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STATE OF TEXAS  
OJJDP FY 2018 TITLE II FORMULA  
GRANTS PROGRAM  
NARRATIVE

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GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

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## **A. DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUE**

### **A.1. SYSTEM DESCRIPTION: STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM**

The Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division (CJD), is the State Administering Agency (SAA) for the Title II Formula Grant Program. CJD works with the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board, state and local agencies, and stakeholders across the state to administer the program and identify priorities.

The basis of Texas juvenile law is Title 3 of the *Texas Family Code*. The primary state agency responsible for the juvenile justice system is the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD). TJJD operates as the single state agency responsible for juvenile supervision and rehabilitation services in Texas. TJJD operates pre-adjudication and post-adjudication facilities and provides oversight of local detention facilities and programs operated, regulated, and funded by the department.

Other related state agencies include: the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), which provides services for children below the prosecution age who are at risk of committing crimes or have already committed crimes; the Texas Education Agency (TEA), which has regulatory oversight for local school districts that operate law enforcement agencies and provide truancy prevention and intervention services; the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), which provides mental health and substance abuse services to juveniles.

Locally, counties are required to have a juvenile board responsible for administering juvenile probation services. Juvenile boards designate the juvenile court, appoint the judges for those courts, and may also appoint attorneys as referees to conduct juvenile hearings. The juvenile judge provides oversight and ultimate authority over a referee's recommendation.

Each county must also have a juvenile probation department (though rural counties often take the option to combine departments for efficiency), which is tasked with administering the policies of the local juvenile board and providing services to juveniles. There are 165 juvenile probation departments in Texas with 121 of those providing services to a single county. The remaining 44 serve between two and six counties<sup>1</sup>.

Upon juvenile court intake, there are three options for a juvenile referral plan: (1) Deferred Prosecution<sup>2</sup>; (2) First Offender Program<sup>3</sup>; and (3) Disposition Hearing<sup>4</sup>. Law enforcement agencies or prosecutors may divert juvenile cases from formal court proceedings by referring the juvenile to a specialized program. These programs are targeted toward first time and less serious juvenile offenders for whom an alternative to traditional juvenile court would result in a more positive outcome.

Under current state law, 17 is the age of majority. For the purposes of determining jurisdiction of a juvenile court, a child is defined as persons who are:

- Ten years of age or older<sup>5</sup> and under 17 years of age; or
- Seventeen years of age or older and under 18 years of age who is alleged or found to have engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision as a result of acts committed before becoming 17 years of age<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Office of the Attorney General, 2014 Juvenile Justice Handbook.

<sup>2</sup> 53.03 Deferred Prosecution, Texas Family Code

<sup>3</sup> 52.031 First Offender Program, Texas Family Code

<sup>4</sup> 54.04 Disposition Hearing, Texas Family Code

<sup>5</sup> The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services provides services to children aged 7 to 9. See Sec. 264.302, "Early Intervention Services," Texas Family Code.

<sup>6</sup> 51.02 Definitions, Texas Family Code

**A.2. ANALYSIS OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY PROBLEMS (YOUTH CRIME) AND NEEDS.**

**General juvenile crime statistics**

Between 2014 and 2016, the number of juveniles arrested decreased from 57,447 to 49,957. The largest decreases were for runaway (- 32%), larceny (-27%), and drug abuse violations (-14%).

<b>Juvenile Arrests</b>			
<b>Offense</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Murder/Manslaughter	34	28	30
Rape	n/a	289	339
Robbery	759	960	933
Assault	10,587	10,902	11,672
Burglary	2,297	2,312	2,011
Larceny-Theft	10,807	9,908	7,847
Motor Vehicle Theft	639	818	823
Arson	151	111	90
Forgery	37	49	61
Fraud	151	152	179
Embezzlement	12	12	106
Stolen Property	133	114	152
Vandalism	1,982	1,653	1,491
Weapons	429	417	518
Prostitution	42	28	13
Sex Offenses	433	400	375
Drug Abuse Violations	7,200	5,692	6,157
Gambling	7	12	8
Offenses Against Family and Children	73	47	59
DUI	114	93	111
Liquor Laws	891	683	684
Drunkenness	297	282	234
Disorderly Conduct	1,480	1,377	1,317
Vagrancy	127	166	30
All Other Offenses	8,369	7,739	7,545
Curfew and Loitering	2,866	2,614	2,109
Runaway	7,472	5,839	5,034
Human Trafficking	58	47	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>57,447</b>	<b>52,744</b>	<b>49,957</b>

**Source of court referrals**

In Texas, youth can be referred to court from many sources, including law enforcement agencies, schools, social service agencies, and parents. While juvenile referrals have also been declining (-

14% from 2015 to 2017), arrests or probation are by far the largest source of referrals. Referrals can occur outside of arrests, such as those for Conduct Indicating a Need for Supervision (CINS), or a probation violation. CINS referrals in particular are good candidates for diversion programs as they do not yet involve specific allegations of criminal acts.

