



SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION FOR INSTITUTIONAL INSPECTIONS

2009 Annual Report



"Enriching Lives through Effective and Caring Service"

Los Angeles County Strategic Plan

The Los Angeles County Vision is to improve the quality of life in Los Angeles County by providing responsive, efficient and high quality public services that promote the self sufficiency, well being, and prosperity of individuals, families, businesses and communities. The County Mission is to “Enrich Lives through Effective and Caring Service”.

Sybil Brand Commission activities represent goal number five of the Los Angeles County Strategic Plan Goals:

To improve the well being of children and families in Los Angeles County as measured by the achievements in the five outcome areas adopted by the Board: good health; economic well-being; safety and survival; social emotional well-being; and education/workforce readiness.

The Los Angeles County Sybil Brand Commission webpage can be accessed 24 hours a day by logging onto: <http://sbc.lacounty.gov>



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SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION FOR INSTITUTIONAL INSPECTIONS

Authority

The Sybil Brand Commission for Institutional Inspections is authorized by Chapter 2.82 of the Los Angeles County Code and consists of ten members; two from each Supervisorial District, with the Sheriff and the Chief Probation Officer serving as ex officio members. The Sybil Brand Commission meets each Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. in Room 372 of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street in Los Angeles.

The following Commissioners currently serve on the Sybil Brand Commission.



Eleanor R. Montaño
Chairperson
4th District



Frank S. Bacio
Vice Chairperson
1st District



Carl E. Moore
2nd District



Rita Hall
2nd District



Barbara Bigby
5th District



Anne Hill
5th District



John A. Hammargren
4th District

Duties

The members of the Sybil Brand Commission, or a committee of the Commission, is required to visit and inspect each jail, lockup, probation and correctional facility in the County at least once each year. They may conduct additional inspections more often as the Commission may deem necessary or as directed by a judge of the Superior Court. The Commission shall examine every department of each institution visited to ascertain its condition as to effective and economical administration, cleanliness, discipline and comfort of its inmates. In addition, the Commission may call for and inspect the permit and register of such jail and lockup and may see and visit all persons kept in such jail and lockup, whether the institution is located within or without the corporate limits of any incorporated city. The Commission may also inspect Group Home Facilities.

2009 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In calendar year 2009, the Sybil Brand Commission (SBC) accomplished the following objectives:

Reports

- Conducted 287 site inspections.
 - Number of Group Homes Inspected: 228
 - Number of Sheriff's Department/Court Lock-Up Facilities/Probation Camps Inspected: 59
- Traveled an estimated annual mileage of 23,726 miles to conduct site inspections.
- Presided over 46 meetings where reports on Institutional Inspections were discussed.
- Presided over 12 Business Meetings with Department representatives from the Department of Auditor-Controller, Department of Children and Family Services, State of California Community Care Licensing Division, Internal Services Department, Department of Mental Health, Probation Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to identify, discuss and find solutions to problems that arise at various facilities.
- Issued 4 letters to various group homes, law enforcement and County agencies as it relates to Commission activities.
- Issued 2 letters of commendation, one to the Sheriff for their employee's responsiveness, assistance and participation during site inspections, and a

second to former Commissioner Vito Cannella for long-term exemplary service on the Commission.

- Group home inspections improved the quality of life for foster children, and with the collaboration of the Department of Children and Family Services, Community Care Licensing, and the Probation Department, the Commission successfully advocated the closure of two group homes that were identified as egregious cases of non compliance.

Donations

The Sybil Brand Commission maintains a savings account that is funded strictly through the monthly dues that have been agreed upon and paid by each commissioner. These funds are used exclusively for donation and/or support programs and events associated with Sybil Brand Commission activities. Each transaction is voted on and approved by a majority vote of the Commission members.

In 2009, the Sybil Brand Commission made the following donations:

- The Commission has initiated a new target population (DCFS and LA Unified foster children) to renew the Scholarship Awards Program in 2010
- The Tierra Del Sol Foundation - \$100

SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

During the 2009 calendar year, the Sybil Brand Commission was addressed by invited guests from various liaison departments throughout Los Angeles County.

In April 2009, Commissioner Vito Cannella retired from the Sybil Brand Commission and in honor of his dedicated service Supervisor Antonovich, his appointing Supervisor, presented him a Board of Supervisors' Scroll for his 25 years of service to the Commission.



Fifth District Supervisor Michael Antonovich &
Commissioner Vito Cannella
Background: Commissioner Moore

On April 15, 2009 the Commission met with Department Representatives to receive updates on group homes and probation facilities.



Commander Margaret Ruiz, Sheriff, Barbara Butler, DCFS, & Elizabeth Howard, DCFS

On May 20, 2009, a Business Meeting with Department Representatives included Commander Ruiz and Captain Asmus, LASD, who reported on jail facility assaults, injuries and complaints, furloughs implemented in the courts, and temporary holding cells to solve the issue of overcrowding.



