



Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force

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Rules for Today's Virtual Meeting

- Please keep your line muted if you are not speaking.
- We encourage Task Force members to ask questions or make comments directly during today's meeting, though please also feel free to use the chat box.

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Agenda

- Welcome (Co-chairs) – 5 minutes
- Review of Task Force findings (Co-chairs) – 10 minutes
- Discussion of takeaways from public testimony, questionnaires, and stakeholder roundtables (Task Force) – 45 minutes
- Public testimony – 45 minutes
- Next steps (Co-chairs) – 15 minutes

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Review of Key Data Findings

- Most youth enter the juvenile justice system for misdemeanor and/or nonperson offenses and score as low risk to reoffend, but a majority are not diverted from court
 - Diversion from formal court processing is more than 80% successful
 - But 54% of misdemeanor written allegations against youth with no priors do not lead to it
- Many youth who enter the system with low-level cases are sent to the deepest stages of the juvenile justice system
 - 43% of youth who go straight to probation are at low risk to reoffend
 - Among youth sent to out-of-home placement in 2018, a majority:
 - did not commit a felony or a person offense;
 - had either no prior written allegations (39%) or one (23%); and
 - did not score high or very high risk to commit another offense

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Review of Key Data Findings

- The share of cases assessed financial obligations nearly doubled over ten years to just under 60%, averaging under \$250 per youth in 16 counties—but over \$1,000 in five others
- Youth are kept under court supervision—and in out-of-home placement—for years
 - Youth average 17 months under overall court supervision even when probation is the first and only response (no diversion and no escalation)
 - Youth with placement dispositions:
 - average six out-of-home placements over the course of their case
 - cumulatively stay 16 months out of home, on average, (one-in-five stay over two years); and
 - average more than three years under overall court supervision

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Review of Key Data Findings

- The vast majority of Pennsylvania’s spending on delinquency services is focused on out-of-home placement—totaling at least \$280,000,000 in FY19
 - State-run facilities cost at least \$192,720 per youth per year, on average
 - Privately-run placements cost at least \$107,468 per youth per year, on average, up 54% since FY15
- Just 20% of Pennsylvania’s spending on delinquency services is allocated to services for youth living at home

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Review of Key Data Findings

- Among youth charged as adults because they are statutorily excluded for juvenile court:
 - half are charged with robbery or aggravated assault; murder makes up only 6% of charges
- Among youth whom a juvenile court judge decided must be tried as an adult:
 - the most common charges are drug- or theft-related, accounting for 44%

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Review of Key Data Findings

- There are few statewide criteria in statute or court rule guiding decision-making by offense, prior history, or risk
- There is wide variation in the likelihood a youth in one county will receive the same response as similarly situated youth in another county for:
 - diversion, consent decree, probation, placement, imposition of fees/fines, prosecution in criminal court, among other decision points
- Youth of color—especially boys—are more likely to be:
 - removed from home, even for identical offenses as other youth;
 - kept longer on probation and under the overall court supervision; and
 - prosecuted as adults

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Findings from Stakeholder Input

- Task Force members have hosted **24 roundtables** attended by **368 individuals**, including at least **45 young people** (ongoing)
- Task Force members heard testimony from **14 individuals**, including **nine young people** (ongoing)
- **771 judges, juvenile probation officers, and district attorneys** completed questionnaires distributed by Task Force members

Questions for Discussion

- What key takeaways did you hear from stakeholders?
- In what ways did input from stakeholders align with data findings?

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**Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force
Public Testimony**

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Next Steps

- Next Task Force meeting:
 - Wednesday, January 13, 2020
- Roundtables:
 - youth in BJJIS facilities
 - northeastern Pennsylvania stakeholders
- Policy development subgroups

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Contact Information

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