

CAB
AMBASSADOR PROGRAM
GUIDE
2025

CAB Ambassador Program Guide

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CAB AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

The CAB Ambassadors Program (CAP) was established in 2016 to strengthen communication between the Community Advisory Board and key decision-makers. As an AB109 Community Advisory Board member, you serve as an ambassador for our work in the community, representing the board when meeting with county supervisors, community organizations, and other stakeholders.

The program serves two essential purposes:

1. **Creating Communication Channels:** CAP establishes direct communication between CAB and those who vote on CAB's proposals. Ambassadors gather valuable insights about departmental and elected officials' priorities through regular engagement while sharing CAB's annual focus areas. This ongoing dialogue ensures mutual understanding and builds collaborative relationships.
2. **Mobilizing Support:** CAP builds support for significant CAB recommendations, particularly those addressing complex or potentially challenging issues. Ambassadors meet with each stakeholder annually to discuss priorities and build understanding before critical end-of-year voting processes.

Program Structure

CAB members collectively develop recommended talking points to guide discussions with Community Corrections Partnership members and County Supervisors. The program operates through carefully assigned Ambassador pairs consisting of a Lead and a Second who function as a coordinated team. The Office of Reentry & Justice (ORJ) reviews all assignments to ensure compliance with Brown Act requirements.

This guide provides the tools and information you need to effectively communicate our board's priorities, gather valuable feedback, and build strong partnerships across the community to support successful reintegration efforts.

Your Role as an Ambassador

As a board ambassador, you:

- Represent the collective voice of the advisory board, not just personal opinions
- Build relationships with key stakeholders and community partners
- Educate others about AB109 and its local implementation
- Gather community feedback and concerns to bring back to the board
- Help identify potential partnerships and resources

Tips for Conducting Successful Meetings

Before the Meeting

1. **Prepare thoroughly**
 - Research the organization or official you're meeting with
 - Review relevant data and recent board discussions

- Prepare concise handouts/notes with key information
- Confirm meeting logistics (time, location, attendees)
- Be prepared to share any approved board materials

2. Set clear objectives

- Define 2-3 specific goals for the meeting
- Prepare an agenda and share it in advance if appropriate
- Anticipate questions and prepare thoughtful responses
- Know which decisions require full board approval

During the Meeting

1. Make a strong first impression

- Log into Zoom 5-10 minutes early
- Begin with a brief introduction of yourself and the board's role
- Thank them for their time and interest
- Start with common ground before addressing challenging topics

2. Communicate effectively

- Use plain language, avoiding jargon and acronyms
- Balance facts and data with personal stories and examples
- Listen actively and take notes on feedback
- Be honest about what you know and don't know
- Offer to follow up on questions you can't immediately answer

3. Handle difficult conversations

- Acknowledge concerns respectfully
- Focus on shared goals for community safety and successful reentry
- Use "we" language to emphasize collaborative approach
- Redirect politically charged discussions to evidence-based outcomes
- Stay calm and professional if tensions arise

4. Close effectively

- Summarize key discussion points and any agreements reached
- Clarify next steps and who is responsible for each
- Invite ongoing communication and feedback
- Thank them for their time and perspectives

After the Meeting

1. Follow through

- Send a thank-you email summarizing key points and next steps
- Provide any additional information promised
- Share relevant feedback with the full board and/or chair
- Update your CAB Ambassador Meeting Report Out document
- Schedule follow-up communications as appropriate

Talking Points: County Supervisors

About AB109 Implementation

- "Our county's AB109 implementation plan focuses on evidence-based practices to reduce recidivism while enhancing public safety."

- "The Community Advisory Board provides community perspective and oversight to ensure programs align with local needs."
- "Since implementation began in 2011, we've seen [insert local data point on positive outcomes]."
- "Our current priorities include [list 2-3 board priorities]."

Funding and Resources

- "AB109 funding has allowed our county to develop innovative programs such as [specific local examples]."
- "We continuously evaluate program effectiveness to ensure responsible use of taxpayer dollars."
- "The advisory board reviews data to identify successes and areas needing improvement."

Community Impact

- "Effective reentry services benefit everyone by reducing crime, strengthening families, and creating taxpaying citizens."
- "Our community-based approach addresses the root causes of recidivism, including housing instability, unemployment, and untreated mental health issues."
- "The board includes diverse community voices, including [examples of board composition]."
- "We're seeing promising results in [specific outcome area], with [specific data point]."

