



VENTURA COUNTY PROBATION AGENCY

Strategic Plan Refresh

2024-2025

TRANSFORMING AND EMPOWERING LIVES TOGETHER



Message

FROM THE DIRECTOR/CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER

Probation agency employees, key stakeholders, and community partners:

I am pleased to present Ventura County Probation Agency's Strategic Plan Refresh, 2024-2025: Transforming and Empowering Lives Together. This plan is aligned with the [County of Ventura's Strategic Plan 2024-2027](#) and is a testament to the agency's commitment to making our communities the safest in the nation.



Gina Johnson,
Chief Probation Officer

Our refreshed plan ensures we remain a modern, innovative, adaptable, and efficient agency. At the forefront, we have renewed our commitment to strengthening organizational development, investing in leadership and professional development, creating a roadmap for succession planning, and ensuring employee wellness and safety. This plan also reflects the values and principles that make Ventura County Probation Agency a place of excellence, accountable to those we serve and protect, and transformative in delivering services and interventions.

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge and extend my heartfelt appreciation to our employees for their commitment and contributions in developing this plan. Their professionalism and integrity in carrying out their duties in support of this plan are commendable. Our work will positively impact the lives of those we serve and our communities. I look forward to working with all of you to achieve great things.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gina Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gina Johnson, Chief Probation Officer
Ventura County Probation Agency

Agency Vision, Mission, and Values

Vision

TRANSFORMING AND EMPOWERING LIVES TO BUILD A STRONG COMMUNITY.

Mission

TO PROMOTE EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS, INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY, AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING.

Values

■ **COLLABORATION**

We actively build networks of support and strive to create shared solutions on issues impacting our communities.

■ **DEDICATION**

We demonstrate the highest level of integrity, professionalism, and compassion as a committed workforce.

■ **EMPOWERMENT**

We connect people to resources and opportunities to encourage change and personal responsibility, which are cornerstones to building safe communities.

■ **EXCELLENCE**

We are innovative, adaptable, and determined to continuously improve.

■ **RESPECT**

We believe in a positive, empowering, and supportive work environment that encourages the sharing of diverse opinions.

■ **SUPPORT**

We focus on restoration by providing access to trauma-informed services and facilitating healing.

Overview:

Strategic Goals

Goal One

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Programs, services, and practices that encourage positive life changes and support community well-being

Goal Two

DATA

A data-driven and strategic agency that is continually improving

Goal Three

COMMUNICATION

Transparent communication within the agency, with stakeholders, and with the community at large

Goal Four

WORKFORCE

An inspired and diverse workforce, united in purpose, and dedicated to excellence

Goal Five

LEADERSHIP

A culture where leaders inspire, engage, mentor, and celebrate the personal and professional development of staff

Implementation

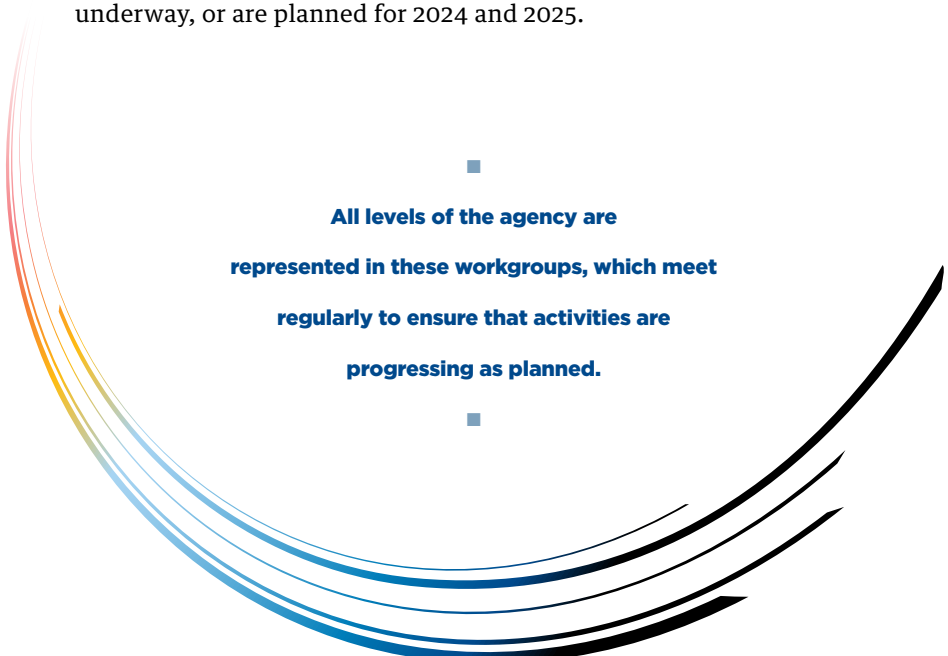
STEPS AND ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESS

The Ventura County Probation Agency is actively working on implementing activities to support its strategic plan.

