



SB 1157 FACT SHEET:

Establishing Accountability and Safety for Less Restrictive Programs

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The Need:

Less Restrictive Programs (LRPs) were established as part of the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) closure and the transfer of supervisory and detention authority of DJJ youth to counties. While a youth may be ordered by the court into an LRP in the community, jurisdiction remains with Probation as this is part of the court-ordered term of custody. As their use has expanded across California, there is no statewide framework to ensure courts have even the most basic safety and accountability information before a placement is made.

There is currently no framework to address the governance concerns for congregate residential LRPs located in the community, nor are there set expectations for their operations. This is not transitional housing nor is it post-court jurisdiction. This bill pertains to LRPs in which a portion of the detention term under court and probation jurisdiction is served in a community setting. In no other aspect of state or local work, for example in schools, foster care, or related systems, do we not have any foundational level of safety criteria for the operation or programs overseeing young adults with the most significant risk and needs.

This isn't hypothetical. A California Post investigation found that one LRP operator is housing young adults convicted of serious offenses inside a house on UCLA's Sorority Row — marketed publicly as student housing, with no disclosure that it also houses youth still serving custodial terms. The operator was paid \$1.2 million last year, with no independent, statelevel mechanism confirming the placement met basic safety standards.

SB 1157 closes this gap with a practical, statewide framework that strengthens transparency, supports informed judicial decisionmaking, and helps ensure LRPs continue to serve as safe, effective step-down placements.

What SB 1157 Does:

SB 1157 establishes a statewide framework to improve transparency and accountability by giving courts key information about residential Less Restrictive Programs before placement decisions are made.

The bill requires probation departments to report whether a program:

- ✓ Has provided notice to the local city and county
- ✓ Conducts criminal background checks for staff with direct youth contact
- ✓ Has a plan for adhering to each youth's case plan and accountability measures
- ✓ Has an established rate structure
- ✓ Maintains required insurance coverage

Courts retain full discretion. SB 1157 doesn't create a new approval hurdle — it simply ensures the court has this information before deciding whether a placement is appropriate.

Why SB 1157 Matters:



Strengthens Accountability

Establishes a statewide framework so courts have the information they need when considering placements in congregate residential LRPs — closing the gaps that leave state resources vulnerable to misuse or undue influence over placement decisions.



Increases Transparency

Provides visibility into program operations that doesn't exist today. Right now, anyone can open an LRP in California without demonstrating relevant qualifications or experience, and many operate with little to no systematic screening of provider qualifications, staff training, or program quality. SB 1157 changes that.



Supports Safe Rehabilitation

LRPs were designed as a structured step-down option for young adults who have made substantial progress. Strong standards protect the young adults in our care, support probation departments in making responsible recommendations, and help ensure LRPs remain safe bridges back to the community — not premature or inappropriate placements.



No New Cost — A Net Savings

SB 1157 carries no new fiscal cost to the state. Its information-sharing requirements build on what county probation departments are already doing — the bill simply adds a few additional details to information already being gathered before a placement is approved. By making that information available up front, SB 1157 helps prevent delays and costly missteps, producing a net savings for the state rather than a new cost.

Supporting California's Juvenile Justice System:

SB 1157 helps strengthen California's continuum of care by supporting:

- ✓ Safe and effective rehabilitation
- ✓ Improved and transparent safety outcomes for youth and community
- ✓ Informed judicial decision-making
- ✓ Accountability and public confidence
- ✓ Collaboration between courts, probation, and program providers

Summary:

SB 1157 is a critical step to restore balance and integrity to California's LRP system. It closes transparency gaps, strengthens accountability for public funds, and ensures LRPs function as safe, effective tools for young adults' success — at no additional cost to the state. Probation chiefs across California stand ready to implement these standards. We urge swift passage of SB 1157 to protect youth, communities, and the public's investment in realignment.