
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2023 - 2024 Regular Session

AB 2818 (Mathis) - County jail: available social services

Version: April 16, 2024

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 5, 2024

Policy Vote: PUB. S. 5 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Liah Burnley

Bill Summary: AB 2818 requires each county jail to provide each person incarcerated in the jail with contact information for specified agencies and resources.

Fiscal Impact: Costs (local funds, General Fund) of an unknown amount to the counties to compile and provide the required information to each person incarcerated in county jail. The average daily population of county jails statewide is approximately 59,000 people according to the Board of State and Community Corrections. In the aggregate statewide, workload and printing costs may exceed this committee's suspense threshold. General Fund costs will depend on whether the duties imposed by this bill constitute a reimbursable state mandate, as determined by the Commission on State Mandates.

Background: The Steinberg Institute recently reported that, "Too many Californians with significant behavioral health needs find themselves languishing in our jails while their illness is left untreated. Counties report that 53 percent of people in county jails have an open mental health case, a figure that has more than doubled since 2010. While state-level information on substance use disorder prevalence is limited, national estimates find that over 60 percent of incarcerated people have a substance use disorder. These figures likely underestimate the true prevalence of behavioral health conditions among incarcerated individuals due to a lack of standardization in data tracking and reporting." In recognition of the challenges faced by a person incarcerated in a county jail who needs community services upon their release, this bill seeks to provide contact information for relevant agencies and community organizations to incarcerated people.

Proposed Law: This bill requires each county jail to provide contact information for the local social services agency, the local county child support agency, a local alcohol or drug abuse resource, local homeless shelters, and local mental health resources for counseling or therapy. The bill specifies that if an incarcerated person provides a phone number or email address, the county jail may send them the required information electronically. If not, the county jail must provide each incarcerated person with a printed page containing the required information.

Related Legislation: AB 857 (Ortega), Chapter 857, Statutes of 2023, requires CDCR to provide each incarcerated person, upon release, informational materials about vocational rehabilitation services and independent living programs offered by the Department of Rehabilitation.

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