

# INFOCUS



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## Emergency Planning for Juvenile Residential Facilities

In the United States, there are more than 1,500 residential placement facilities that house approximately 37,500 juvenile offenders.<sup>1</sup> These facilities are responsible for safely detaining juvenile offenders and providing them with medical and mental healthcare, academic enrichment, vocational training, and life skills.

All juvenile justice facilities should be actively engaged in emergency planning to mitigate, respond to, and recover from natural, technological, manmade, and public health emergencies. Funds provided by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to tribal, state, and local juvenile residential facilities ensure that the facilities are prepared to continue operations, prioritize the safety and well-being of youth and staff, and reduce damage to the physical facility during and after an emergency.

### Program

#### Juvenile Justice Emergency Planning Demonstration Program

Funding through this program helps juvenile justice facilities implement the principles outlined in OJJDP's *Emergency Planning for Juvenile Justice Residential Facilities*. The comprehensive planning guide covers a range of topics, including information sharing across agencies, evacuation procedures, alternate locations for housing youth, emergency staffing, internal and external communication procedures, and budgeting for emergency planning and response.

Grantees may use program funds for a variety of activities that include establishing a cross-sector team to design and implement the emergency plan, conducting vulnerability assessments, forming agreements with organizations and professionals (e.g., mental health practitioners) who can provide additional support during and after an emergency, and purchasing equipment for use during an emergency.

By developing, implementing, and improving their emergency planning activities, residential facilities can effectively respond to—and recover from—these incidents as they protect the youth in their care, keep families informed, support staff, and continue operations.

### For More Information

Access additional information about how OJJDP is supporting emergency planning for juvenile residential facilities at <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/programs/emergency-planning-juvenile-facilities>.

<sup>1</sup> Hockenberry, S., and Sladky, A. Forthcoming. *Juvenile Residential Facility Census, 2018: Selected Findings*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

### Funding

Between fiscal years 2017 and 2019, OJJDP provided more than \$1.2 million to help juvenile residential facilities prepare for and recover from emergencies.

- ▶ Fiscal Year 2019—\$433,454
- ▶ Fiscal Year 2018—\$415,822
- ▶ Fiscal Year 2017—\$379,823

### From the Field

A 2018 award of more than \$100,000 helped Kentucky address gaps in its emergency operations plan and improve the safety of youth and staff in seven detention centers. The centers are located in areas where weather-related emergencies are common.

The state also purchased a radio system that allows on- and offsite staff to be contacted immediately during an emergency. An upgrade to the facilities' communication system allows it to connect directly to the local, county, and state emergency systems.

Kentucky also used part of the funding to develop and add a trauma-response component to the centers' emergency training curriculums. By planning for youth's trauma-induced reactions to emergency situations, staff will be better able to protect youth from—and guide them through—the physical, mental, and emotional effects of an emergency.



Office of Juvenile Justice and  
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