that the County take appropriate steps to implement the new radio system within the next three months.

Response to Grand Jury Recommendation #2:

The recommendation is in the process of being implemented. The Board of Supervisors and the Executive Office have taken significant steps to address this issue. As such, there has been a significant investment in a new communications system, and it is expected that the new system will be operational in the coming months. The Board of Supervisors and the Executive Office are committed to protecting and preserving public safety in San Benito County within the fiscal constraints faced by rural counties. The County will continue to work with its legislative representatives to take advantage of all state and federal grant opportunities.

Grand Jury Recommendation #3:

The Civil Grand Jury recommends that the facility be brought into ADA compliance within six months.

Response to Grand Jury Recommendation #3:

The recommendation is in the process of being implemented. The County Executive Office is working with the Sheriff's Office and other county departments to remodel the showers to make them ADA Compliant.

Grand Jury Recommendation #4:

The Civil Grand Jury recommends that the County develop a policy so that all inmates and detainees are transported by a minimum of two officers/deputies. This recommendation must be implemented within the next nine months.

Response to Grand Jury Recommendation #4:

The County generally agrees with the response submitted by the Sheriff's Office and the recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable or feasible.

Grand Jury Recommendation #5:

The Civil Grand Jury recommends that the facility incorporate the recommendations that the Sheriff submitted to the BSCC within 6 months.

Response to Grand Jury Recommendation #5:

The County generally concurs with the response submitted by the Sheriff's Office and the recommendation has been implemented. Though not legally required, the Sheriff's Office has changed its procedures to cease the multi-purpose use of sobering cells, absent an emergency. They are also ensuring that those individuals experiencing medical or mental health issues will receive safety checks every 30 minutes rather than every hour.