The agency's Executive Committee oversees five goal teams, each representing one of the strategic plan's goals. The Co-Chairs of each goal team are members of the Executive Committee. The goal teams supervise various workgroups, with agency supervisors leading them. All levels of the agency are represented in these workgroups, which meet regularly to ensure that activities are progressing as planned.

The Executive Committee reviews the strategic plan's goals monthly, tracks progress, discusses challenges, and proposes solutions. The Committee also reviews the workgroup recommendations and makes the final decisions to enable the workgroups to continue their implementation. Through this coordinated process, the strategic plan remains at the forefront, guiding the agency to fulfill its mission.

This updated strategic plan outlines the activities that have been completed, are underway, or are planned for 2024 and 2025.



■
**All levels of the agency are
represented in these workgroups, which meet
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progressing as planned.**
■



Goal One

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Programs, services, and practices that encourage positive life changes and support community well-being

OBJECTIVE One Implement protocols to ensure fidelity to evidence-based practices that promote client success and community safety

ACTIVITIES

UNDERWAY

- Create a differential supervision plan utilizing risk levels to determine supervision level and case assignment
- Establish an Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) Steering Committee to provide broad oversight of agency EBP efforts

2024

- Examine the use of the ORAS and OYAS risk and needs assessment tools
- Investigate available booking screening tools to replace the Detention Risk Assessment Instrument
- Define core correctional practices and provide coaching to Deputy Probation Officers on these practices
- Develop an EBP messaging plan

2025

- Create a comprehensive, trauma-centered plan to address victim needs

OBJECTIVE TWO Incorporate families and other social supports in clients' care and treatment plans

ACTIVITIES

COMPLETED

- Issue an RFP/RFI for youth/parenting programs at the juvenile facilities
- Expand the use of youth advocates
- Improve the use of assessment to improve youth care
- Expand child and family team meetings for all juvenile facilities youth

2024

- Effectively use incentives to improve client outcomes by seeking client input, developing policies and procedures on the use of incentives, and providing training
- Provide support system training for probation staff
- Pilot probation orientation sessions for family members
- Issue an RFI for adult mentorship services for adults

2025

- Conduct multilingual parent satisfaction pre/post-surveys about their youth's care
- Research and potentially implement mobile outreach efforts with Ventura County Behavioral Health, Human Services Agency, and Public Health to increase client awareness of and participation in community-based services

OBJECTIVE Three Ensure the effective use of high-quality risk reduction programs

ACTIVITIES

COMPLETED

- Identify a list of evidence-based/informed programs

UNDERWAY

- Develop service delivery checklists for processing RFPs
- Explore contracting for routine program fidelity assessments and issue an RFI/RFP if feasible



A data-driven and strategic agency that is continuously improving

OBJECTIVE One Collect accurate data to measure the impact of agency performance and progress toward achieving VCPA's vision

ACTIVITIES

COMPLETED

- Adopt a plan to mitigate the need for person merges

2024

- Create a plan to train and coach staff on data entry in the Ventura County Integrated Justice Information System (VCIJIS)

2025

- Automate monthly workload stats for VCIJIS 2.0

OBJECTIVE Two Enhance agency capacity to analyze data, create dashboards, and report outcomes

ACTIVITIES

COMPLETED

- Clarify data collection roles to identify and allocate resources needed to maintain access to timely data retrieval, such as expanding the Information Technology or Research Units

UNDERWAY

- Identify needed data, its use, and collection processes
- Launch the new VCIJIS 2.0 case management system
- Develop internal and external public dashboards

2024

- Develop a systematic data clean-up plan

OBJECTIVE Three Use data to establish budget priorities and allocate resources effectively

ACTIVITIES

2024

- Develop questions and resources needed to make informed decisions about budget allocations

OBJECTIVE Four Implement a comprehensive continuous improvement process

ACTIVITIES

2025

- Create a continuous improvement plan and structure, and adopt and support new technologies to advance the agency’s goals and achieve its mission



Goal Three

COMMUNICATION

Transparent communication within the agency, with stakeholders, and with the community at large

OBJECTIVE One Strengthen relationships with the community and stakeholders by enhancing two-way communication

