



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

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PRESS RELEASE

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INSTITUTION STAFF ASSIGNED TO SANTA MARIA JUVENILE HALL TESTS COVID-19 POSITIVE

(SANTA MARIA, CA) – Chief Probation Officer Tanja Heitman reported today that a Juvenile Institutions Officer assigned to the Santa Barbara County Probation Department's Santa Maria Juvenile Hall (SMJH) notified the Department they tested positive for COVID-19.

The Probation Department has a comprehensive COVID-19 Management Plan that addresses these situations. Employees and contractors are required to submit to temperature and health questionnaire screening prior to entering the facility and have been directed not to come to work ill. In this case, the staff had family members that tested positive, so they tested with their personal physician. The staff is currently asymptomatic and is self-isolating at home. The Department conducted contact tracing and determined one additional probation staff was potentially exposed and is pending testing. No youth or other staff had contact with the individual.

The Probation Department remains focused on being responsive to the mental and physical well-being of youth, staff and contractors during this challenging and stressful situation, and is taking steps to ensure their wellness. The Department is continuing to make decisions based on best practices in health and safety standards for the youth under their care, their officers, and the community. Everyone is encouraged to visit the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department website at <https://publichealthsb.org/> for more information on COVID-19. For more information about the County of Santa Barbara Probation Department, go to www.sbprobation.org.

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