

**SUBJECT**

AB 109 EXCESS FUNDS UTILIZATION

**RECOMMENDATION**

CAB recommends full use of increased AB 109 revenues and drawing down from the AB 109 reserve balance to expand ongoing mental health, substance use disorder (SUD) services, housing services such as supportive housing specifically designed for the reentry population and pre-release engagement. The following funded agencies are recommended for administering these expanded services: Behavioral Health Services for mental health & SUD services; H3 and Community Programs for expanded housing services including supportive housing. We would like these agencies to request additional funding and have some ideas below of potential funding gaps to consider.

**BACKGROUND**

The Community Advisory Board (CAB) is recommending increased funding in the following areas:

- **Housing**
- **Behavioral Health**
- **Employment**
- **Pre-Release Engagement**

**DISCUSSION**

**Housing** (Page 48 in the Agenda Packet Health, Housing, Homelessness)

[\*Our Recommendation # 1...CAB's recent Policy & Budget Recommendations to CCP for FY 2022/2023\*](#)

**INCREASED FUNDING TO HEALTH, HOUSING, AND HOMELESS SERVICES (H3)**

- a. Providing transitional-bridge housing for individuals recently released from jail/local prisons (not limited to individuals on Probation – expand to serve other tiers)
- b. Establish a Justice-System CORE Team (not limited to individuals on Probation – expand to serve other tiers) to increase emergency housing or housing funds in general. Let's move more money toward affordable housing or homeless outreach:

1. Provide rental subsidies or flexible fund for justice-involved individuals and their families (not limited to individuals on Probation – expand to serve other tiers)
  2. A great program would be H3, LAO, Hope Solutions, or the GPS Program to do pre-release services. Also, another Idea is if we can get CORE to come into the county jails, that would help with housing.
  3. We are proposing that AB 109 investments be prioritized for services that utilize a housing first approach, as this is best practice within the housing field, and offer flexible housing options in addition to transitional living.
- c. Establish a permanent supportive housing program for justice-involved individuals with co-occurring disorders (not limited to individuals on Probation – expand to serve other tiers)
  - d. Use Local Innovation Fund resources to support creating housing programs for justice-involved individuals with disabilities and on fixed income
  - e. To make all of this work, there needs to be expanded pools of housing. Are real estate transactions considered one-time expenses? Can properties be bought and converted within one fiscal year? These are interesting questions in light of both short-term and long-term housing needs.

We continue to highlight our concerns with utilizing one predominant housing model – transitional housing through sober living environments (SLE) as the primary source of housing for the reentry population.

**Mental Health** (Page 38 in the Agenda Packet Behavioral Health Dept),

[Our Recommendation # 5 CAB's recent Policy & Budget Recommendations to CCP for FY 2022/2023](#)

**INCREASED FUNDING TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR:**

- a. Providing transitional-bridge housing for reentry individuals leaving Residential programs or exiting the AODS system, and increasing outpatient services (not limited to individuals on Probation – expand to serve other tiers)
- b. Providing behavioral health training to CBO staff
- c. Have behavioral health staff stationed for AB 109 Community Programs co-locate at CBO locations
  - 1. We need more funding for mental health staff support. Could AODS or the health program assist in this area?
  - 2. Also, there needs to be expanded programs for mental health support, outpatient health services, and substance use support.
  - 3. These excess funds like these could be used to provide folks with one full year of high-quality health insurance (physical and mental health) so they can access the existing systems? Or support Health Navigators within the county.
  - 4. CAB further recommends that CCP engage in public discussions in areas where accessibility & coordination of resources can be improved.

Disabilities come in many forms & without having a clear understanding of how many individuals among this population are in need of these services is a missed opportunity to support re-integration.

**Employment Resources** (Page 64 in the Agenda Packet Work Force Development Board Contra Costa County)

*Our Recommendation # 6 CAB's recent Policy & Budget Recommendations to CCP for FY 2022/2023*

- a. We just can't say enough about this area. Outreach to appropriate county agencies who might be able to adapt for those previously justice involved individuals.
- b. Connecting with "Trades" where our returning citizens would have an opportunity for steady employment.
- c. Gainful employment is the bedrock for reducing recidivism.
- d. Equitable access to public sector jobs for those in reentry can lift families out of poverty & on the path to a stable life.
- e. CAB recommends that the county develop an initiative to expand employment opportunities for those in the reentry population as has been done in Alameda & San Francisco Counties.
- f. Finally, the county might want to consider streamlining opportunities for hiring & job placement for justice involved individuals.

**Pre-Release Programming** was a trending developmental need expressed by many of those who participated in the Programs & Services AB 109 Survey.

In this area, we would like to see:

- a. A centralized pilot Pre-release program and services for housing, as mentioned above. A wrap-around services, legal aid & help for individuals with barriers to gaining meaningful employment.
- b. In addition, we would like to see better access to documents such as ID's, SSC, and County aid programs before release.
- c. It's crucial to have these linkages to services prior to returning to society.
- d. Since we already have the Network and RSC which are the two county hubs, might it make sense to ask for additional funding for each of those organizations to spend on?
  1. Hotel vouchers
  2. Transportation or
  3. Where they feel there is the greatest need with participants accessing their services