Requests and Recommendations

- "Based on our current priorities, we recommend [specific policy or program recommendation]."
- "We invite you to attend our upcoming community forum on [topic] to hear directly from program participants and providers."
- "We'd appreciate your support for [specific initiative or funding request] in the upcoming budget cycle."
- "We see an opportunity to leverage county resources by partnering with [specific organization or department]."

Talking Points: Community Organizations

Partnership Opportunities

- "The advisory board seeks community partners who can help address gaps in our reentry continuum."
- "Your organization's expertise in [specific area] could significantly benefit individuals transitioning back to the community."
- "We can connect you with the AB109 program manager to discuss potential collaboration or funding opportunities."
- "Together, we can create stronger pathways to successful community reintegration."

Information Sharing

- "We'd value your perspective on how realignment has affected your clients or community."
- "The advisory board is currently focusing on [specific issue], and we'd appreciate your insights."
- "We can present to your staff or clients about available reentry resources."

Community Education

- "Many community members misunderstand who AB109 serves – these are non-violent, non-serious, non-sexual offenders returning to our community."

- "Research consistently shows that stable housing, employment, and treatment significantly reduce recidivism."
- "Successful reintegration benefits everyone through increased public safety, family stability, and community wellbeing."
- "Community support is essential for successful reentry – isolation and stigma increase the risk of reoffending."

Addressing Concerns

- "Public safety remains our top priority, which is why we emphasize supervision and support services."
- "We welcome community feedback and incorporate it into our recommendations to the Community Corrections Partnership."

Effective Communication Strategies

Telling the AB109 Story

- Use a balanced approach that acknowledges both challenges and successes
- Share specific examples and success stories (with appropriate permissions)
- Connect realignment to broader community benefits
- Use visual aids when possible (simple charts, infographics)
- Personalize without compromising confidentiality

Representing Diverse Perspectives

- Acknowledge the range of views represented on the board
- Focus on areas of consensus when speaking officially
- Clarify when you're sharing personal views vs. board positions
- Recognize the different impacts of criminal justice policies across communities
- Invite diverse stakeholders to board meetings to share their perspectives directly

Quick Reference: Key Statistics and Facts

- **Local Impact:** [Insert 2-3 key local statistics about AB109 population and outcomes]
- **Budget:** Annual allocation of \$[amount] for AB109 programs and services
- **Services:** [List key services funded through AB109]
- **Success Metrics:** [List 2-3 positive outcome measurements]
- **Challenges:** [List 2-3 ongoing challenges]
- **Current Priorities:** [List current board priorities]

Ambassador Dos and Don'ts

Do:

- Represent the board's official positions accurately
- Listen more than you speak when gathering community input
- Bring community concerns back to the full board
- Focus on data and evidence-based practices
- Acknowledge both successes and challenges honestly
- Coordinate with the board chair before major presentations

Don't:

- Make promises or commitments without board approval
- Share confidential information about specific cases or individuals
- Criticize other agencies or officials publicly
- Present personal opinions as board positions

- Engage in partisan political discussions when representing the board
- Speak to media without proper authorization

Resources for Ambassadors

- One-page fact sheet about local AB109 implementation
- Annual report executive summary
- Board-approved PowerPoint presentation (customizable)
- Success stories document (with appropriate releases)
- Schedule of upcoming community events and forums

Feedback Loop

After representing the board at meetings or events:

1. Complete the Ambassador Activity Form [should a form be created for this?]
2. Share key takeaways at the next board meeting
3. Submit any new community contacts for the stakeholder database
4. Identify any needed updates to talking points or materials
5. Mentor new board members in ambassador activities

Last Updated: April 22, 2025

Email template for AB109 Ambassadors to request a Zoom meeting:

Subject: AB109 Community Advisory Board - Request for Meeting on Funding Priorities

Dear [Recipient Name],

I hope this email finds you well. As a member of the AB109 Community Advisory Board (CAB) Ambassador program, my colleague [Colleague Name] and I would like to schedule a 30-minute Zoom meeting with you to discuss our work related to AB109 Community Advisory Board for [priorities for current year].

