California Sex Offender Management Board

Sexually Violent Predator Project: Executive Summary

September 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The California Sex Offender Management Board (CASOMB) has completed a multi-year review of California's implementation of the Sexually Violent Predator (SVP) law. Through four comprehensive reports examining SVP detainee status[1], conditional release housing and placement barriers[2], treatment participation rates[3], and broader program implementation issues, CASOMB identified systemic challenges that undermine public safety objectives impede treatment effectiveness, increase costs, and delay judicial resolution.

Collectively, the reports conclude that California's SVP system can be strengthened through reforms that promote timely adjudication, increase treatment participation, improve conditional release infrastructure, enhance transparency and accountability, and align program operations with evidence-based Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) principles.

A primary concern identified by CASOMB is the excessive duration of SVP detainee status. California remains a national outlier, with many individuals spending years in pre-commitment detention while awaiting trial. Prolonged detainee status creates significant fiscal costs, delays treatment engagement, reduces program credibility, and contributes to institutionalization. CASOMB recommends establishing a two-year target for resolving commitment proceedings, strengthening limitations on continuances, improving case management practices, and creating comprehensive tracking systems to monitor detainee duration and case progression. These reforms would ensure that individuals who meet commitment criteria enter treatment more quickly while those who do not are released in a timely manner.

The reports further identify low participation in the Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP) as a critical challenge. Despite treatment being the central purpose of civil commitment, a significant proportion of committed SVP individuals do not participate in treatment. CASOMB recommends expanding treatment opportunities prior to civil commitment through prison-based programming, enhancing treatment engagement strategies, improving responsiveness to participant needs, implementing individualized treatment planning, creating treatment incentive structures, and establishing ongoing quality assurance and program evaluation mechanisms. Increased treatment participation is expected to improve treatment outcomes, support successful community reintegration, and reduce long-term risk.

CASOMB also found that barriers to Conditional Release Program (CONREP) placement limit access to one of California's most successful public safety interventions. Research consistently demonstrates that individuals transitioning through structured conditional release programs experience lower rates of reoffending than those released directly from institutional settings. However, housing shortages, placement delays, regulatory barriers, and community opposition

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[1] CASOMB SVP Intro and Detainee Status
[2] SVP CONREP Housing and Community Placement Issues SVP CONREP Housing and Community Placement Issues Addendum
[3] CASOMB SVP Project: Sex Offender Treatment Program Participation Rate Paper

have significantly restricted utilization of CONREP. CASOMB recommends expanding housing resources, increasing interagency collaboration, reducing unnecessary placement barriers, developing transitional housing and step-down programs, and ensuring that placement decisions are guided by individualized risk, treatment progress, and reintegration needs. The high cost of CONREP underscores the need to examine opportunities for fiscal reform and improved efficiency.

Across all reports, CASOMB emphasizes the importance of transparency, accountability, and outcome measurement. The Board recommends routine public reporting of program performance indicators, including treatment participation rates, treatment progression, conditional release outcomes, placement timelines, census data, and recidivism outcomes. Enhanced data collection and public reporting will support informed policy decisions, strengthen public confidence, and promote continuous quality improvement.

CASOMB additionally recommends ongoing stakeholder collaboration involving the Department of State Hospitals, the judiciary, district attorneys, public defenders, victim advocates, treatment professionals, community supervision agencies, housing providers, and legislators. A coordinated statewide approach is necessary to address longstanding barriers that cannot be resolved by any single agency acting independently.

Taken together, these recommendations establish a roadmap for modernizing California's SVP system. By reducing unnecessary delays, increasing treatment participation, improving community reintegration pathways, and strengthening accountability measures, California can improve public safety outcomes while ensuring that the SVP program fulfills its intended purpose of providing effective treatment, risk reduction, and responsible community protection.

Key Strategic Priorities

- Reduce SVP detainee duration and expedite commitment proceedings.
- Increase participation efficiency and completion rates in sex offense-specific treatment.
- Expand and improve conditional release housing and placement options.
- Develop transitional and less restrictive alternatives to full confinement.
- Strengthen transparency through routine performance reporting and outcomes research.
- Align SVP programming with Risk-Need-Responsivity principles and national best practices.
- Enhance interagency collaboration among courts, DSH, local governments, treatment providers, and community supervision agencies.
- Support evidence-based reintegration strategies that promote both community safety and successful long-term outcomes.