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August 5, 2025

Mono County Grand Jury  
Honorable Judge Mark Magit  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
100 Thompsons Way  
P.O. Box 1037  
Mammoth Lakes, California 93546

**RE: Mono County Board of Supervisors Responses to the Mono County 2024-2025  
Grand Jury Report Entitled "Mammoth Lakes Police Department Detainment and Arrest  
Processes"**

To the Honorable Judge Magit and Grand Jury Members:

Please consider this letter and attachment as the Mono County Board of Supervisors' Responses to the 2024-2025 Grand Jury Investigation Report entitled "Mammoth Lakes Police Department Detainment and Arrest Processes."

The Board thanks the Grand Jury for its attention to these issues that connect both public safety and mental health care services in our community.

Thanks and best,



Emily Fox  
Assistant County Counsel

Cc:

Nancy Licari, Staff Secretary to the Grand Jury

Enclosures:

Attachment A Board Responses to Grand Jury Report



**Mono County Board of Supervisors Responses to Investigation Report:**  
**Mammoth Lakes Police Department Detainment and Arrest Processes:**

**Findings:**

**F3:** The limited communication and coordination between Mono County Behavioral Health and MLPD may result in the improper handling of arrestees leading to increased risks to the officers and public.

**Response to F3:** The Mono County Board of Supervisors (the “Board”) agrees and disagrees with this finding. The Board acknowledges that the privacy concerns and inability to share protected medical information pursuant to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (“HIPAA”) may reduce MLPD’s understanding of the resolution of a call, the Board disagrees that a lack of communication results in the mishandling of arrestees. Mono County Behavioral Health (“MCBH”) staff are not trained or able to serve as first responders or act in the same capacity as armed law enforcement when there has been a crime or there are weapons present. When someone with a mental health condition commits a crime or is presenting a public safety threat, that is first and foremost a law enforcement issue. MCBH staff cannot intervene in such a situation to deescalate or otherwise resolve a criminal situation in the way that armed and trained law enforcement can.

When someone who is committing or has committed a crime is arrested appears to be in mental distress, MLPD notifies MCBH to perform an evaluation of that individual. A 5150 evaluation may be completed at the jail in a safe and secure location, or is more often performed at the hospital if the arrestee has been transported there for medical care. MCBH staff are not on-scene first responders with the same role or responsibilities of armed law enforcement when it comes to addressing a crime or public safety threat.

Currently, there is a Memorandum of Understanding in place for Mobile Crisis Response and communication, and there are established procedures for how the different agencies that may make contact with an individual experiencing mental distress will transport or refer individuals for 5150 assessment.

If an emergency call is received for an individual who is not committing or who has not committed a crime and is not experiencing a medical emergency, MCBH can be connected to the individual by dispatch for a warm hand off to service. Law enforcement or emergency medical service respond to the individual’s location and MCBH can provide participating law enforcement agencies with mobile tablets for remote MCBH assessment. Law enforcement or emergency medical services will remain on site during the assessment unless another urgent situation or emergency presents. The assessment will determine if placement in the hospital is warranted. If not warranted, MCBH will coordinate follow-up care with the individual. If transportation to the hospital emergency department is warranted, MBCH works with the agency on scene to coordinate



transportation to the hospital. No follow up communication with MLP regarding the results of any assessment is allowed under HIPAA.

If law enforcement or emergency medical services encounters an individual experiencing a medical emergency or a substance use disorder-related need and that individual is transferred to the hospital, Mammoth Hospital will contact MCBH to conduct a 5150 assessment.

**Implementation of F3:** The Board will direct MCBH to review and revise, if needed, the procedures for communication around 5150 referrals and holds with MLPD and other interested agencies.

**Implementation Timeline for F3:** in Fiscal Year 25-26.

**F4:** Due to the requirements of HIPAA Compliance, there is no mechanism for the Department of Behavioral Health to “close the loop” with MLPD after a potential 5150 hold incident is vacated. The police are not notified of the cause which hinders their ability to understand the outcomes and be better able to serve the public.

**Response to F4:** The Board agrees with this finding. HIPAA prevents “closing the loop” with MLPD to inform them if any particular case they referred or transported for a 5150 assessment ultimately resulted in a 5150 hold.

**Implementation of F4:** MCBH can provide aggregate annual data to MLPD on the “results” of 5150 referrals, i.e., how many of the referrals made by MLPD resulted in a 5150 hold, to help MLPD better understand their overall match from their own evaluation of when an individual may need a 5150 hold and how often that hold is actually warranted. MCBH cannot provide case-by-case data, which though would be more helpful, would violate HIPAA.

MCBH is also available to coordinate with MLPD on a monthly basis or at another desired frequency to discuss coordination issues and review concerns.

**Implementation Timeline for F4:** In January of 2026, MCBH will compile and arrange for aggregate data for 2025 to be sent to MLPD.

## **Recommendations:**

**R2:** The grand jury recommends that the board of supervisors encourage the reinvigoration of the Crisis Care Committee by October 1, 2025 made up of the MLPD Chief of Police, the Director of the Mono County Department of Behavioral Health, a representative of Mammoth Hospital and the Sheriff’s Department to focus on cross-training and communication.

**Response to R2:** The Board agrees and disagrees with this recommendation. MCBH agrees that a forum for the discussion of protocols, communication, and other inter-



agency issues that may arise would be helpful. The Board disagrees that there are not existing forums, such as the committee created under the Mobile Crisis Response Memorandum of Understanding or the Behavioral Health Advisory Board, that would be effective places for coordination and communication to take place.

**Implementation of R2:** The Board will direct MCBH to reach out to other participating members of the Memorandum of Understanding to initiate the meetings contemplated by the agreement.

**Implementation Timeline for R2:** In Fiscal Year 25-26.

**R3:** The grand jury recommends that the Mono County Board of Supervisors encourage the Department of Health to provide MLPD officers training on de-escalation and assessment, similar to what they would provide their own employees, starting by January, 2026.

**Response to R3:** The Board agrees and disagrees with this recommendation. The Board agrees that if MLPD, as an independent agency from the County, requests that MCBH provide de-escalation and assessment training, MCBH may work with MLPD to deliver a training that would meet the department's needs. However, the Board disagrees with the recommendation in that ultimately, the Commission of Peace Officer Standards and Training ("POST") offers free trainings on crisis intervention, mental health, and de-escalation that are free to officers and catered to law enforcement that are likely more effective trainings for peace officers. As non-law enforcement personnel, MCBH can provide insights and a training perspective that may be useful to MLPD, if they so determine that it would be valuable to the officers.

**Implementation of R3:** MCBH can provide requested training that covers MCBH's role and its techniques for crisis intervention and assessment, distinct from those taught by POST.

**Implementation Timeline for R3:** As requested by MLPD.