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FACT SHEET ON WHY WE SHOULD CLOSE JUVENILE HALL

A large Juvenile Hall is no longer needed. Youth crime has steadily declined over 20 years.

In San Francisco, violent felony juvenile arrest rates have declined by over 87 percent since 1990. Statewide, the violent felony juvenile arrest rate dropped by about 67 percent since 1995. In 2018, on average, two-thirds of the beds at Juvenile Hall were empty every day. In December 2018, for example, 40 children were detained at juvenile hall, filling only 27% of its 150 beds. Thirty percent of these 40 children were being held on a misdemeanor offense, awaiting trial. Half of the children were there post-disposition, awaiting their court-ordered placement.

Detaining children is ineffective. Research has shown that incarcerating young people does not make our community safer, but does the opposite. In a recent study, researchers at Brown University and MIT found that incarcerating young people increased the likelihood that they would go to jail as an adult by 23 percent. It is in fact the single biggest predictor of future incarceration. One recent longitudinal study of 35,000 young offenders found that those who were incarcerated as juveniles were twice as likely to go on to be locked up as adults as those who committed similar offenses and came from similar backgrounds but were given an alternative sanction or simply not arrested.

Detaining children at Juvenile Hall is a huge waste of City funds.

The budget for Juvenile Hall does not reflect today's low numbers of incarcerated youth. In fiscal year 2017-2018 the City budgeted \$13,322,254 for Juvenile Hall despite the significantly reduced number of incarcerated youth. The average annual cost per year for each youth detained has risen 127% in the last 10 years; from \$123,400 in 2009 to \$279,500 in January 2019, even though the number of youth detained has plummeted.

The majority of detained children have mental health issues. In December 2018, ninety percent of the children in Juvenile Hall suffered from mental health issues. Almost a third were being administered psychotropic medications. And during the last quarter of 2018, 4 incarcerated youth had to be hospitalized outside of the facility for medical or mental health care.

Jailing children is a civil rights issue. Black youth make up 4.9% of all children under 18 in San Francisco, and yet 55% of the children booked in Juvenile Hall in 2018 were Black. Latino and Pacific Islander youth are also consistently over-represented, while white children are rarely incarcerated in Juvenile Hall. The majority of youth come from the highest poverty areas in San Francisco.



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LEGISLATION DETAILS:

- 1) Mandate that the Board of Supervisors close Juvenile Hall at 375 Woodside by December 2021, and instead develop a) an expanded array of alternatives to incarceration and b) a small, rehabilitative non-institutional center for the small minority of young people who cannot safely be released into the community and who must be detained as per state law.
- 2) Create a 12 person implementation working group made up of key city agencies, juvenile justice experts and community representatives that will meet regularly for two and a half years to meet the December 2021 deadline. Specifically this group shall:
 - Conduct a thorough needs assessment of every young person who is being detained
 - Identify what existing programs serving this population of youth need strengthening and/or expansion
 - Identify what new services and programs, including home options, must be created
 - Design and create a small non-institutional secure center in San Francisco for the minority of youth who must be detained as required by state law. Local experts estimate San Francisco will need a 10-15 bed center, but the final size will be determined by the Working Group
 - Reassign the workforce that currently staffs the juvenile hall to other City employment
 - Create a "Youth Justice Reinvestment Fund" that redirects funds historically allocated for Juvenile Hall to community-based alternatives to detention, the secure youth center, and additional mental health and academic supports for juvenile justice-involved youth