



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

117 E. Carrillo St., • Santa Barbara, CA 93101

www.countyofsb.org/probation

(805) 882-3700 • FAX (805) 882-3767

PRESS RELEASE

News Media Contact:

Karyn Milligan

Public Information Officer

(805) 882-3653

kmillig@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

Probation No. 20-17

DATE: 11/05/2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SANTA MARIA JUVENILE HALL AWARDED ACCREDITATION FROM NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CORRECTIONAL HEALTH CARE

(SANTA MARIA, CA) – The Santa Maria Juvenile Hall (SMJH) has earned accreditation from the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC) by demonstrating compliance with NCCHC's Standards for Health Services in Juvenile Detention and Confinement Facilities. Accreditation recognizes SMJH's dedication to compliance with the most respected standards in correctional health care.

"This accreditation reflects the County's commitment to supporting the health and wellness of our local youth, especially during difficult times in their lives," noted 2nd District Board of Supervisor Chair Gregg Hart.

In September 2020, the SMJH underwent a rigorous on-site survey. An experienced physician and other medical experts in juvenile health care delivery surveyed the facility for compliance with standards on governance and administration; safety; personnel and training; health care services and support; juvenile care and treatment; health promotion; special needs and services; health records; and medical-legal issues.

"Obtaining accreditation by the NCCHC is a significant achievement and signifies the facility's medical operations meet the highest standards involving medical and related care for youth while in a custody setting," commented Chief Probation Officer Tanja Heitman. "It is indicative of the great work occurring in our department and the high priority we place on the care provided to our youth."

NCCHC has surveyed and accredited jails, prisons and juvenile detention and confinement facilities for 40 years. The NCCHC standards used in accreditation are developed with input from the nation's experts in correctional juvenile health care.

"In achieving NCCHC accreditation, the Santa Barbara County Probation Department has demonstrated its commitment to meeting constitutional requirements for health care for incarcerated youths," said National Commission CEO Deborah Ross, CCHP. "Accreditation is a voluntary process and we commend the Santa Barbara County Probation Department and SMJH for successfully undertaking this challenge to provide quality health care for this population. Providing appropriate health care to juveniles can change the direction of their lives so they become productive adults."

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