

2025 RACIAL JUSTICE OVERSIGHT BOARD ANNUAL UPDATE

RJOB Co-Chairs:
Ellen McDonnell, Public Defender
Chala Bonner



RJTF FINDINGS PRESENTED TO BOS (JULY 2018)

1. Higher arrest rates for Black youth and adults drive disparities in County juvenile and criminal justice processes in 2014
2. Black and Latino youth were more likely than White youth to be placed in custody, both pre- and post-adjudication.
3. Differences in the rate of disparity across cities indicated that different local contexts drive these disparities.
4. A higher proportion of Black and Latino defendants have sentence enhancements, due to characteristics of charges and/or defendants
5. Black adults in Contra Costa County were more likely than Latino or White adults to be detained pre-trial
6. In 2014, Black youth were sent to secure confinement at a higher rate than all other races; relative to being a ward of the Court, Hispanic youth were securely confined at a higher rate.
7. Changes to County jury selection processes have increased disparities in who services on juries in Contra Costa County.

RJTF RECOMMENDATIONS APPROVED BY BOS (JULY 2018)

Based on RJTF's findings and analysis, a set of 18 recommendations were developed and adopted by the County's Board of Supervisors. They encompass the following domains:

- Oversight and Accountability (formation of the Racial Justice Oversight Body)
- Diversion Practices and Related Services
- Data Collection and Analysis, with particular attention to racial disparities
- County Support for and Engagement with Local Agencies
- Community Engagement
- Practices Related to Trial & Adjudication Processes
- Confinement Practices

RJOB'S MISSION

In adherence to the RJTF's oversight and accountability recommendations, RJOB was assembled in 2019 with the objective to:

- Prioritize and implement the RJTF recommendations as approved by BOS
- Establish subcommittees of RJOB members who bring expertise in and commitment to the topic areas
- Develop subcommittee workplans

The full body meets quarterly and reports to the BOS annually. Subcommittees meet monthly or bi-monthly



RJOB ACTIONS TO DATE

April 2021

Approved diversion definition and guidelines developed by the Diversion Subcommittee.

June 2021

CEF Subcommittee requested initial funding from BOS for technical assistance with development of a proposal for a two-phase, hybrid cohort community capacity fund.

May 2022

RJOB urges BOS to create a Sheriff Oversight Board pursuant to government code section 25303.7 and refer back to RJOB for recommendations regarding its charge and composition.

August 2024

Requested BOS approve bylaw changes, which include the addition of 4 Alternate Community Representative seats

Approved joint statement on racial equity in light of COVID-19 and its impact on people who are incarcerated.

June 2020

On behalf of CEF Subcommittee, to strongly recommend BOS endorse the creation of the Miles Hall Non-Police Response Unit and AB 988 (The Miles Hall Lifeline Act).

June 2021

On behalf of Data Subcommittee, requested a commendation to Probation at the BOS for their engagement in the subcommittee and their willingness to share data and promote transparency.

June 2021

Approved statement in response to racist text message scandal involving Antioch Police Department.

June 2023

Approved extending RJOB Work Plan from 1-year to 2-years, and refining focus priority areas.

August 2025

2025–2027 WORK PLAN OBJECTIVES

1. Provide resources, advocacy, and support to schools, youth, and families that promote non-punitive discipline practices, as well as behavioral health and early intervention services for youth.
2. Establish formal relationships between County criminal justice agencies and community-based organizations.
3. Evaluate all CBOs for the efficacy and effectiveness of program goals and objectives to ensure populations are appropriately served.
4. Seek funding to implement improved procedural justice practices and racial equity training.
5. Ensure inclusion of de-escalation and behavioral health intervention trainings in local law enforcement orientations.
6. RJTF Recommendation: Expand eligibility for Pre-Trial Services with a focus on reducing racial disparities and replacing the money bail system.
7. Ensure collection and reporting of accurate data in all criminal justice and law enforcement agencies countywide and improve data sharing and dissemination.

SUBCOMMITTEE ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Full Body	Diversion	Data	Community Engagement & Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed and approved a two-year work plan. • Incorporated 5 new members Alternate Community Representative Seats • Held a retreat (extended meeting) to revisit purpose, priorities, and goals, as well as to onboard new members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Began planning development of landscape analysis and eligibility criteria of diversion programs for youth • Catalyzed discussions within RJOB regarding illegal immigration actions by the Federal Government. • Created two ad-hoc committees to assess the current landscape of Youth Diversion programming and opportunities available in Contra Costa, and to develop/update eligibility criteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Began the planning data walk to formally review all data sources and provide a report to the full body. • Reviewed initial Racial Justice Task Force (RJT) recommendations and data analysis that informed the priorities and goals of RJOB. • Created an initial draft of recommendations for the Sherriff's Office to consider applying towards the enhancement of their Quarterly Report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed and prioritized the development of a communication strategy for RJOB, including increased engagement with community and growing their awareness of the body. • Discussed possible funding opportunities for equity within the county. • In the process of organizing a series of three community town hall events, as a full RJOB collaboration, to take place in January/February 2026.

SUBCOMMITTEE OBJECTIVES

Full Body	Diversion	Data	Community Engagement & Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a proposed budget based on the recommendations from each subcommittee and prepare to submit to Board of Supervisors for 2027 budget process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop and implement a communication strategy to share information with community members, school sites, service providers, system partners.Conduct Community Town Halls, Listening Sessions, and/or surveys to learn what's working, what needs improvement, and what's still needed in regard to increasing community awareness of and engagement with RJOB.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete review current data sets on the county, assess where gaps lie, and propose plan to improve data collection, sharing and transparency.Assess individual outcomes but also systemic impacts, particularly in regard to racial disparities of CJ contact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Socialize the subcommittee's prior recommended definition of diversion in order to align understanding and application, and help guide efforts to expand diversion opportunities.Complete review of diversion efforts within the county for both youth and adults, assess where gaps lie, and propose plan to improve efforts.