



**Central California Women's Facility  
2016-2017  
Madera County Grand Jury  
Final Report 1617-03**

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**Introduction:**

On September 30, 2016, pursuant to Section 919(b) of the California Penal Code, the Madera County Grand Jury visited the Central California Women's Facility (CCWF), located at 23370 Road 22, Chowchilla, California. CCWF is part of the California State Prison system.

The Grand Jury was given a tour of the prison facility and was provided guided access to several areas of the facility. They were also allowed to visit and talk individually with several guards, supervisors and a number of inmates.

The Grand Jury made a follow-up visit on February 8, 2017 to clarify statistical information.

The Grand Jury thanks the warden and staff for their time, transparency and hospitality during the tour.

**Facts:**

1. CCWF is the orientation prison for all female inmates coming into the California prison system. The inmate orientation process requires between 65 and 95 days.
2. Inmate population capacity is 3,513. Inmate population on September 28, 2016 was 2,838.
3. CCWF has a death row unit. On September 28, 2016, this unit housed 21 inmates.
4. On September 28, 2016, the ethnic breakdown of the inmate population was: 855 White; 709 Hispanic; 798 Black and 465 other.
5. Inmate clothing is color-coded.
6. Vocational courses offered are: electronics, building maintenance, heating and air conditioning, computers, auto, carpentry, and office work. Educational programs offered are: GED, high school diploma and AA Degree. Rehabilitation programs include: Anger Management, Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Domestic Violence, and Parenting.
7. A formal procedure is available for inmates to file grievance petitions. Inmate grievances for the year of 2015 were 2,216. The most common grievance petitions were property loss and petty theft.
8. Several California agencies investigated the prison in 2016 in response to complaints. The agencies' investigations resulted in significant personnel changes at several levels of staffing, including senior staff.
9. Average guard staff overtime for 2015 was 12%. On September 30, 2016, the guard staff overtime was 14%.

10. Due to staff shortages and overtime, guards may be reassigned to fill staffing requirements. Several inmates voiced complaints regarding procedural inconsistencies due to these reassignments.
11. Some cell walls were observed to be dirty and defaced. Toothpaste residue used to adhere photos and notes to wall surfaces was evident. Graffiti was also visible.
12. Roof leaks in classrooms have caused visible water damage to ceiling tiles.
13. During the follow-up visit on February 8, 2017, the Grand Jury was provided documentation showing the staffing shortage was resolved and overtime reduced since the September 30, 2016 visit.

### **Findings:**

1. The color of inmate clothing indicates program status: orange for reception/orientation, blue for general population, green for outside work detail, and pink for program failure, e.g., refusal to work.
2. Procedural inconsistencies can result when a guard is reassigned to a different location.
3. Guard staff shortages and the resulting high overtime negatively impacted both staff and inmates. The increased staffing as of February 8, 2017 has reduced overtime.
4. Building maintenance and repairs are needed. Prison staff stated a lack of funding was responsible for the current state of roof disrepair.

### **Recommendations:**

*The Madera County Grand Jury recommends that:*

1. Guard staffing levels be maintained at the authorized strength.
2. Management and supervision ensure that policies and procedures are consistently enforced by guard staff.
3. CCWF pursue additional funding for facility repair.
4. The warden and staff be commended for their efforts to effect positive changes in prison operations.

### **Respondents:**

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