<b>Juvenile Court Referrals</b>			
<b>Offense</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
Homicide	49	51	42
Attempted Homicide	1	3	7
Sexual Assault	1,305	1,348	1,430
Robbery	1,059	1,167	1,172
Assaultive	3,256	3,248	3,204
Other Violent	40	23	31
Burglary	2,724	2,616	2,378
Theft	1,911	1,836	2,050
Other Property	1,169	912	778
Drug Offenses	1,319	1,302	1,256
Weapons Offenses	394	390	388
Other Felony	1,235	1,507	1,588
Misd. Weapons Offenses	285	328	394
Misd. Assaultive	8,803	8,861	8,592
Misd. Theft	6,158	4,204	3,319
Misd. Other Property	2,566	2,494	2,402
Misd. Drug Offenses	7,022	6,700	6,471
Other Misdemeanor	5,789	5,657	5,599
Contempt of Magistrate	1,225	155	223
Violation of Court Order	10,277	9,076	8,227
Truancy	891	7	0
Runaway	3,336	3,119	2,789
Alternative Ed Expulsion	242	286	298
CINS Property	87	83	70
CINS Disorderly Conduct	57	33	38
CINS Drugs	40	33	33
CINS Liquor Laws	61	30	29
CINS Sex Offenses	25	5	33
Other CINS	1,096	674	562
Crisis/NotSpecIFied	279	219	149
<b>Total</b>	<b>62,701</b>	<b>56,367</b>	<b>53,552</b>

## Juvenile court dispositions

The outcome of juvenile dispositions in Texas falls within one of six categories:

1. Dismissed;
2. Supervisory caution;
3. Deferred prosecution;
4. Probation;
5. Indeterminate/determinate commitment; or
6. Adult certification.

In 2017, there were 51,877 instances of dispositions for juveniles and a 15% reduction in overall dispositions between 2015 and 2017.

		Disposition Year		
		2015	2016	2017
Disposition	Dismissed	14,884	14,305	13,509
Category	Supervisory Caution	13,161	11,001	10,259
	Deferred Prosecution	16,165	14,357	13,508
	Probation	15,886	14,638	13,646
	Indeterminate Commitment	704	688	659
	Determinate Commitment	130	128	159
	Adult Certification	111	152	137
<b>Total</b>		<b>61,041</b>	<b>55,269</b>	<b>51,877</b>

## Offense levels within state system

Offense levels among new admissions to supervision by the Texas Juvenile Justice Department – those youth who have failed earlier county interventions or committed serious offenses such as capital murder, armed robbery, or aggravated sexual assault – show a fairly even spread across offense levels.

<b>Committing Offenses, New Admissions to TJJD Custody</b>					
<b>Committing Offense</b>		<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>
Determinate Sentence	%	9.9	10.2	14.9	15.9
<b>Offense Level</b>					
Capital Offense	%	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.0
1st Degree Felony	%	21.4	25.2	26.5	27.7
2nd Degree Felony	%	36.4	33.3	30.6	30.7
3rd Degree Felony	%	21.4	21.2	22.3	23.2
State Jail Felony	%	20.5	20.0	20.3	18.4

### **Criminal history of TJJD admissions**

The offense history of new TJJD admissions shows that by the time youth reach that level of commitment, they generally have a history of involvement in the justice system.

<b>Offense History, New Admissions to Juvenile Justice System</b>					
<b>Offense History</b>		<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>
3+ Felony or Mis. Referrals	%	75.8	68.5	70.3	72.7
2+ Felony or Misd. Adjudications	%	68.2	65.4	64.2	66.6
Prior Court-Ordered Out of Home Placement	%	64.3	68.8	67.7	65.3
On Probation at Commitment	%	76.3	72.6	73.1	71.9

### **Demographics**

Among all juveniles, the significant jump in the age of those arrested occurred at age 13-14, while the jump among youth committed to TJJD custody (more serious or repeated offenses) occurred at age 15, indicating that initial interventions or diversions may be most effective at 13-14 while the juveniles who move on to more serious offenses, do so as soon as one year later.

<b>Referrals to Juvenile Courts</b>			
<b>Age at Arrest</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Under 10	0%	0%	1%
10 to 12	8%	8%	9%
13 to 14	30%	30%	30%
15	27%	27%	27%
16	34%	34%	33%

<b>New Admissions to TJJJ Custody</b>			
<b>Age At Admission</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>
10 to 12 Years	1.2%	0.9%	0.4%
13 Years	3.6%	2.2%	1.9%
14 Years	9.3%	8.2%	8.1%
15 Years	22.5%	22.0%	23.5%
16 Years	38.9%	38.2%	39.7%
17 Or Older	24.6%	28.5%	26.4%

Male juveniles continue to be arrested at far higher levels than female, representing 68% of referrals in 2016.

<b>Gender of Juvenile Arrests</b>			
<b>Gender</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Male	68%	68%	68%
Female	32%	32%	32%

However, TJJJ admissions indicate that males move on to more serious or repeated offenses far more than females, with males consistently representing over 90% of TJJJ admissions.

<b>Gender of TJJJ Admissions</b>			
<b>Gender</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Male	91%	90%	91%
Female	9%	10%	9%

CJD also analyzed Texas' juvenile referrals in regards to race. Referrals decreased from 2015 to 2017 across all ethnic groups. The most significant change was an 18% decrease for youth in the Hispanic demographic and the least significant change was a 7% decrease for African American youth.

