



Probation Eliminates Collect Calls to Assist Detained Youth

Detained youth in Martinez and Byron can now call their families without charging the recipients.

Press release from [The Contra Costa County Probation Department](#)

March 26, 2021

The Contra Costa County Probation Department has permanently eliminated collect calling for youth detained at the Glenn A. Davis Juvenile Hall in Martinez, and Orin Allen Youth Rehabilitation Facility in Byron. Rather than continuing the practice of charging recipients when a youth makes a call, the Department will now absorb those costs.

“Our primary goals are harm reduction and removing barriers to success for our clients and their loved ones,” said Chief Probation Officer Esa Ehmen-Krause. “Eliminating this additional financial burden and creating a pathway for increased communication with loved ones is the right thing to do.”

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors has consistently demonstrated support for justice-involved youth and families. A moratorium was issued in 2016 on the assessment and collection of juvenile probation fees. In 2017, the Board took further action to permanently repeal these fees, and discharge any outstanding fees owed. These forward-thinking actions were ahead of Senate Bill 190, which required counties to eliminate juvenile fines and fees in 2018. This legislation did not include collect calling.

“In these challenging times, it’s more important than ever that everyone stays connected to their families, especially youth, and I applaud the Probation Department for making it easier on families as we pursue the ultimate goal of reunification and living a healthy life,” said Diane Burgis, Chair of the Board of Supervisors.

Additionally, in response to the public health shelter in place order, the Department began utilizing video visitation in 2020, which has created the ability to offer more frequent contact between youth and their family members. The Department plans to continue this service, also provided at no cost, even after on-site visitation resumes. Video visitation affords family members who may have transportation challenges or mobility concerns with another resource to maintain contact with their loved ones.