



City and County of San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department

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JPD / UC Berkeley School of Optometry Vision Testing Program

The linkage between youth vision problems and juvenile delinquency is well documented in research findings offered by the Harvard School of Education, the Optometric Extension Program Foundation and the American Optometric Association. Studies estimate that while 25% of school age children suffer from undiagnosed vision problems, 70% of juvenile offenders have undiagnosed vision problems which contribute to their anti-social behaviors, discipline problems and disengagement from school. Since the Juvenile Probation Department is charged with the responsibility of guiding youth toward pro-social behaviors, the above findings and the real opportunity to enhance the likelihood of youths' future success by simply addressing and correcting signs of vision impairment prompts our immediate attention and response.

For this reason I am pleased to announce that through the efforts of Judge Julie Tang and Dr. Pamela Fong, O.D., the Juvenile Probation Department has established a formal linkage with the UC Berkeley School of Optometry to provide free vision testing for court involved youth (not in secure custody) beginning on April 15, 2011.

The UC Berkeley School of Optometry will receive direct referrals from the Probation Department involving juveniles demonstrating or disclosing vision problems. Pursuant to parental consent, youth will be transported and examined at the Berkeley facility one day per month. Necessary prescribed corrective lenses will be provided free of charge through this program. Referrals for more comprehensive eye care treatment, however, will need to be covered under Medi-Cal, through a private insurance carrier, or at the family's expense.

Probation Services Division personnel will assume responsibility for the management of this JPD/Berkeley School of Optometry Vision Testing Program. This will include the identification, referral, scheduling and transportation of juvenile patients to the Berkeley School of Optometry one day each month for as many individuals as may need these services. **The Court Officers Unit will assume a key role in the implementation of this program under the direction of Supervisor Al Harper and Senior Supervisors Sara Schumann and Vince Tong.**

Vision problems detected during detention based vision screening and/or those detected or disclosed during the probation officers' development of dispositional reports and case plans shall prompt referrals to this program. Probation officers shall be the principal and sole source of referrals to the JPD/Berkeley School of Optometry Vision Testing Program using the **attached form**. We invite the Courts and attorney groups to help us identify youth who may benefit from this program.