		Referral Year		
		2015	2016	2017
Race	African American	16,551	15,863	15,344
	Caucasian	14,155	12,240	12,259
	Hispanic	31,337	27,703	25,426
	Other	658	561	523
<b>Total</b>		<b>62,701</b>	<b>56,367</b>	<b>53,552</b>

When looking at the proportion of juvenile arrests by race compared to the population as a whole, African American juveniles were grossly over-represented compared to the population as a whole, and white juveniles were somewhat over-represented. However, when looking at those juveniles who were committed to TJJD custody, white juveniles drop dramatically and become under-represented, African-American juveniles become even more over-represented, and Hispanic juveniles become more in-line with their portion of the overall population.

Juvenile Arrests by Race				
Race	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	All Texans Under 19
Hispanic	26.4%	28.1%	28.7%	49%
Black or African American	22.6%	21.7%	22.9%	12%
White	50.0%	49.1%	47.5%	33%
Other	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	6%

TJJD Admissions by Race				
Race	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	All Texans Under 19
Hispanic	45.0%	45.7%	43.1%	49%
Black or African American	34.9%	33.7%	37.6%	12%
White	19.4%	20.5%	18.6%	33%
Other	0.6%	0.1%	0.7%	6%

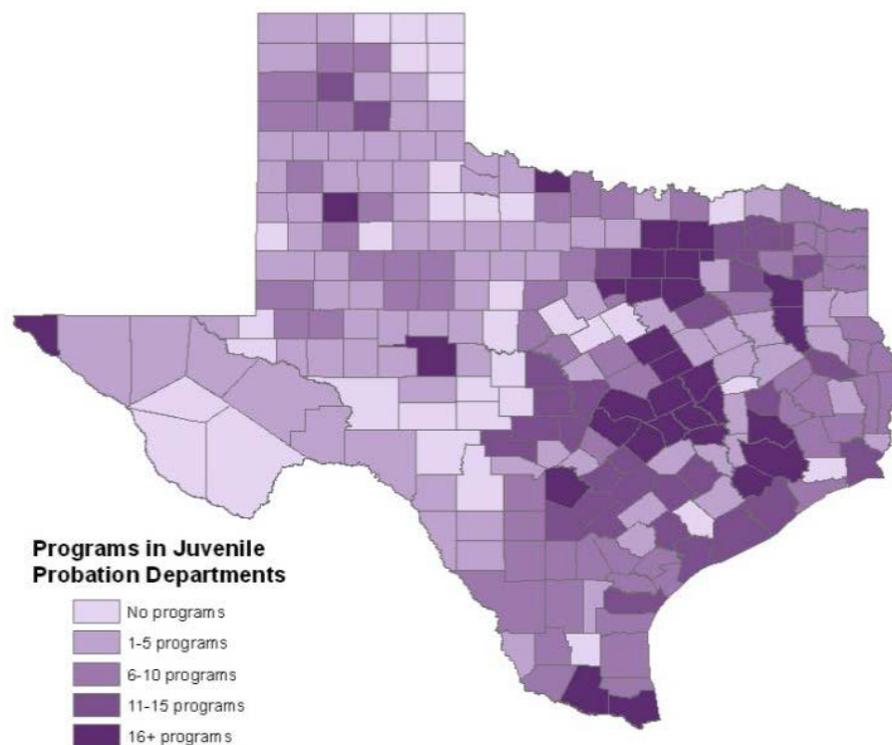
With regards to disposition by race, the most common disposition for African Americans and Hispanics was probation. In 2017, 28% of all African American and 27% of all Hispanic

dispositions were probation. For Caucasian and those in the ‘Other’ category, the most common outcome was deferred prosecution. In 2017, 31% of all Caucasian and 32% of all ‘Other’ dispositions was deferred prosecution.

<b>Disposition by Race</b>				
<b>Disposition Category</b>		<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
Dismissed	African American	3,973	4,074	4,007
	Caucasian	3,143	2,817	2,706
	Hispanic	7,618	7,270	6,673
	Other	150	144	123
Supervisory Caution	African American	3,102	2,748	2,666
	Caucasian	3,125	2,571	2,509
	Hispanic	6,772	5,572	4,959
	Other	162	110	125
Deferred Prosecution	African American	3,694	3,553	3,281
	Caucasian	4,376	3,659	3,653
	Hispanic	7,876	6,975	6,405
	Other	219	170	169
Probation	African American	4,411	4,381	4,037
	Caucasian	3,226	2,851	2,765
	Hispanic	8,107	7,285	6,743
	Other	142	121	101
Indeterminate Commitment	African American	227	233	270
	Caucasian	156	154	135
	Hispanic	317	296	251
	Other	4	5	3
Determinate Commitment	African American	63	65	85
	Caucasian	17	15	13
	Hispanic	50	47	59
	Other	0	1	2
Adult Certification	African American	42	63	55
	Caucasian	22	20	21
	Hispanic	47	67	61
	Other	0	2	0

## Community-Based Programs

Of Texas' 165 juvenile probation departments, 149 enroll juveniles in community-based programs. 1,562 community-based programs are listed as active in the TJJD Program & Services Registry. These programs served over 32,000 juveniles throughout the fiscal year. More than 29,000 of those juveniles were under active deferred prosecution or probation supervision. The map below shows the dispersion of community-based programs throughout the state. The number and type of programs offered differ by department based on the availability of department and community resources and the unique needs of the juveniles under the department's jurisdiction.



General counseling, intensive supervision, sex offender treatment, and substance abuse treatment were among the most common programs. The number of programs also generally correlated to the state's major population centers, with many rural areas in West Texas having no programs.

