



Grant Parks *State Auditor*

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Los Angeles County

It Has Yet to Spend Tens of Millions of Dollars Intended to Provide Services to Realigned Youth

Background

In September 2020, the State began the process of eliminating the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation’s Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), and DJJ’s dissolution was complete in 2023. Before this change, DJJ operated facilities to house youth whom a court had determined had committed certain serious offenses. When the State began closing DJJ, it assigned to county probation departments the responsibility for the youth whom DJJ would have previously supervised (realigned youth). Starting in fiscal year 2021–22, the State has provided county probation departments with specific funding to supervise realigned youth. As the result of this realignment of responsibilities, Los Angeles County (Los Angeles) took steps to revise its approach toward youth justice through its *Youth Justice Reimagined* (YJR) initiative, and the county used this initiative to help plan for how the county would care for and supervise realigned youth.

Key Findings

- » Although Los Angeles’s spending of state funding for realigned youth is in accordance with state law, the county has spent only \$9.7 million of the \$88 million it has received.
 - A primary reason for this low spending is that Los Angeles has yet to begin delivering many of the services that it planned to provide. For example, the county assigned Probation the responsibility for providing 26 programs, services, or goods, but the department had only begun providing six.
 - The state laws that establish funding for realigned youth do not set an expiration for the funding if it is unspent, increasing the risk that Los Angeles may accumulate a sizeable amount of realignment block grant funding. The State could take action to ensure that it has necessary information regarding the county’s pace of spending in providing services to realigned youth.
- » Although Los Angeles has taken steps to prepare for the care and supervision of realigned youth through its YJR initiative, the county’s efforts to restructure its care model for these youth are still in progress.
 - In addition to the low level of spending, Los Angeles has implemented 12 of 27 recommendations from a December 2020 YJR report regarding the transition of realigned youth.

Key Recommendations

Legislature

To ensure that the State has access to information about realignment block grant spending that could provide accountability and inform future decisions about funding levels, the Legislature should amend state law to require counties to include in their annual realignment block grant plans the amount of realignment block grant funds spent by fiscal year and their total amount of unused block grant funding. The law should also require the State Office of Youth and Community Restoration to report this information to the relevant budget subcommittees of the Legislature.

Los Angeles

To ensure that it addresses the significant amount of unspent realignment block grant funds, the realignment subcommittee should include as part of its next annual spending plan a detailed approach to the timely and effective use of those unspent funds that it has already received and the additional funding it expects to receive each year from the State. The plan should include provisions for avoiding an excessive reserve, and it should consider the extent to which the county should use this funding to address not-yet-fully implemented recommendations from the December 2020 YJR report.

