

**COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA**

For the Agenda of:
June 17, 2008

To: Board of Supervisors
From: Countywide Services Agency
Subject: Report Back – Alternative Sentencing Program
Contact: Penelope Clarke, Administrator Countywide Services Agency, 874-5886

REPORT BACK

The Alternative Sentencing Program is not a statutorily mandated program but has been funded by both the County and the Court in the Sacramento metropolitan area for over 30 years. The services are most utilized to implement sentencing options for adult and juvenile offenders who cannot afford a fine or for whom more costly and punitive traditional sentences of fine, incarceration and/or probation appear inappropriate. The services also contribute to a reduction in probation caseloads and overcrowding in custody facilities. In the community, many small businesses and non-profit entities rely on alternative sentences in the form of community service for staffing resources.

Referrals to alternative sentencing are made from three primary locations: the main downtown Schaber courthouse, the Carol Miller Justice Center and the B.T. Collins Juvenile Center. Currently the Volunteer Center of Sacramento is contracted to provide placement and monitoring of both adult and juvenile offenders who are ordered by the Court to perform community services as an alternative sanction to fines, probation, or incarceration. The Volunteer Center of Sacramento provides services to 10,000 - 12,000 offenders every year. The contract with the Volunteer Center of Sacramento in the amount of \$143,600 will expire on June 30, 2008 and has an option to amend the term of the contract for a year not to exceed two years. The program is currently included in the Fiscal Year 2008-09 Proposed Budget reductions.

The County provides funding to the Alternative Sentencing Program in Budget Unit 5020000 - Court – Non Trial Courts Operation and it is a discretionary program funded by the general fund. In addition, the Volunteer Center of Sacramento has a sliding scale fee schedule that is charged to clients. The Alternative Sentencing Program does not directly benefit from the Fines & Forfeiture revenue that is distributed based on Government, Penal, and Health and Safety codes. The larger proportionate share of the Fines & Forfeiture revenue is distributed to the State of California and then directly to Departments as designated by code. Data to determine whether the Alternative Sentencing Program significantly impacts an increase in fines and forfeiture revenue to the County of Sacramento would be difficult.

There are other programs available to adult and juvenile offenders through the Sheriffs Department and/or Probation. The programs are used to mitigate overcrowding in custody facilities and include Work Project (community service program) and Home Detention (electronic monitoring).

Respectfully submitted,

APPROVED:

PENELOPE CLARKE, Administrator
Countywide Services Agency

TERRY SCHUTTEN
County Executive