<b>Community-Based Services Programs by Type</b>	
Counseling	190
Intensive Supervision	110
Sex Offender Treatment	110
Substance Abuse Prevention	103
Life Skills	94
Electronic Monitoring	93
Substance Abuse Treatment	91
Educational	84
Early Intervention	74
Mental Health	71
Anger Management	69
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy	68
Family Preservation	61
Programs for Parents	48
Other	44
Mentoring	33
Aftercare Management	28
Experiential Education	24
Female Offender	24
Intensive Case Management	20
Extended Day Program	16
Drug Court	15
Vocational Skills/Employment	15
Gang Prevention/Intervention	12
Home Detention	11
Equine/Animal Therapy	9
At Risk Kids	8
Runaway	8
Parenting	7
Victim Services	7
Mental Health Court	6
Victim Offender Mediation	5
Border Justice Project	4

### **Needs and risk factors of juvenile offenders**

Juveniles admitted to TJJD custody show a high level of special education eligibility. They also lag in educational achievement, indicating a high co-occurrence with truancy issues.

Education Profile of TJJJ Admissions				
EDUCATION	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
Special Education Eligible (%)	30.9	31.7	30.5	28.2
Median Years Behind Reading Achievement	-5.2 yrs	-3.8 yrs	-3.6 yrs	-3.4 yrs
Median Years Behind Math Achievement	-5.5 yrs	-5.0 yrs	-4.7 yrs	-4.8 yrs

Juveniles admitted to TJJJ custody also show high levels of abuse or neglect; family instability, and family criminal involvement.

Family Characteristics of TJJJ Admissions (%)				
Risk Factors	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
Suspected History Of Abuse Or Neglect	35.6	41.3	35.9	32.9
Parents Unmarried, Divorced, Separated, or at Least One Deceased	88.3	84.7	87.4	84.0
Suspected Family History Of Criminal Involvement	37.5	48.6	53.8	42.8

A substantial number of juveniles admitted to TJJJ custody demonstrate moderate or high levels of need for treatment for violent behavior, alcohol or drug treatment, or co-occurring treatment needs.

New Admissions to TJJJ Custody: Needs for Treatment by a License of Specially Trained Provider					
<b>Capital Serious Violent Treatment</b>					
High Need	%	6.3	7.7	6.2	15.4
Moderate Need	%	55.9	63.9	69.3	63.2
Low Need	%	34.3	24.3	13.3	12.2
<b>Sexual Behavior Treatment</b>					
High Need	%	8.7	11.2	10.9	11.2
Moderate Need	%	5.4	2.7	4.6	2.9
Low Need	%	6.1	9.2	12.8	23.8
<b>Alcohol Or Other Drug Treatment</b>					
High Need	%	40.6	46.3	46.1	42.3
Moderate Need	%	41.4	35.3	36.3	36.8
Low Need	%	10.2	11.4	6.9	12.3
<b>Mental Health Treatment</b>					
High Need	%	2.9	3.3	2.1	1.7
Moderate Need	%	19.7	17.8	16.9	29.0
Low Need	%	25.7	32.7	31.0	24.2
Multiple (2 Or More) Specialized Treatment Needs	%	75.1	81.9	83.0	81.8

## **B. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Goals (in order of priority):

1. **Increase the effectiveness of community-based supervision**

Program areas: Community-Based Programs, Mental Health Services

2. **Improve the identification and response to victims of child abuse**

Program areas: Child Abuse and Neglect Programs, Aftercare/Reentry

3. **Improve the employability of at-risk youth**

Program areas: Job training, Delinquency Prevention

4. **Prevent delinquency before it occurs**

Program areas: Delinquency Prevention

5. **Reduce racial disparities in the juvenile justice system**

Program areas: Disproportionate Minority Contact, Delinquency Prevention

6. **Reduce recidivism among juvenile offenders**

Program areas: Aftercare/Reentry, Community-Based Programs and Services, Mental Health Services

7. **Divert youth from entering the juvenile justice system**

Program areas: Diversion

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➤ **Goal 1: Increase the effectiveness of community-based supervision**

**Program Areas:** Community-Based Programs and Services, Mental Health Services

**Objectives:**

1. Fund mental health and substance abuse treatment programs to support community-based treatment services for youths under community supervision.

## **Background and Approach:**

Youth who return to a home environment have a positive supportive relationship with a parent or adult. These youth have decreased exposure to negative behaviors and an increase in access to appropriate social activities. At-risk youth do not have the support needed in confinement and from their families to ensure a safe place to return home after release from the juvenile justice system. “*Closer to Home: An Analysis of the State and Local Impact of the Texas Juvenile Justice Reforms*”, is an independent review of the resulting impact of Texas juvenile justice reform that occurred between 2007 and 2012. The goal of the reforms was to downsize the number of youth in the state’s secure facilities, starting with prohibiting youthful misdemeanor offenders from being committed to confinement and lowering the age of jurisdiction to 19. Other laws were passed that included financial incentives to juvenile probation departments, which would see an increased number of youth remaining within their jurisdictions.

CJD prioritizes funding mental health and substance abuse treatment programs for youth on probation, thus improving the effectiveness of non-confinement sentences, which allows more youth to stay with their families in their communities.

