



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Juvenile Detention Centers and Alternative Programs (JDCAP) is a statewide, nonprofit, bipartisan association representing the administrators and staff of agencies who serve justice-involved youth, within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The Juvenile Detention Centers and Alternative Programs is a professional organization dedicated to supporting its members by: promoting sound policies, advancing best practice standards, and maintaining a continuous learning environment within the juvenile justice system. The Association serves to strengthen Pennsylvania juvenile justice facilities' ability to assure community protection and improve the well-being and quality of life of their constituents. To this end, the Association effects the achievement of favorable state legislation, programs and policies, and provides appropriate programs and services to its members.

The association's legislative and regulatory policy is based on the resolutions adopted by the general membership at the Annual Conference. These resolutions, taken as a body, are incorporated in this Association Platform. Responsibility for developing and pursuing strategies for their implementation falls to the Association board of directors, standing committees, special committees, and staff, with the grassroots assistance of the membership.

The general theme of the Association's legislative and regulatory policy is to promote evidence-based decision-making processes and practices that lead to reduced victimization and improved outcomes for youth. This association will oppose legislation that imposes increased responsibility on local government which is not supported by additional funding. The association also supports legislation and policy that allows for greater flexibility for locally run programs to address local needs.

However, recognizing the interdependence of federal, state, county, and local government, the Association will in some circumstances support legislation or regulations contrary to this general rule of flexibility. For this to occur, there must be a rational need for the directive or mandate, and it must be vested with sufficient resources, both fiscal and structural, to permit JDCAP members to administer the directive or mandate in a manner which it determines best meets the needs of its constituents.

A. The Association opposes state-wide policy changes that affect existing relationships between county agencies, commonwealth agencies and JDCAP members when those changes occur outside the regulatory and legislative process, and without input from the agencies that will be affected. (Adopted 2013) (Amended 2015) (Amended 2017)

B. The Association supports a long-term funding solution for services targeting justice-involved youth, to be accomplished through a collaborative effort inclusive of all involved county departments, the Office of Children Youth and Family Services, and other stakeholders, to re-evaluate existing funding mechanisms and establish the most appropriate formula. Funding formulas

must also consider county-specific needs, balancing child needs and community safety, and adoption of evidence-informed practices. (Adopted 2013) (Amended 2015) (Amended 2017)

C. The Association supports a participatory role for JDCAP in the development of any juvenile justice policy. (Adopted 2013)

D. The Association supports maximum local authority and flexibility for secure juvenile detention service and detention alternative programs/services. The Association opposes any efforts to consolidate or regionalize juvenile justice programs that are the responsibility of counties or their affiliates, and each county or group of counties currently managing a juvenile justice program should have a right of first refusal in determining whether to continue to manage the services or to privatize. (Adopted 2013)

E. The Association supports enactment of an appropriate legislative remedy to allow counties to be reimbursed for the behavioral health and health care services provided to youth in detention facilities. (Adopted 2013)

F. The Association supports efforts to re-examine the laws defining state funding available to counties through reimbursement for secure detention and detention alternative utilization. As utilization decreases, operational costs per child increase. Detention is viewed as a court mandated service which must remain as a viable and affordable option when community safety is at risk. (Adopted 2013)

G. The Association supports efforts by counties to maintain the adequate numbers of secure beds in juvenile detention facilities as well as the flexible and dynamic use of these facilities to ensure access by county courts as needed. (Adopted 2013)

H. The Association supports the Department of Human Services' Office of Children, Youth and Families in finding a stable, state-level funding source for the development and ongoing administration of a comprehensive training program which meets training requirements. Defined by the 3800 regulations including the current training needs of juvenile justice service providers. (Adopted 2013) (Amended 2015). (Amended 2017)

I. The Association, in recognition of the growing number of unique populations within the juvenile justice system (gender, behavioral health, gender identity, young adults, autism, etc.):

a. Supports the development of additional community-based behavioral health services for justice-involved youth within the state;

b. Supports adequately training juvenile justice staff to manage the needs of these youth by providing stable, state-level funding for the development and ongoing administration of a comprehensive training program for juvenile detention centers and alternative programs that would provide training on behavior management, crisis intervention skills, cognitive functioning and psychopathology;

c. Supports providing behavioral health services to justice-involved youth to maintain their safety, effectively meet their needs and help prevent the exacerbation of problems;

d. Supports the examination of systemic issues around access to services, ability to obtain services and models for responding to the behavioral health needs of justice-involved youth; and

e. Supports incentivizing the use of training methodologies that utilize electronic means to reduce travel and other costs for providers, including the use of video conferencing capabilities to facilitate staff participation in required training (Adopted 2013) (Amended 2015)

J. The Association supports quality year-round academic engagement and pro-social development programming for youth in the juvenile justice system. (Adopted 2013) (Amended 2015)

K. The Association supports state policies that encourage juvenile justice service providers to utilize best practices, protocols, and procedures in order to assure the safety of youth in their care and of staff, while protecting the community. (Adopted 2013) (Amended 2015) (Amended 2017)

L. The Association supports efforts to create and maintain data collection and management systems that enable quality improvement opportunities both internally and systemically. (Adopted 2013) (Amended 2015)

M. The Association supports efforts to allow state administrative agencies to reimburse counties for the costs of “Direct File” youth while in juvenile detention. (Adopted 2015)

N. The Association recognizes that salary information for public officials and employees is a public record but opposes legislation to require publication of individual salary information on the internet, out of concern that the information would be too freely accessible and too prone to use for illegal or improper purposes. (Adopted 2013)

O. The Association supports funding to improve access and interaction with community support individuals and agencies who will provide transition services to youth re-entering or being diverted within the community. (Adopted 2016)

P. The Association supports funding and technical assistance access for providers to improve their ability to provide a balanced approach (Community Protection/Competency Development/Victim Restoration) for justice-involved youth. (Adopted 2017)

Q. The Association supports efforts to enhance workforce development and retention. (Adopted 2017)