

Concerns of the Chiefs of Police Association

- A) Is the realignment money allocated to your county being spent exclusively for realignment functions? We have already received anecdotal information that some counties are diverting realignment funding to other, non-realignment county functions. As municipal police chiefs unfettered by the constraints of county hierarchies, we are uniquely situated to assure that this issue is always center stage. Police chiefs should insist that all of these funds go to realignment purposes.
- B) What is the proposed ratio of post-release felons to probation officers? Keeping in mind that the state parole ratio will be about 50-1 for general parolees (and 40-1 for three strike candidates and 20-1 for serious sex offenders), police chiefs should insist that the local ratios be significantly better. It needs to be kept in mind that the cohort of post-release felons with whom probation will be dealing have already proven resistant to probation's best strategies as they were progressing in their criminal careers. The fact that CCP Executive Committee meetings are open to the public should give traction to the need for acceptable ratios.
- C) What is the home visit strategy? If realignment is to succeed, frequent and unpredictable home visits are essential in the vast bulk of cases involving post-release felons. Although probation departments correctly point out that there are some felons for whom frequent home visits are counter-productive, the fact remains that the core of any effective realignment strategy should be frequent and unpredictable home visits. Put simply, a realignment plan that does not have a vigorous home visit strategy, is unacceptably deficient. Again, since virtually all of these post-release felons will be living in cities, police chiefs have a high stake in assuring that these home visits are a key element of the realignment protocols.
- D) Are any of post-release felons to be simply put on a banked caseload? Keeping in mind that the cohort of post-release felons has already proven resistant to best probation strategies when they were advancing in their criminal careers, all of these post-release felons should be viewed as high risk. Accordingly, police chiefs are in a position to insist that banking any of these cases is counterproductive.
- E) What realignment resources are to be allocated to front-line public safety? Post-release felons will be living in communities protected by police chiefs. They are a unique new burden on front-line law enforcement and impose daunting challenges to successfully protecting the rest of the community. Moreover, since many probation officers are unarmed, police chiefs will have to allocate officers to accompany probation officers on home visits in their communities. Police Chiefs are in a position to advocate that appropriate allocations of realignment funds be earmarked for front-line public safety services. Although the California Police Chiefs Association continues to work at the state level for a dedicated funding source for front-line public safety, police chiefs can and should seek a fair share of the local realignment funding.

Addendum #E

- F) What capacity does the sheriff have to incarcerate persons convicted of certain felonies? Realignment provides that most non-violent, non-serious, non-sex felons will serve their sentences at the local level. Police Chiefs should engage with their sheriff to determine the capacity of the sheriff to house those felons, the nature of any alternative custody/GPS tracking strategies, as well as the protocol to determine which felons are placed in alternative custody/GPS tracking and which will be incarcerated. If police chiefs are required to perform additional duties to assist with alternative custody oversight, local realignment funds should be made available to compensate for those additional services.
- G) How can we learn from post-release failures? Each post-release failure should be viewed as a teachable moment where we can re-examine if other post-release strategies might have resulted in better outcomes. As the primary providers of front-line law enforcement, it is probable that the victims of post-release failures live in the communities protected by police chiefs. Therefore, police chiefs can legitimately require that the CCP Executive Committee aggressively audit post-release failures so that the prospects of future failures are minimized.