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### ➤ **Goal 2: Improve the identification and response to victims of child abuse**

**Program Area:** Child Abuse and Neglect Programs, Aftercare/Reentry

#### **Objectives:**

1. Increase the identification, intake, and review of child abuse cases in multi-disciplinary approach settings across Texas.

## **Background and Approach:**

CJD serves as the State Administering Agency (SAA) for Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). In this capacity, CJD's victim services and justice programs staff work closely together on intersecting projects that ensure child abuse and neglect is addressed in meaningful ways across the state. These projects include working with the Children Advocacy Centers of Texas that uses a multi-disciplinary approach to investigating child abuse and ensuring they receive the physical and emotional treatment they need to return to normalcy. Additionally, the Public Safety Office's Child Sex Trafficking Team works closely with CJD on eliminating and eradicating sexual exploitation, child pornography, and sex trafficking across the state.

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### ➤ **Goal 3: Improve the employability of at-risk youth**

**Program Area:** Job Training, Delinquency Prevention

#### **Objectives:**

1. Continued funding of Goodwill's Youth Employment Program and other similar projects and individualized aptitude testing, job-readiness assessments, and successful employment of 100 youths across Texas.
2. Evaluate the successfulness of CJD's current portfolio of job training pilot grants to replicate and promote in other jurisdictions across the state.

## **Background and Approach:**

The population in Texas continues to grow as businesses relocate to the state and citizens across the nation move here to take advantage of the growing economy. It is critical that youth remain in school and develop marketable skills to supply the demands for the workforce.

CJD recognizes the importance of improving the employability of at-risk youth by funding projects that assess skill aptitude, teach basic job skills including workplace etiquette and positive workplace habits, and offer training and pre-apprenticeships for vocational disciplines.

CJD funds several programs that work to reduce criminal activity and juvenile delinquency through vocational education training, social skills training, and GED studies. Vocational programs include courses in electrical, carpentry, welding, framing, roofing, small engine repair, culinary arts, cosmetology and office assistant trades. Employment helps juveniles gain self-esteem, develop a sense of responsibility, manage time and money, work as a team, set goals and become aware of business practices that can lead them toward successful careers. Studies have shown that youth in the juvenile justice system who have access to job-readiness and employment opportunities have a higher chance of succeeding in their community.

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### ➤ **Goal 4: Prevent delinquency before it occurs**

**Program Area:** Delinquency Prevention

#### **Objectives:**

1. Improve the number of services and funding available to schools to assist in truancy prevention and juvenile delinquency prevention. Using federal or state funds, fund additional juvenile case managers across the state to serve as caseworkers, social

workers, and court coordinators at municipal courts or Independent School Districts (ISDs) to prevent school truancy and run-aways.

2. Fund one-to-one mentoring programs for at-risk youth in community settings. Increase noticed positive behavior in mentored youths in CJD-funded programs.
3. Improve and increase training for School Resource Officers (SROs) to prevent juvenile delinquency. Coordinate with Texas School Safety Center to offer training on SRO de-escalation techniques and train SROs across the state.

**Background and Approach:**

A study conducted by Texas A&M’s Public Policy Research Institute and the Council of State Governments reported that 59% of 928,940 students in 6th through 12th grades had some involvement in the juvenile justice system while in school. Prevention and intervention efforts for youth are cost-effective and successful in preventing future delinquent behavior and contact with the juvenile justice system.

Texas targets youth in high-risk categories and funds programs or other initiatives designed to impact youth positively and divert them from a path of serious, violent, and chronic delinquency. Prevention and early intervention initiatives may include support for evidence-based educational programs, truancy and run-away intervention, mentoring, character development, effective interventions for juveniles with emotional or learning disabilities, and accountability and after-school programs.

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➤ **Goal 5: Reduce racial disparities in the juvenile justice system**

**Program Area:** Disproportionate Minority Contact, Diversion

**Objectives:**

1. Fund minority diversion programs in the target areas and jurisdictions across Texas with high levels of DMC.
2. Examine and reduce confinement levels or placement in residential facilities for minority juvenile offenders in TJJD facilities.

**Background and Approach:**

Texas' juvenile population is projected to increase 2% between 2010 and 2030 with Anglo youth population decreasing by 5% and the African American decreasing 8%. The Hispanic juvenile population is projected to increase by 11%. Hispanic juveniles accounted for 49% of those referred with African American juveniles accounting for 24%. Compared to Anglos, Hispanic juveniles have a significantly higher probability of progressing through all four stages of case processing from initial contact through court action. African American youth have a higher probability of progressing through two stages including initial contact and prosecutorial review.

CJD prioritizes funding to support programs and initiatives that will reduce the number of minority youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system relative to non-minority youth through the establishment of non-invasive caution/warning programs.

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➤ **Goal 6: Reduce recidivism among juvenile offenders**

**Program Areas:** Aftercare/Reentry, Community-Based Programs and Services, Mental Health Services

**Objectives:**

1. Complete a planning process to develop an initial strategy to improve juvenile reentry effectiveness.
2. Fund services that facilitate better reentry outcomes, such as aptitude assessments, vocational training, family support and group counseling, and mental health and substance abuse treatment.

