

SB 823 – DJJ REALIGNMENT

As a valued DJJ partner, I wanted to update you on the continuing changes to the operation of the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). On September 30, 2020, Governor Newsom signed SB 823, which, among other things, will set us on the path for the eventual closure of DJJ and transition of youth offenders to local county jurisdictions.

Let me assure you that the change is not immediate, and facilities will remain staffed for the foreseeable future. In fact, there is not a definitive closure date at this time. However, SB 823 does set some critical items into motion, including the suspension of intake of new commitments to DJJ starting on July 1, 2021, with a few exceptions, as well as the creation of an Office of Youth and Community Restoration under the California Health and Human Services Agency. This Office will oversee the gradual transition of youth offenders from state to local custody over the next several years.

In the coming weeks and months, we will be sharing more detailed information with the staff, youth, families and community partners impacted to ensure collaboration, transparency and open communication..

As the DJJ Director, please know how appreciative I am of the work that you do to care and provide valued services for some of California's most challenged youth. Your ability to continue doing that, even as we work through complex challenges resulting from COVID-19 and realignment ahead, makes me even more grateful for your continuing dedication, flexibility and collaborations for service delivery.

As we reflect on our past work and look toward future opportunities, rest assured that you are valued and appreciated partners, and have made a real difference for the youth in our care. Please keep up the good work as we continue to fulfill our mission.

Signed by

HEATHER BOWLDS

Director (A)