Commander Ruiz & Captain Asmus, LASD

On June 17, 2009, the Commission's Business Meeting included a presentation by ISD and Community Care Licensing representatives on pertinent updates of concern.



Left: Allan Henry, CCL; Commissioner Hall; Vice-Chairperson Bacio; Andrew Sevrin, Staff; & Chairperson Montaño **Right:** Paul McIver, DMH; & Howard Wong, Probation



Michael Varela, Probation; Terrence McClain and Allan Henry, CCL; Commissioners Hall & Vice Chairperson Bacio



On December 9, 2009 the Commission hosted its Annual Holiday Gathering attended by Commissioners, Staff and Department Representatives.



Cassandra Youngblood, Auditor-Controller & Chairperson Montaño

On December 16, 2009 the Commission was visited by Robert Taylor, Chief Probation Officer, who provided the Commission with copies of the Los Angeles County Probation Department's Strategic Plan, and reported on the budget and new programs that benefit youth.



Left: Francesea Jones, Probation; Michael Varela, Probation; Allan Henry, CCL; Robert Taylor, Chief Probation Officer; Commissioner Hall & Vice-Chairperson Bacio



Robert Taylor, Chief Probation Officer

The Sybil Brand Commission will continue to encourage the Department of Auditor-Controller, Department of Children and Family Services, State of California Community Care Licensing Division, Internal Services Department, Department of Mental Health, Probation Department and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to work together and seek the assistance of the Commission to collaborate and help each Department achieve their independent goals.

Training and Conferences Attended

As mandated by the Board of Supervisors, the Commission works closely with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Department of Children and Family Services, Probation Department, Department of Mental Health and the Department of Auditor-Controller to monitor and ensure the safety and well-being of juveniles placed in County Group Homes and Juvenile Probation Camps. Current information on the ever-changing problems faced by today's out-of-home care youth, both psychologically and socially, is essential to the understanding and support of these children.

During the 2009 calendar year, the Sybil Brand Commission attended the following training and conference:

- May 21, 2009, ***Commissioners' Leadership Conference*** "Moving Ahead In Tough Times" where attendees from County Departments and Commissions discussed challenges ahead, including marshalling internal/external resources to provide needed services to constituents and the public.

- June 22, 2009, **Assembly Bill 1234 Ethics Web based Training**
- September 24, 2009, **Brown Act Workshop.**

Professional Support

The Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors, Commission Services Division provides administrative support and coordination for the many activities of the Commission. Staff members carry out day-to-day operations, coordinate activities, and respond to the requirements and direction of the Commission. The primary support given is to publish notices, prepare agendas; record minutes, and maintain official records. The Executive Office also advises the Commission on County Commission procedures and regulations.



Sandra Barbee, Chief
Commission Services Division



Lee Millen, HBS
Commission Services Division



Nyla Jefferson, SBS
Commission Services Division

Sybil Brand Commission 2009



Update on Goals for 2009

In our continuing effort to monitor and ensure the effective and economical administration, cleanliness, discipline and comfort of inmates and the care of group home clients, the Commission has identified and accomplished the following goals for 2009:

- At Chairperson Montano's recommendation, the Commission approved inspection site assignments from Commissioners' respective Supervisorial Districts and began an initiative to increase site visits and inspections of youth facilities and jails in the Northwest area of Los Angeles County.

Status: Completed

- During the 2009 calendar year, 59 site visits were conducted of youth facilities and jails in the Northwest area of Los Angeles County.

Status: Completed

- Provide recognition and commendations for all County agencies that maintain positive environments for youths in their Group Home and Probation facilities.

Status: In progress. (The Commission will continue to pursue this goal in 2010.)

- Enhance the Commission Website to provide the public with valuable information and resources.

Status: Completed

- The Sybil Brand Commission Website was updated to include pertinent hyperlinks and more resources available to the public.

Status: Completed

- Evaluate and modify reporting forms to ensure effective inspections for all group homes and jail facilities.

Status: In Progress (The Sybil Brand Inspection Reporting forms were revised in 2009 to include more relevant and descriptive performance metrics for all facilities inspected by the Commission.)

- Partner with various schools, including the DCFS and Probation Department to increase awareness of efforts to identify Scholarship awardees.

Status: In progress. (The Commission will receive presentations in early 2010 from school district contacts and DCFS regarding this issue.)

Goals for 2010

- Continue to increase site visits and inspections of youth facilities and jails in the Northwest area of Los Angeles County, at least monthly.
- A group inspection of larger probation camps/jails will be scheduled each month.
- Create a new Inspection Reporting form that is more comprehensive and well-organized.
- Evaluate and effect relevant changes to the Sybil Brand Commission Education Scholarship Application to be disseminated during group home and probation camp inspections.
- Increase the Scholarship monetary award.
- Provide recognition and commendations for all County agencies that maintain positive environments for youths in their Group Home and Probation facilities.
- Continue dialogue between the respective County Departments to enhance collaboration and efficiencies.