**Background and Approach:**

CJD does not currently receive many applications for reentry programs from local or statewide grant applicants. More work must be done to identify the tools confined youth need in preparation for release into the community. The tools to help youth may be aptitude assessments and/or vocational training, which will help professionals determine post-placement services for youth offenders' successful reintegration. Youth who enter the criminal justice system and reenter society are more likely to reoffend if they do not have an understanding of their abilities and potential skillset to be successful in the workforce community. Additionally, mental health and substance abuse programs need to be offered to ensure a full spectrum of reentry services.

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➤ **Goal 7: Divert youth from entering the juvenile justice system**

**Program Area:** Diversion

**Objectives:**

1. Reduce juvenile crime rates, especially Conduct in Need of Supervision (CINS) and misdemeanor crimes, which are more directly relevant to diversion programs.
2. Fund programs that enroll juveniles in diversion programs.

**Background and Approach:**

While Texas continues to see a decline in the number of juvenile referrals – 14% from 2015 to 2017 – the relatively high number of misdemeanors and Conduct in Need of Supervision referrals demonstrate opportunities to divert youth from the juvenile justice system before committing felonies. In 2017, 52% of referrals were for CINS and Misdemeanor offenses.

CJD will seek to fund diversion programs at the local level through grants to local governments actively diverting juvenile offenders. CJD also began a Truancy Prevention and Intervention Grant Program in 2017 and will continue it this year. This program is funded by a state appropriation and may help to reduce overall delinquency and juvenile crime rates as youth are engaged in programs and case management to address truancy issues.

Diversion programs are critical to diverting youth away from delinquent and criminal activity. Efforts must be made to engage parents, extended family members, schools, advocacy groups, providers and community leaders to invest time and energy in helping youth develop skills to say no to peer pressure that leads them down the path of delinquent behavior. School-based diversion programs, in particular, can impact delinquency rates. The 2013 Texas At-Risk Youth Services Project report stated the following: “When participants in the current research project were asked about the most effective performance measures for juvenile delinquency prevention and intervention programs, the measures cited most often were school-based.”<sup>7</sup>

Diversion programs can offer youth alternatives to gang involvement and provide support to

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<sup>7</sup> *Texas At-Risk Youth Services Project*, Texas Legislative Budget Board, 2013, <http://www.lbb.state.tx.us/Search.aspx>

youth who are under pressure to join gangs. Diversion programs can also present an alternate view of the future to troubled youth when local environments, role models and even families do not.

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## C. IMPLEMENTATION (ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES)

CJD implements the OJJDP Grants Program through two programs: the statewide grant program and the local program.

### ➤ **Consultation in implementation of statewide plan**

The statewide program is implemented with close coordination with the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board (JJAB), who also performs the merit review recommendations for CJD. The JJAB is and will continue to be involved in general priority and goal-setting, performance evaluation, and funding recommendations. Statewide grants will focus in part on developing the resources and infrastructure needed for local programs.

### ➤ **Consultation and participation of units of local government**

For the local program, CJD contracts with the 24 regional councils of governments (COGs) to provide grant training workshops for interested applicants. After the deadline for submission of applications, the COGs appoint Criminal Justice Advisory Committees (CJACs) to review and prioritize applications based on regional needs. The following proposed timeline is for CJD's Fiscal Year 2019 juvenile subrecipient application and award process:

December 18, 2018	Open Solicitation for Subrecipients
February 20, 2019	Application Submission Deadline
March-April, 2019	Review and Prioritization by Criminal Justice Advisory Committees at COGs
June 1, 2019	JJAB Meeting to Prioritize Statewide Applications
May 8, 2019	Funding Recommendations Due from COGs
July 31, 2019	Executive Approval of Funding Recommendations
August 3, 2019	Release Awards to Subrecipients

October 1, 2019

Grant Period Begins for Subrecipients

In order to help achieve the plan's goals and objectives, CJD will then coordinate with the local CJACs to encourage grant applications from local governments and non-profits in their area that implement plan priorities, as well as encouraging CJACs to prioritize the funding of such grants.

➤ **Goal 1: Increase the effectiveness of community-based supervision**

**Objectives:**

1. Fund mental health and substance abuse treatment programs to support community-based treatment services for youths under community supervision.

**Implementation:**

CJD will engage in education efforts to inform local CJACs of best practices in treatment services for community-based supervision.

CJD will continue to take advisement from CJACs on the needs of local community-based supervision programs. CJACs have and are anticipated to continue to recommend that CJD fund treatment services at the local level.

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➤ **Goal 2: Improve the identification and response to victims of child abuse\**

**Objectives:**

1. Increase the identification, intake, and review of child abuse cases in multi-disciplinary approach settings across Texas.

**Implementation:**

CJD will fund the development and deployment of tools to identify victims of child abuse and neglect within TJJD custody, and facilitate a multi-disciplinary approach to addressing needs

that could improve reentry outcomes. CJD will also explore methods to deploy screening tools to local juvenile justice probation departments to better identify and serve juvenile offenders who are also victims of abuse or neglect.

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➤ **Goal 3: Improve the employability of at-risk youth**

**Objectives:**

1. Continued funding of Goodwill’s Youth Employment Program and other similar projects and individualized aptitude testing, job-readiness assessments, and successful employment of youth across Texas.
2. Evaluate the successfulness of CJDs current portfolio of job training pilot grants to replicate and promote in other jurisdictions across the state.

**Implementation:**

CJD will fund the identified objectives and then develop a statewide plan for making funding tested and successful programs available statewide.