ACTIVITIES

UNDERWAY

- Develop an annual agency report template, issue a digital annual report beginning October 2024, and create an infographic of the report
- Create a plan to engage the community and other stakeholders through live events, social media, and other activities
- Increase agency visibility and awareness by involving staff in community events and recruitment efforts posted on an agency group calendar
- Redesign the agency's internal and external websites
- Implement a plan to promote the agency's vision, mission, and values, including exploring working with a branding expert
- Create guidelines for all Executive staff to visit their worksites quarterly and engage in meaningful interactions with staff

OBJECTIVE Two Expand the agency's communications infrastructure

ACTIVITIES

COMPLETED

- Explore expanding the role of the Public Information Officer and/or hiring a Communication Manager

OBJECTIVE Three Address structural barriers to effective communication at the Juvenile Facilities

ACTIVITIES

UNDERWAY

- Create a workgroup to utilize the Juvenile Facilities message boards more effectively and expand agencywide use by 2025
- Establish procedures for Community Supervision Officer (CSO) IIIs to conduct shift briefings and allow for staff to check emails
- Establish biannual and virtual Juvenile Facilities townhall meetings
- Continuously evaluate communication barriers and ways to address them

2024

- Create guidelines for all Juvenile Facilities leadership, including CSO IIIs, SDPOs, and DMs, to visit the units regularly, engage in meaningful interactions with staff, and hold “office hours” for staff



Goal Four

WORKFORCE

An inspired and diverse workforce, united in purpose, and dedicated to excellence

OBJECTIVE One Recruit, recognize, and retain talented and motivated staff

ACTIVITIES

COMPLETED

- Acknowledge employee award nominees in the newsletters and awards program
- Have the Professional Standards Unit assess the background process and improve it
- Institute a college internship program with probation

UNDERWAY

- Form a workgroup to develop a comprehensive recruitment plan
- Form a workgroup to develop a comprehensive retention plan
- Improve the performance review process to add value and increase consistency in rating performance

2024

- Create an educational career component for local high schools to share information about careers in probation
- Improve the student internship program (Summer at the County)

OBJECTIVE TWO Cultivate a supportive workplace that honors diversity and fosters respect, unity, engagement, safety, and well-being

ACTIVITIES

COMPLETED

- Establish a Safety and Wellness program

OBJECTIVE Three Establish pathways for advancement, continuous learning, and professional development

ACTIVITIES

COMPLETED

- Disseminate to all staff approved training and conference opportunities

UNDERWAY

- Create a shared Human Resources document with information to support promotional activities
- Refine the agency’s training plan so the agency is overseeing and prioritizing training and staff needs

OBJECTIVE Four Build and sustain high-performing, collaborative teams

ACTIVITIES

COMPLETED

- Include a “Shout Out” section in the agency newsletter
- Hire a full-time agency project manager to oversee agency projects

UNDERWAY

- Create a Scope of Authority workgroup to develop guidelines for all supervisory positions
- Evaluate the agency’s reassignment policy and recommend any needed improvements
- Expand the Service Excellence Program and create a standardized process for the program
- Create an online course/video of agency job functions

2024

- Adopt standardized project management practices, create a manual, and train employees

A culture where leaders inspire, engage, mentor, and celebrate the personal and professional development of staff

OBJECTIVE One Cultivate and maintain a thriving, healthy organizational culture

ACTIVITIES

UNDERWAY

- Administer an annual survey to gauge employees' perceptions of leadership, include text boxes for staff to offer improvement recommendations, and develop and implement a plan for following up on survey results

2024

- Administer an annual survey to measure staff satisfaction with agency culture, include text boxes for staff to offer improvement recommendations, and develop and implement a plan for following up on survey results
- Conduct focus groups to gather staff's perceptions about the agency culture and to identify strategies for improvement

OBJECTIVE TWO Ensure agency policies and personnel practices are clear and consistently carried out

ACTIVITIES

COMPLETED

- Assess the Policy and Legislative Division's structure
- Reinforce that all staff review policies within ten days
- Create a Policies and Procedures Review Committee
- Update agency meeting guidelines

OBJECTIVE Three Equip and empower staff at all levels within the agency to fully and independently exercise their responsibilities

ACTIVITIES

UNDERWAY

- Convene a workgroup to create a desktop guide template to be used to describe key responsibilities and spheres of authority for each position
- Include questions about staff empowerment in the survey and text boxes for staff to offer improvement recommendations

OBJECTIVE Four Develop and implement a strategic succession plan to ensure continuity of strong leadership

ACTIVITIES

2024

- Create a Succession Planning Workgroup to develop and implement an action plan
- Create a formal mentoring program with two tracks: one for new hires and one for ongoing mentorship and professional development
- Implement leadership development training for current leaders in all classifications



VENTURA COUNTY PROBATION AGENCY





<https://venturaprobatation.org>