Purpose of Meeting:

- Provide a brief overview of the CAB Ambassador program
- Share updates on our current initiatives
- Request your valuable feedback on four key priority areas:
 1. Housing
 2. Behavioral health
 3. Employment
 4. Pre/post-release services

Your insights would greatly contribute to our efforts in ensuring effective resource allocation and program development for returning community members.

Potential Meeting Dates: Please share your availability in the next few weeks for any of the following time frames.

- [Date Option 1]: Between [time range]
- [Date Option 2]: Between [time range]
- [Date Option 3]: Between [time range]

If these dates don't work for your schedule, please suggest alternatives that would be more convenient for you. Additionally, if you prefer that another individual from your office attend in your place, please let us know, and we'll be happy to coordinate with them directly.

We appreciate your consideration. We look forward to connecting and discussing these important community matters.

Best regards,

[Your Name] AB109 Community Advisory Board Ambassador Phone: [Your Phone Number]
Email: [Your Email Address]

**REQUESTING & CONFIRMING AB109 AMBASSADOR
MEETING**

EMAIL CONFIRMING MEETING

Dear :

My associate XXXXXXXXXXXX and I are looking forward to hearing your perspectives on public safety issues. We want to provide an overview of the program and request your feedback on the four key priority areas:

1. housing,
2. behavioral health,
3. employment, and
4. pre/post-release services.

We look forward to this opportunity to strengthen the partnership between the CAB and your office

Respectfully,

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

CAB Member

DRAFT

Tips for Effective Ambassador Meeting

- The two interviewers should meet prior to their Ambassador Call to layout their joint approach!!! This is crucial for the comfort of new CAB Members engaged in the Ambassador Program & to provide a professional approach.
- Be...
 - Punctual (i.e.. arrive 10-15 minutes early)
 - Polite
 - Professional
 - Personable
 - Engaging
- Focus on “Active Listening”
- Clearly define why we are here
- Prepare some questions
- Most Important... STAY POSITIVE and speak with an affirmative tone
- Review Interviewee's web page
- Take notes

EXAMPLE: SUMMARY OF MEETING NOTES (SUPERVISOR BURGIS) Nov 3, 2021 @ 3:15 PM

- Her assignments as a County Supervisor have not been in the Criminal Justice arena. They are learning about this area.
- Develop a relationship with Alicia Nuchols (925 655 2335) in her office who watches various areas such as this. She can assist us with priorities for the Supervisor's District
- We should look into Measure X money. It allows receiving agencies to be creative with the use of that money. It would be most helpful if we could assist the county in finding funding for various initiatives.
- Public Safety is a key issue for her District. We should frame our messaging to those we are seeking assistance from stressing that our programs save considerable money by not investing it in the prison system
- She feels we can give people HOPE by stressing accountability
- As far as transparency, it would be helpful to provide a model from a county that's engaging in transparency in a effective manner. We should keep in mind that there are limits as to what can be reasonably accomplished. Our emphasis should not

Sample Outline For Framing an Interview / Conversation

(LEAD)

Greeting and introduction of Community Advisory Board (CAB) attendees.

- Give lead/Co-lead(s) an opportunity to introduce themselves.
- Provide opportunity to introduce themselves and other attendees.

Establish purpose of the meeting.

- Establish a line of communication between the CAB and their respective office.
- We would like to hear your priorities and receive input from you on how the CAB could support your initiatives and priorities.
- Please feel free to chime-in as appropriate.
- Before we move along are there any priorities or issues that you would like to discuss

and bring to our attention?

- (CO-LEAD)

- Introduction to CAB's Policy Statement & Pillars
 - Over the last several years, the CAB has worked diligently to realize the intention of AB 109 Public Realignment by advocating for increased community-based reentry services, supporting the expansion of our reentry system, ensuring our criminal justice partners and the broader community work together to end the cycle of recidivism and mass incarceration.
 - Some of our accomplishments include successful increases in funding for community-based housing resources, legal aid, and employment services; new expense reporting templates; strengthening pre-release transition planning; and the permanent creation and expansion of the Office of Reentry and Justice.