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➤ **Goal 4: Prevent delinquency before it occurs**

**Objectives:**

1. Improve the number of services and funding available to schools to assist in truancy prevention and juvenile delinquency prevention. Using federal or state funds, fund additional juvenile case managers across the state to serve as caseworkers, social workers, and court coordinators at municipal courts or Independent School Districts (ISDs) to prevent school truancy and run-aways.

2. Fund one-to-one mentoring programs for at-risk youth in community settings. Increase noticed positive behavior in mentored youths in CJD-funded programs.
3. Improve and increase training for School Resource Officers (SROs) to prevent juvenile delinquency. Coordinate with Texas School Safety Center to offer training on SRO de-escalation techniques and train SROs across the state.

**Implementation:**

CJD will continue to develop its Truancy Prevention and Intervention program. CJD will continue to promote and fund programs with a preventative component, such as mentoring and SROs whose duties extend to prevention and are not solely law enforcement / security officers.

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➤ **Goal 5: Reduce racial disparities in the juvenile justice system**

**Objectives:**

1. Fund minority diversion programs in the target areas and jurisdictions across Texas with high levels of DMC.
2. Examine and reduce confinement levels or placement in residential facilities for minority juvenile offenders in TJJD facilities.

**Implementation:**

CJD continues to fund support programs and initiatives that will reduce the number of minority youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system relative to non-minority youth through the establishment of non-invasive caution/warning programs. However, applications for these projects have not been very forthcoming from local applicants. CJD will work to identify programs and tools that could be effective at the local level and promote funding opportunities for these programs.

CJD will also work with TJJD to identify strategies and tools to reduce confinement or placement levels within TJJD facilities.

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➤ **Goal 6: Reduce recidivism among juvenile offenders**

**Objectives:**

1. Complete a planning process to develop an initial strategy to improve juvenile reentry effectiveness.
2. Fund services that facilitate better reentry outcomes, such as aptitude assessments, vocational training, family support and group counseling, and mental health and substance abuse treatment.

**Implementation:**

CJD plans to hold a strategic session with reentry experts and major stakeholders in this field to help us determine an appropriate assessment for youth offenders and current professional development programs targeted at the juvenile population. The JJAB will then review options to fund a new pilot program and evaluation focused on reentry and pilot new programs that fill the gap in professional development for the identified population.

The new programs will help youth offenders get the tools they need in preparation for release into the community. The tools to help youth may include aptitude assessments and/or vocational training, which will help professionals determine post-placement services for youth offenders' successful reintegration.

CJD will also work with TJJD to identify strategies and tools that will increase the effectiveness of juvenile reentry and reduce recidivism.

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➤ **Goal 7: Divert youth from entering the juvenile justice system**

**Objectives:**

1. Reduce juvenile crime rates, especially Conduct in Need of Supervision (CINS) and misdemeanor crimes, which are more directly relevant to diversion programs.
2. Fund programs that enroll juveniles in diversion programs.

**Implementation:**

CJD will seek to fund diversion programs at the local level through grants to local governments actively diverting juvenile offenders. CJD will also seek to leverage the Truancy Prevention and Intervention program to identify and offer services and programs to truant youth at risk of developing further delinquent behavior.

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Additionally the JJAB has identified several focus areas for the coming year:

➤ **Focus 1: Rely on evidence and faithfully implement tested practices**

**Implementation:**

1. **Invest in evidence:** Explore proven programs and reexamine pilot programs that may not have been adequately evaluated.
2. **Build new evidence:** Place a larger emphasis on “practice-based research”.
3. **Finding evidence:** Provide a pointer-system for CJD grant recipients to places where they can find both evaluations of programs and implementation guidance.

➤ **Focus 2: Reduce future crime.**

**Implementation:**

1. **Diversion:** Lower the number of young people who enter or reenter the system by focusing on the points in the system where efforts may be most fruitful including those

who make a first mistake, those who are frequent repeat offenders, or those who are born into the cycle.

2. **System Improvement:** Reduce the number of young people who enter the criminal justice system by championing system responses that allow each child to get what they need in an individualized way; including gender-specific services.
3. **Workforce Development:** Support programs that underscore education as a prevention factor and that properly prepare young people for the workforce.

➤ **Focus 3: Mental Health Services**

**Implementation:**

CJD is highly emphasizing and intends to award programs focused on mental health services targeted at youth in the juvenile justice system in the coming grant year. The juvenile justice program Request for Applications has been revised to highlight mental health services to include risky behavior, warning signs, trauma-informed care, and juvenile justice system improvement.

In particular, CJD will focus on:

1. **Rural needs:** Fund and evaluate mental health-focused telemedicine.
2. **Warning Signs:** Education programs for teachers and parents to recognize mental health warning signs.
3. **Dealing with trauma:** Training & technical assistance on trauma-informed care.
4. **Risky behavior:** Identify and fund coordinated, cross-system responses to risky mental health issues

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The following are also elements of the plan:

➤ **Element: Population-specific plans**

**1. Gender-specific services for the prevention and treatment of youth delinquency:**

CJD currently funds a state-wide pilot program through the Girl Scouts of America, Central Texas “Girl Scouts Beyond Bars” which is a prevention program that serves female youth whom currently have a mother that is incarcerated. The program provides professional therapy, regular extended prison visitation with their mothers, mentoring, enrichment opportunities, and Girl Scouts curriculum. The program pairs counseling and case management services to prevent these girls from committing delinquent behavior.

