

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2023**

**MINUTE ORDER NO. 19**

**SUBJECT: RECEIVE DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE REPORT: DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO PROTECTING PUBLIC SAFETY, IMPROVING AND EXPANDING REHABILITATIVE TREATMENT AND SERVICES, AND ADVANCING EQUITY THROUGH ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

**OVERVIEW**

On October 19, 2021 (3), the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed a series of actions intended to enhance public safety, advance equity, and reduce incarceration of people who do not pose a public safety threat by providing community-based rehabilitative services and supports in lieu of custody. The Board direction came approximately 18 months into the COVID-19 pandemic, when policies restricting charges eligible for jail booking and other public health-related justice system changes lowered jail populations and reduced the number of people entering jail from the community. In this context, the Board directed the development of recommendations for community-based services that could be funded and added over time to create permanent alternatives to incarceration. The Board's direction identified certain actions to be led by an independent contracted consultant, including extensive data analysis, community outreach, and best practice research to be reflected in a series of reports. Today's recommendation is to receive the fourth report, the Draft Comprehensive Report, by the independent consultant, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), and receive a presentation on the report and other activities related to the "Alternatives to Incarceration" project.

The Draft Comprehensive Report provides findings about individuals not booked for nine misdemeanor drug, alcohol, or public misconduct charges during the pandemic, and their contacts with law enforcement for the same types of conduct before and after changes to COVID-19 jail booking criteria. An Alternatives to Incarceration Work Group (Work Group) composed of public agency partners agreed to focus on these charges as an initial step in the process of developing recommendations for rehabilitative treatment and community-based intervention services in lieu of booking or incarceration. The Draft Comprehensive Report also compiles data related to the needs of those at risk for justice system contact and the gaps and barriers to such individuals receiving services. The report provides a summary of best practice literature review and highlights effective programs that provide alternatives to incarceration. The report also describes data limitations SANDAG encountered researching a comparison of the cost of jail compared with service interventions in the community and why a reliable comparison was not feasible.

As part of the Alternatives to Incarceration project, SANDAG convenes an Alternatives to Incarceration Advisory Group composed of 14 community stakeholders with diverse perspectives, including those with lived justice system experience, to inform its work. SANDAG has also conducted extensive stakeholder surveys and outreach, including two virtual Community Listening Sessions in January.

The Public Safety Group has convened a project Work Group to consider SANDAG's recommendations and reports, receive presentations from local and national programs on best practices, and review local opportunities for creating and enhancing alternatives to incarceration or implementing strategies to increase referrals to and engagement in existing services. The Advisory Group and Work group have met jointly twice to inform and collaborate.

Reports on these stakeholder activities and SANDAG's Draft Comprehensive Report are included in today's presentation. SANDAG will present their Final Comprehensive Report, including recommendations to create alternatives to incarceration, to the Board on May 23, 2023. County staff will use SANDAG's analysis, the project's diverse stakeholder input and additional analysis and information to develop related recommendations for the Board's consideration in May.

## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

### **CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

1. Receive SANDAG's Draft Comprehensive Report on Data-Driven Alternatives to Incarceration.
2. Receive a presentation on the Alternatives to Incarceration project.

## **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Nationally, arrest and incarceration disproportionately impact people of color and those who are poor, mentally ill, struggling with addiction, disabled, or experiencing homelessness. The same is true in San Diego County. For example, in 2021 Black individuals composed 20 percent of the average daily jail population, according to jail data, while only 5 percent of San Diego County residents are Black, according to Census data. Disparities are also observed among Hispanic and Latino individuals, who composed nearly 45 percent of the average daily jail population in 2021 and 34 percent of the region's population, according to Census data. In the Regional Task Force on Homelessness's 2022 Jail Point in Time (PIT) Count, 31 percent of those surveyed said they were experiencing homelessness at the time of their arrest; a prior survey question from the 2020 PIT Count found 7 of 10 unsheltered individuals interviewed in the community had been to jail at some point.

Throughout this project, community stakeholders are engaged in the review of data and outcome measures to provide diverse perspectives and inform ongoing implementation. For example, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) facilitated two Community Listening Sessions in January 2023 to gather public input on priorities and service gaps in regional efforts to reduce incarceration rates. SANDAG also conducted a stakeholder survey to gather public input on the County's justice system and public safety from May to June 2022.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

The Board-directed action to provide a data-driven approach to protecting public safety, improving and expanding rehabilitative treatment and services, and advancing equity through alternatives to incarceration contributes to the County of San Diego's Sustainability Goals of engaging the community, providing just and equitable access, and protecting health and wellbeing. In terms of equity, health, and wellbeing, the ongoing initiative to provide alternatives to incarceration aims to impact the communities and socioeconomic groups historically burdened by mass incarceration by providing alternatives to booking that are designed to improve long-term outcomes through rehabilitative treatment. Extensive community engagement through surveys, community listening sessions, and an external Advisory Group composed of individuals with lived experience is a major component of the project. Rather than perpetuating the cycle of incarceration for individuals booked on low-level charges, the alternatives sought by this project seek to provide these individuals with connections to the community that will improve their health, including sobering services, mental health treatment, and crisis stabilization services.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no current year fiscal impact associated with today’s request to receive a report and presentation on the Alternatives to Incarceration project. Staff will return to the Board with possible actions according to the schedule directed by the Board regarding Data-Driven Alternatives to Incarceration. Any financial impacts related to future recommendations will be identified and staff will return to the Board to seek any necessary approval.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

**ACTION:**

ON MOTION of Supervisor Lawson-Remer, seconded by Supervisor Vargas, the Board of Supervisors took action as recommended.

AYES: Vargas, Anderson, Lawson-Remer, Desmond

NOT PRESENT: Fletcher

State of California)  
County of San Diego) §

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of the Original entered in the Minutes of the Board of Supervisors.

ANDREW POTTER  
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors



Signed  
by Andrew Potter