(LEA
D)

- Over the last year, CAB members and members of the community have come together to “make real” a set of values that we believe MUST be at the center of ALL justice-system related decision- making and policies enacted by the County.
- As County residents and representatives of the community, we want a fair and effective justice system in Contra Costa County. Our approach to policy rests on four (4) pillars:
 - We want to invest in what works.
 - We believe that true justice requires social justice.
 - We believe that incarceration should serve as a last resort.
 - We believe that safety for all depends on justice for all.
- Discuss CAB’s recent accomplishments:
 - This year CAB’s Policy & Budget Subcommittee was tasked by the Community Corrections Partnership (CCP), and supported by the Public Protections Committee (PPC) of the Board of Supervisors, to develop recommendations for utilizing a one-time allocation of \$15M in excess funds from the AB 109 fund balance on CAB’s four priorities:
 - (1) expanding housing services for justice-involved individuals;
 - (2) expanding behavioral health support for justice-involved individuals;
 - (3) increasing employment opportunities for reentry population; and
 - (4) enhancing pre-release engagement services.
 - During this time, departments and organizations serving AB109 individuals across the county provided written responses to questions, presented at CAB subcommittee meetings, and made themselves available to discuss this important issue.
 - The outcome of the workgroups allowed CAB to make the following recommendation with the excess funds, and we would like share with you the great work CAB has been able to conduct with the support and feedback through workgroups conducted that included H3, Behavioral Health, Rubicon, WIOA, CCC Human Resources, Sheriff's Office, Contra Costa Office of Education, DA, Public Defenders Office, Detention Health, LAO, Hope Solutions who participated in the round table discussions.
 - This work cannot be completed without the trust installed in CAB from the BOS, CCP and county programs. With the ongoing dedication and commitment to serving the AB109 population in Contra Costa County, we, CAB, would have been unable to retrieve the results.

(CO-LEAD)

Review CAB Recommendations:

- We would like to share our results with you around four (4) key Priority Areas and open it up for discussion and feedback.

Priority Area # 1 is Housing.

<i>Priority Area # 1 Housing</i>
Funding is needed to establish an additional countywide CORE team(s) to focus on homeless reentry population in the community and at the point of immediate release from the county's detention facilities. The estimated funding would be for the creation of Reentry/Justice CORE position(s).
RFP: In collaboration with H3 & Probation, funding is needed to expand our county's housing supports specific to the AB109/Reentry population by following H3 and the CoC's 1-2-4 housing services framework for interim, permanent, and homelessness prevention.

Discussion/Feedback

Move to the area of Priority Area # 2 Behavior Health

(LEAD)

Priority Area # 2...BEHAVIORAL HEALTH is our second area of focus

Priority Area # 2 Behavioral Health
Funding is needed to pilot a countywide on-demand mobile outreach service for behavioral health resources that can be accessed anywhere in the community, affording current reentry providers and reentry clients with on-demand supports for behavioral health needs while reducing wait times and system navigation challenges.
Funding is needed to hire additional Community Support Workers (CSWs) to provide field based mental health services in the community in partnership with CBO providers. CSWs are typically trained and qualified peer support specialists.

Discussion/Feedback

Move to the area of Priority Area # 3 – Employment Services

(CO-LEAD)

Priority Area # 3...EMPLOYMENT SERVICES is our third area of focus.

Priority Area # 3 Employment
<p>Funding is needed to pilot a countywide employment pathway for reentry participants to fill vacant county positions. To prepare reentry clients for such opportunities, the pilot program would include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Job training workshops and on-the-job training for preparation into County roles.Establish internships and transitional employment opportunities with county departments and CBO providers for job-specific roles.Increase and enhance pre-release employment service offerings, including identification of immediate employment opportunities prior to release and support job placement.A clean slate program designed to help clients clear their prior record. Program services would be procured through a competitive bidding process (RFP).

Discussion/Feedback

Move to the area of Priority Area # 4 – Pre/Post Release Services

(Lead)

Priority # 4...PRE/POST RELEASE SERVICES is our fourth & final area of focus.

Priority Area # 4 Pre/Post-Release Engagement
<p>Funding is needed to pilot a Guaranteed Income program for justice-involved individuals. These additional resources, on a time-limited basis, provide basic needs assistance and offer opportunities toward greater economic security.</p>

Program design and service delivery would be procured through a competitive bidding process (RFP).