**2. Services for the prevention and treatment of youth delinquency in rural areas: CJD**

currently funds a state-wide pilot program through Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center for the Telemedicine Wellness, Intervention, Triage, and Referral (TWITR) program. The TWITR program is located in twelve rural school districts in a six county region. TWITR has three steps: educate, assess, and treat. TWITR serves as a model for the use of telemedicine to identify high school and middle school students exhibiting at-risk behavior that makes them imminently dangerous to themselves or others.

**3. Services for youth with mental health needs:** Mental health services to youth in the

juvenile justice system, including information on implementation and how the state is targeting those services to youth in the system who need them most.

➤ **Element: Collecting and sharing juvenile justice information**

CJD has partnerships with all respective agencies that collect and/or gather juvenile justice data across education, child welfare, juvenile justice, and law enforcement systems. CJD shares this data with the COGs to incorporate into their regional strategic plans and makes their local

funding recommendations. Below are some examples of the robust dataset CJD collected to inform Texas' three-year plan:

1. Texas Education Agency: Average daily attendance rates, graduation rates, truancy data, and student population
2. Texas Juvenile Justice Department: Juvenile referrals, dispositions, and detention rates by gender, age, race, and offense
3. Texas Department of Public Safety: Juvenile arrests by gender, age, race, and offense.
4. Texas Department of Family and Protective Services: child population, confirmed victims of abuse/neglect cases, and other related child welfare data.

At this time, CJD has not encountered any barriers in the collecting or sharing of juvenile information of at-risk youth among state agencies. Section 411.0765 of the Texas Government Code allows for the sharing of sensitive information across criminal justice agencies in Texas.

## D. FORMULA GRANTS PROGRAM STAFF

Section	Title	Name	Salary Source	% of Time Supporting JJDP
Executive Administration	SAA Executive Director & Authorized Signing Official	Aimee Snoddy	100% state funds	5%
	Executive Director, CJD	Reilly Webb	100% state funds	5%
Justice Program	Director	Margie Fernandez-Prew	33% JJDP 33% other federal 34% state funds	33%
	Associate Director	Andrew Friedrichs	33% JJDP 33% other federal 34% state funds	33%
	Lead Program Coordinator	Lauren Rodriguez	100% JJDP Funds	100%
	Lead Grant Coordinator	Marta Salinas	33% JJDP 33% other federal 34% state funds	33%
	Grant Coordinator	Jeana Bores	10% JJDP 90% state funds	10%

### Executive Administration Staff Duties

- Set programmatic and operational goals for the agency that coincide with the Governor's overall mission for the state.

### Justice Program Staff Duties

#### *Director, Justice Programs*

- Responsible for leading the administration of juvenile and youth services programs which includes the supervision/administration over all juvenile programs within CJD's Justice Programs.
- Works closely with Juvenile Justice Advisory Board to strategically plan program direction, coordination and implementation of identified priorities.

*Associate Director, Justice Programs*

- Planning and implementation of the Governor's JJDP Act Compliance Monitoring Plan ensuring the state's compliance with Section 223(a)(11)(12)&(13) of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act of 2002 relating to Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (DSO), Separation, and Jail Removal.
- Supports the planning, implementation, coordination, monitoring of grant-funded programs.

*Lead Program Coordinator/Juvenile Justice Specialist/DMC Coordinator*

- Responsible for leading the strategic coordination and execution of the DMC requirement of the JJDP Act, which includes planning and implementation of the Governor's JJDP Act DMC Plan ensuring the state maintains compliance with Section 223(a)(14) of the JJDP Act of 2002.
- Conduct research, coordination and facilitate the implementation of designated priorities and activities of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board activities.

*Grant Coordinators (2 positions)*

- Manage assigned grants and provide assistance to current and potential sub-recipients.
- Review grant applications for budget and programmatic compliance.
- Monitor sub-recipient agencies to determine compliance with state and federal grant administration policies and procedures.

## **6. PLAN FOR COLLECTING THE DATA REQUIRED FOR THIS SOLICITATION'S PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

CJD continues to contract with the Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) at Texas A&M University to maintain a web-based data collection system for program performance data. This system allows for the retrieval and analysis of programmatic data. Recipients of state and federal juvenile justice funding report performance results to PPRI quarterly. Output and outcome measures reported by sub-recipients are consistent with those recommended by OJJDP and align with the 28 program areas. Measures are assigned to each project based on the approved activities for the particular grant. In the event that a sub-recipient is delinquent in reporting this information as required, they could have a fund hold placed on their grant. Additionally, delinquent reporting could result in deductions for points during the COG scoring process for prioritizing recommendations for funding.

CJD monitors sub-recipient performance through program progress reports and reaches out to agencies who are not meeting stated objectives. Failure to meet requirements for delivery of services could result in a sub-recipient being asked to return grant funds to CJD. Fund holds are placed on sub-recipient agencies for which CJD is needing additional documentation to determine compliance and if necessary, a vendor hold may be implemented which results in a hold on all funds, regardless of their source, to the agency or unit of government. CJD maintains a list of sub-recipients who are permanently banned from receiving grant funds based on non-compliance of grant requirements. In order to be removed from the list, a sub-recipient must submit all missing documents or refunds to CJD for review and approval.