

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT

PROBATION

Service To
The Community



PC 67
18738

PROBATION

Few people have much understanding of probation and of the importance of probation in the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

Although it may be the least understood of the professions, probation is important to every citizen. On the basis of the information provided in the probation officer's report, offenders are selected for community treatment and probation supervision. For those selected, guidance and supervision by the probation officer helps minimize any threat which they might represent to the community or themselves.

THE DEPUTY PROBATION OFFICER (DPO)

As an "arm of the court," the probation officer is required to uphold the law, but that does not make him a policeman. He is concerned with helping those who come under his supervision to live in the community without committing crimes and without threat to society.

The probation officer's main jobs — investigation and supervision — are, for most cases, carried out by officers assigned to one of the twenty field services offices. At times, he or she may seem like a mother, father, brother, buddy or sister. He becomes an important person to the probationer and his family. He works with both adults and juveniles.

The probation officer may supervise as many as 75 juvenile or 150 adult probationers. In order to protect the community and the individual, he must obtain information about his client's background and personal history and evaluate family relationships and records of employment, military service, medical history and education.

In order to provide information to the courts, he must be able to communicate with the accused, with parents, police, attorneys, clergymen, victims, witnesses, psychiatrists and teachers, and then submit an evaluation and recommendation to assist the judge in making a suitable disposition. The investigating Deputy Probation Officer usually has about 20 cases per month coming up in court.

The probation officer finds foster homes and places children in private institutions. He supervises youths in camps, juvenile halls and special schools. The Deputy Probation Officer goes to court as a court officer in both adult and juvenile cases and files petitions for juvenile cases the way the district attorney files complaints in adult cases. The probation officer supervises male adults on the Work Furlough Program out of the Sheriff's facilities and directs the service of local volunteers in the rehabilitation of offenders within the community.



The probation officer's role is a positive one. His main objective is to rehabilitate the offender who may then contribute something of value to the community.

Probation is not punishment. It is a treatment process that features the assistance and guidance of a trained counselor — the Deputy Probation Officer.

Probation began in Massachusetts in 1841. California adopted both a Juvenile Court law and an Adult Probation law in 1903. The Federal Government adopted probation in 1925.

If it weren't for probation, it would cost approximately \$1 billion to institutionalize the 60,000 probationers under the supervision of the Los Angeles County Probation Department and an additional \$250 million per year for maintenance and operation of these institutions, while the Los Angeles County Probation Department's budget is only \$40 million per year for everything. Probationers also pay back nearly \$4 million a year in fines and restitution.

THE PROBATION DEPARTMENT

The Los Angeles County Probation Department is among the national leaders in the correctional field. More than ½ of the nearly 4000 employees of this department are engaged in some professional aspect of probation work as deputies and supervisors. Approximately 20,000 juveniles and 40,000 adults are under the guidance, supervision or care of these employees who work in 36 field service offices and suboffices, three juvenile detention facilities, 11 boys' camps, two girls' schools, seven community day care centers and seven camp aftercare units.

ORGANIZATION

The department, under the overall direction of the Board of Supervisors, serves the most populous county in the world and has seven operating divisions. Division Chiefs of the three Field Service Divisions report to an Assistant Chief Probation Officer. The department's juvenile facilities are administered as two separate divisions: Juvenile Detention, and Camps & Schools.

The other divisions are the Administrative Services Division, headed by the Administrative Deputy, and the Medical Division, administered by the Medical Director.

Two Assistant Chief Probation Officers, the Administrative Deputy and the Director of the Medical Division report directly to the Chief Probation Officer. Also reporting directly to him are the Employee Relations Officer and the Director of the Community Relations and Communications Office.

DETENTION

Two juvenile halls provide temporary care for juveniles who are awaiting court hearings for detention or disposition or who are awaiting placement out of their own homes. The children commonly remain in this setting from three days to several weeks, depending upon court action and upon availability of placements.



During their detention, delinquents receive individual and group counseling, medical, psychological and psychiatric services. In addition, some children participate in an intensive family treatment program involving the entire family unit through weekly conferences. They attend school, conducted at the juvenile halls by a special division of the County Superintendent of Schools. They also participate in constructive work programs, recreation, religious services and group activities.

MacLaren Hall provides protective custody and care for dependent-neglected children. This facility has the capacity to provide for 125 youngsters ranging in age from infancy up to 18 years old. Individual and group counseling, medical, psychiatric and psychological services are also provided.

CAMPS AND SCHOOLS

The 9 camps for 13 to 18-year-old boys have varied programs designed to meet the needs of individual youths. Besides programs in welding, forestry, culinary arts, landscaping, and automotive skills, the



boys participate in a school program and individual and peer-group counseling. Community groups sponsor activities including tutoring services, handicraft clubs, and athletic, cultural and recreational activities.

The *Camp Aftercare Program* is designed to give help to young men who have graduated from probation camps and are returning to the community. While in camp, a boy has the opportunity to redirect and stabilize his behavior, to develop skills for use in the community and to establish healthy personal relationships.

As the boy leaves the camp environment, he is most in need of intensive support and assistance in making a healthy adjustment to family, school, job and community. This support is provided by the aftercare deputy probation officer who has become acquainted with the boy and his family while the youth was still in camp.

