



YOLO COUNTY

Health & Human Services Agency

Resource · Partner · Support System

September 9, 2025

Yolo County Grand Jury
The Honorable Timothy Fall
Superior Court of California, County of Yolo
1000 Main Street
Woodland, CA, 95695

Yolo County Grand Jury Foreperson Karen Buchko
120 W Main Street, Suite A
Woodland, CA 95695

Dear Judge Fall and Grand Jurors,

On June 13, 2025, the Yolo County Grand Jury submitted its report, Homelessness: Our Local American Tragedy, which contained twelve (12) Findings and five (5) recommendations. The Yolo County Department of Health and Human Services has reviewed those sections of the Report of the Grand Jury requested and has prepared an official response (pursuant Penal Code §933.05):

F9. The existing shortage of mental health professionals within Yolo County significantly exacerbates the complex challenges of providing adequate mental health services to residents, particularly those experiencing homelessness. Staffing shortages within the mental health system are attributed to factors such as stringent training requirements and insufficient funding. Furthermore, recent legislative changes appear to have had a limited positive impact on increasing access to mental health care. The intersection of homelessness and mental health is critical, and addressing the systemic gaps in mental health service provision is essential for effectively supporting the well-being and long-term stability of individuals experiencing homelessness.

County Response: HHSA partially agrees with this finding. The existing shortage of mental health professionals in Yolo County is indicative of a larger shortage of mental health professionals at the state and national level. Yolo County is competing with other employers across the state for qualified professionals at a time when governmental budgets are constricting due to the impacts of the current federal administration and an economic downturn.

F11. Communities across Yolo County are expressing growing frustration and discontent over the perceived lack of tangible progress in addressing homelessness. A significant concern driving this

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dissatisfaction is the urgent need for accessible and comprehensive mental health facilities and services within the county. Residents recognize the critical and often intertwined nature of homelessness and mental health challenges, observing that a lack of adequate support acts as a major barrier to housing stability and overall well-being. This desire extends beyond basic facilities, with communities advocating for a range of services, including crisis stabilization units, sobering centers, residential treatment programs, and robust outpatient care options. The absence of these resources is viewed as a major impediment to breaking the cycle of homelessness and fostering healthier, safer communities. This underscores the pressing need for county leadership to prioritize the development and funding of a comprehensive mental health infrastructure as an integral component of its strategy to effectively address homelessness.

County Response: HHSA partially agrees with this finding. While the intersection of behavioral health services and homelessness is critical for housing stability with individuals that are experiencing behavioral health challenges, a more relevant factor locally is the paucity of affordable housing. Access to mental health services, in and of itself, is insufficient to address local needs. The current economic outlook of the County creates a significant barrier to provide comprehensive mental health services, as there is insufficient funding to provide more than basic services at this time.

R4. Yolo County should establish a dedicated and mobile Mental Health Outreach Team specifically trained to engage with and provide services to homeless individuals. This team would be responsible for actively seeking out individuals in need, conducting mental health assessments, providing immediate support and crisis intervention, and facilitating connections to ongoing mental health care and other essential resources.


County Response: HHSA partially agrees with this finding. Development of a mobile mental health outreach program is indeed a best practice and a component of a comprehensive behavioral health system of care that Yolo County ultimately desires. However, at this time there is insufficient funding to support such an approach.

In closing, the County extends our gratitude to the Grand Jury for their work on this report. The County invites the Grand Jury to have an ongoing working relationship with the County / HHSA to work to improve the growing homeless crisis. The County is committed to working in partnership with all city jurisdictions, the Grand Jury, and the community to solve this complex issue.

Sincerely,

Mónica
Morales

Mónica Morales
Agency Director

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