

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC DEFENDER

MANOHAR RAJU – PUBLIC DEFENDER
MATT GONZALEZ – CHIEF ATTORNEY



March 13, 2020

Chief Juvenile Probation Officer Katherine Miller
Juvenile Justice Center
375 Woodside Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94127

Re: Public health crisis measures for youth detained in the juvenile detention facilities

Dear Chief Miller,

On behalf of my office's clients now in your custody and the broader community, I am searching for all possible avenues to enable the release of all youth confined in San Francisco's juvenile detention facility who are eligible for release, with a particular focus on those youth who are particularly young, suffer from disabilities such as asthma, or are immunocompromised, and therefore at higher risk for contracting and spreading COVID-19.

The Juvenile Court is required to not only protect public safety, but to provide for the best interests of the minors (WIC 202). During the COVID-19 crisis, we know that any confined individual adult or juvenile is at great risk for contracting the virus or in the case of youth, being carriers of the virus and pose contagion to staff, attorneys, multigenerational visitors, and other detainees.

One measure you could take immediately is to begin assessing all detained youth for release. If they are awaiting placement, please expedite the release of the youth to their placement or to SF Catholic Charities Boys and Girls Shelter. If youth are on warrants, please clear the warrants and place a moratorium on non-violent violations, technical violations such as home detention violations, motions to revoke or AWOL's, and allow youth to appear in court, or by phone, without having to surrender to clear warrants. I urge you to also consider diversion to CARC or Make it Right in lieu of filing petitions to detain.

Given the public health emergency we are facing, I ask that you exercise your powers as broadly as possible to prevent the detention of youth and to minimize exposure of multigenerational family members, staff and justice partners to possible contagion during this crisis. We should release these youth now before they become exposed, which would prevent many of them from being able to return to their homes, especially if they live with the elderly or immunocompromised people.

Adult Division - HOJ
555 Seventh Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
P: 415.553.1671
F: 415.553.9810
www.sfpUBLICDEFENDER.org

Juvenile Division - YGC
375 Woodside Avenue, Rm. 118
San Francisco, CA 94127
P: 415.753.7601
F: 415.566.3030

Juvenile Division - JJC
258A Laguna Honda Blvd.
San Francisco, CA 94116
P: 415.753.8174
F: 415.753.8175

Clean Slate
P: 415.553.9337
www.sfpUBLICDEFENDER.org/services

Community Justice Center
P: 415.202.2832
F: 415.563.8506

Bayview Magic
P: 415.558.2428
www.bayviewmagic.org

MoMagic
P: 415.567.0400
www.momagic.org

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. I look forward to a speedy response given the circumstances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mano Raju". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mano" and last name "Raju" clearly distinguishable.

Mano Raju
Public Defender

Cc: Mayor London Breed
District Attorney Chesa Boudin
DPH Director Dr. Grant Colfax
Juvenile and Family Court Presiding Judge Monica Wiley
San Francisco Superior Court Presiding Judge Samuel Feng