The *Las Palmas School and Lathrop Hall* are two placement facilities for girls operated by the department. Las Palmas is a residential treatment facility for 100 delinquent girls aged 13 to 18. The average stay is approximately six months, with close follow-up by experienced deputy probation officers who possess Master of Social Work degrees to assist girls in readjustments to the community.

While at *Las Palmas* the girls live in cottages and participate in intensive psychiatric group sessions as well as individual counseling. Every effort is made to include family members in family treatment and group family therapy.

Lathrop Hall is a short-term, 90-day facility providing family counseling. The overall program is designed to help the girls return to the community as soon as possible.

The *Community Day Centers'* primary purpose is to provide an intensive education and treatment program for 12 to 16-year-old boys and girls on probation who would otherwise require placement in a camp or institution. The youths attend special remedial schools and participate in rehabilitative activities during the day while continuing to live at home. Family counseling is an important part of the *Community Day Center* program.

SPECIALIZED OFFICES AND PROGRAMS

The *Work Furlough* program concentrates on converting inactive jail time into a useful, supervised experience for qualified inmates. In this specialized program, the inmate may be released during specified hours for regular employment, vocational training, or school attendance. Upon release from jail, a furlougee is able to continue his career without loss of employment status due to an interruption in his work history. Additionally, welfare aid to families is saved because the inmate's job is saved or in some instances unemployed inmates are placed on jobs and supervised while still technically in custody.

In the *Narcotic Treatment Control Unit*, supervision of persons on probation focuses on a one-to-one relationship between the deputy and probationer which is supportive in nature and which helps the probationer deal with his drug problem. It is oriented towards setting and maintaining realistic limits on behavior through confrontation techniques.

New Careers in the Probation Department are provided by three programs designed to bring employment to both teenagers and adults by giving on-the-job training and work experience. The *Concentrated Employment Program (CEP)*, the *Mexican American Opportunities Foundation (MAOF)* and the *Neighborhood Youth Corps (NYC)* help local residents become self-sufficient by preparing them for the labor force. Two of these programs (*CEP & MAOF*) offer a direct avenue of advancement to employment as a Community Worker for the County of Los Angeles.

The Probation Department programs which rely heavily on Community Workers to provide extra services to probationers and their families are *RODEO (Reduction of Delinquency through Expansion of Opportunity)* and *COYOP (Community Oriented Youthful Offender program)*. The professional deputy probation officer and the Community Worker, who is a local resident, work as a team to open up the community's opportunity structure to juvenile and adult law violators. Intensive probation services are provided including both group and individual counseling, tutoring, workshops, and educational and recreational field trips.



Volunteers In Service To Offenders (VISTO) is another community-based program. *VISTO's* main goal is to increase community involvement and responsibility for solving problems of crime and delinquency. It opens doors to employment and provides education, training, recreation and other opportunities for both adult and juvenile probationers. Neighborhood volunteers are trained to work with probationers and act as tutors or "big brothers" and "big sisters." *VISTO* volunteers also locate jobs, teach arts and crafts, help with child care and provide transportation.

The *Volunteers In Probation Service* program (*VIPS*) is designed to assist primarily young offenders within the community. These offenders are referred by the Municipal Courts for friendly and helpful assistance by interested volunteers who are trained by deputy probation officers. Acting as stable and resourceful influences, the volunteers help probationers find a job, go back to school, and engage in suitable pursuits in the community.

The *Harambee* Area Office provides a complete variety of probation services to the County's model neighborhoods in South Central Los Angeles, *Harambee*, which means "Let's all work together" in Swahili, provides intensive services to clients and to the community, using the results of positive programs developed in the *RODEO* program, extensive use of community workers and volunteers, and maximum utilization of community resources.

PROBATION

. . . SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

PROBATION . . . as established by state and local laws, is services to children, adults and families, and to all the courts of the County . . .

is a process to protect the community from crime and delinquency . . .

is individualized study and treatment of the offender, as opposed to retaliatory punishment . . .

is a treatment process that features the assistance and guidance of a trained professional deputy probation officer . . .

THE PROBATION DEPARTMENT . . .

is among the national leaders in the field of corrections, with more than half of its 4,000 employees employed as professional deputy probation officers . . .

supervises about 15,000 juveniles and 55,000 adults who are under the supervision, guidance or care of its professional staff . . .

provides service through more than 80 work locations throughout the County -- area offices, detention facilities, boys' camps, girls' schools and community day care centers . . .

THE DEPUTY PROBATION OFFICER . . .

gathers facts about the offense or incident and about the individual and reports them to the court . . .

evaluates the individual and the situation and recommends to the court the best plan of treatment and whether probation should be granted . . .

plans with the client a course of action that will resolve future conflict in an acceptable way . . .

helps the client to follow through on the treatment plan and the conditions of probation . . .

recommends termination of probation whenever it is no longer needed nor appropriate . . .

VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE TO OTHERS (VISTO) . . .

the people in this County are involved in rehabilitation of offenders . . .

volunteers demonstrate to probationers that people in the community care about them -- and care enough to be of help . . .

volunteers are all kinds of people, trained to work with adults and juveniles and matched with individuals who need them and what they have to offer . . .

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO BECOME A VISTO VOLUNTEER,
TELEPHONE 923-7721, extension 2853

Los Angeles County Probation Department
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