



County Administrator's Office

Craig L. Pedro
County Administrator

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FILED

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Superior Court of California
County of Tuolumne

By: *Janet Russo* Clerk

The Honorable Eric L. DuTemple
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
41 W. Yaney Street
Sonora, CA 95370

Re: Response to Grand Jury Report - Office of Revenue and Recovery

Dear Judge DuTemple:

The following is offered in response to the 2011-12 Grand Jury Report as it pertains to the County's Office of Revenue Recovery.

Grand Jury Findings

F1 It appears to the Jury that the ORR is a well-run, efficient county department. The ORR is operating with a bare minimum staff. The group uses what they have to maximize revenue.

Response: Agree.

F2 The employees spend the majority of their time trying to collect debts from people with limited or no assets. This job requires judgment, tact, and compassion. As the ORR tries to collect debts or arrange payment schedules, they are often in competition with other collection agencies with the same goal. The Jury was surprised to find that the Collection Officers were frequently hampered by the lack of a social security number for debtors and the fact that they cannot run a credit report without written permission, which would be a valuable skip trace tool.

Response: Agree.

F3 The ORR Collection Officers and department head are supported by an Office Assistant and an Accounting Clerk. Due to budgetary constraints, the Accounting Clerk's hours in this department have been reduced from full-time to part-time. The reduced availability of the Accounting Clerk has resulted in Collection Officers having to spend time on data entry and other tasks originally handled by the clerk.

Response: Agree.

...serving the Board of Supervisors, departments, and the community as good stewards of the County's fiscal and human resources through collaborative, professional and ethical leadership.

- F4** The budgeted amount for employee salaries (including paid time off) is \$239,687. In addition to the \$239,687 salary amount, \$195,023 is budgeted for employee benefits. Stated differently, benefits (not including paid time off) cost the County an additional 81% of the salary amount. A separate Grand Jury report will explore the question of county government salary to benefits ratio, including a comparison to the private sector.

Response: Agree.

Grand Jury Recommendations

- R3** Considerable time is spent entering court accounts into ORR computers. In the past, the ORR and the County Information Technology Departments have looked into creating an interface between the Court's computer software and the ORR's computer software. Although technical and cost issues have never allowed this project to be accomplished, the Jury recommends that the issue be watched going forward. When either entity (the Court or ORR) commissions a new software system, this interface should be thoroughly explored.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented. Since neither the Courts nor ORR have immediate plans to replace their computer systems, IT staff will initiate a process to complete the following alternate project before the end of FY 2012-13:

- ***Submit a request for data extraction to the Courts for complete case and account distribution information;***
- ***Work with the extracted data to properly import the data file to the County collections system;***
- ***Work with ORR staff to verify data; and***
- ***Work with Court staff to automate the transfer process.***

Staff will seek a more elegant interface at such time ORR or the Courts pursue replacement of their current system(s).

- R4** The annual furlough of three weeks has had a negative impact on the ORR operations. As previously mentioned, time is of the essence in executing these collections. Consideration should be given to eliminating or spreading furlough days out over the year or, at least, reducing large blocks near the Christmas holidays to lessen their impact on collections.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be starting in FY 2013-14 when the bargained 15 furlough days will come to and end.

R5 It should be recognized that the ORR staff deals with a variety of individuals, some in stressful situations. The Jury recommends that ORR management continue to solicit staff input on ways to maintain a safe and comfortable atmosphere in which to interview clients.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be in FY 2012-13 through a meeting amongst ORR, Human Resources and Facilities Management staff to consider possible changes to ORR's client interview area.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the above findings and recommendations. Please feel free to contact the County Administrator Craig Pedro should you have any questions regarding same.

Yours truly,



CRAIG L. PEDRO
County Administrator



DANIEL RICHARDSON
Deputy County Administrator



BILL MORSE
HR/Risk Manager

Cc: Board of Supervisors
Del Hodges, Treasurer/Tax Collector