Funding is needed for a variety of pre and post release services to be utilized as system “gap – fillers” to increase client connections to reentry programming while in-custody and upon those critical first few weeks following release. The following are recommendations for expansion of existing services based on provider staff feedback and CAB’s in-custody survey findings.

1. Expand transportation and increase mentoring services upon release-24 HR/after hours and weekends countywide.
2. Expanding existing service hours for after hours and weekends.
3. Expand language services for in-custody and post-release service provision.
4. Expansion of in-custody and post-release services for women.

Previously accounted for in Priority Area #1 Housing Services, funding is needed to provide Interim Bridge Housing placement for individuals released from the county’s jails facilitated and coordinated by a Reentry-focused CORE Team (see above). For the Pre/Post-Release Engagement Priority Area, CORE team members should have the ability to conduct assessments, arrange housing placements and schedule transportation from the detention facility to the Bridge Housing Program at any time of release. An additional set-aside is recommended to account for expenses related to assessing, service coordination and placement beyond business hours.

Discussion/Feedback

(LEAD)

We would like to note that our Priorities are aligned with our 2023 recommendations and the Programs & Services AB 109 Survey that we asked our County agencies & CBOs to participate complete. It is our understanding that CAB’s recommendations will be going before the Board of Supervisors for consideration at a future meeting.

CONCLUSION

(CO-LEAD)

- We appreciate you taking the time to meet with us. It has been an absolute pleasure. We believe it has been time well spent.

(LEAD)

- Thank you for providing this opportunity to meet and hear about the work being done by the CAB.
- Please have your office reach out to us if there is ever a need for clarification or an opportunity for the CAB to provide support.
- The fact that this meeting has taken place says a great deal about your commitment to this important work.
- We are so pleased to have the opportunity to see first-hand the role that you play in making Contra Costa County a better place to live & I thank you for providing this opportunity to meet.

EXAMPLE SUMMARY OF MEETING NOTES

- Applauded CAB work in strength ties across county departments and CBOs
- Recommend bringing law enforcement into some conversations so we can address issues that lead to incarceration that may be preventable.
- One area would like to see us learn more about its pathways for AB109 individuals to get connected back to education pipeline.
- Supervisor Carlson explored the idea of supporting the families of AB109 individuals.
- One recommendation was to develop training or interactive videos for county staff to walk a day in the shoes of those they serve.

External Meeting Report - Key Results

Report to CAB After Member Participation in an External

Meeting SAMPLE REPORT OUT – CAB

AMBASSADOR MEETING:

Group Name	Supervisor Burgis	Date	November 3, 2021
Location	Zoom Call	Time	3:15 PM
Purpose	Update Supervisor of CAB's Proposals & Activities		

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- In attendance were Jon'Ta Davenport (Lead) & Crawford Carpenter (Second)
- Her assignments as a County Supervisor have not been in the Criminal Justice arena. They are learning about this area.
- Develop a relationship with Alicia Nuchols (925 655 2335) in her office who watches various areas such as this. She can assist us with priorities for the Supervisor's District
- We should look into Measure X money. It allows receiving agencies to be creative with the use of that money. It would be most helpful if we could assist the county in finding funding for various initiatives.
- Public Safety is a key issue for her District. We should frame our messaging to those we are seeking assistance from stressing that our programs save considerable money by not investing it in the prison system
- She feels we can give people HOPE by stressing accountability
- As far as transparency, it would be helpful to provide a model from a county that's engaging in transparency in an effective manner. We should keep in mind that there are limits as to what can be reasonably accomplished. Our emphasis should not be on coming in after the fact, but on being proactive with measures that can be adequately planned for
- Three areas that are priorities for her District are:
 - Housing
 - Mental Health
 - Homelessness

ACTION REQUESTED OF FULL CAB

- Note comments above regarding providing a model of successes

IMPORTANT DATES

- N/A

ATTACHMENTS

- N/A

DRAFT

SAMPLE CAB THANK YOU EMAIL

We appreciate you taking the time to meet with us. The opportunity you provided allowed us to establish a line of communication and share with you about the Community Advisory Board's work and our commitment to Contra Costa County.

We look forward to collaborating with your Office and other stakeholders to ensure the CAB's work is understood and considered while addressing the needs of the reentry population in Contra Costa County.

Thank you,

CAB

Member