

State of Alaska FY2024 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Family and Community Services Juvenile Justice Results Delivery Unit Budget Summary

Juvenile Justice Results Delivery Unit

Contribution to Department's Mission

To hold juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior, promote the safety and restoration of victims and communities, and assist offenders and their families in developing skills to prevent crime.

Core Services

- Probation
- Detention
- Treatment

Major RDU Accomplishments in 2022

The Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) had numerous accomplishments this year despite the most significant staff turnover seen in decades. Senior leadership was able to prepare for the Department of Health and Social Services bifurcation and the transition to the new department was successful. DJJ, the Alaska Pioneer Homes (AKPH), Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API), and the Office of Children's Services (OCS) have increased collaboration and are seeing positive results across the board. Including cross division training and new programming between DJJ, API, and AKPH to a strengthened partnership with OCS to better serve complex cases involving youth. The Division of Juvenile Justice has already seen the benefits of the bifurcation to a smaller department. Administrative support for project management, human resources, and information technology have increased resulting in more effective work product for the division. Expectations of increased efficiencies are anticipated as Department Support Services becomes appropriately staffed.

The continued development and implementation of a specialized treatment program has allowed the division to provide better services to the youth in our care. The four areas of specialized programming are substance abuse, female programming, violent offender rehabilitation, and treatment for youth with neurobehavioral disorders. Two of these units are fully operating with new programming (the Female Unit and the Neurobehavioral Disorders Program) the remaining two are partially implemented but still underdevelopment. The division staff and youth have seen positive results with neurofeedback treatment which retrains the brain to regulate and aims to change the way the brain responds to certain stimuli.

COVID-19 taught the staff and facilities to manage infections to ensure the health and safety of youth, staff, and families while providing uninterrupted services. This training has allowed the division to be prepared for future potential infections. As a result of the restrictions from the pandemic behind us, staff and youth are excited to establish in person activities including visiting, transitional services, group activities and court visits.

In April 2022, senior and mid-level managers attended a three-day in person planning meeting to focus on division goals. One of the main topics discussed was recruitment and retention. At the meeting the discussions and planning about changing leadership was inspiring and the division is starting to improve raising future leaders and develop the skills of existing managers.

The Probation Department continued to focus on overall system improvements. Consultation visits and trainings were held with Dr. Brian Lovins, focusing on coaching and success plans for youth. The division currently utilizes the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) a national tool to assess the areas of risk and needs for the youth. Probation will improve the use of this tool to identify factors that place youth at risk to assist case planning and management. Several workgroups have been active working on probation enhancements including policy updates, team building, community partnerships, and quality assurance. Strategic planning is currently being designed for the upcoming two years putting these efforts into action.

The Division of Juvenile Justice continues to participate in national Performance Based Standards (PbS) ensuring ongoing monitoring for quality assurance and system improvements when needed. All secure facilities report PbS data twice yearly resulting in either findings that document deficiencies and required improvement plans or in the

divisions case, celebrating the facility success. In Fiscal Year 2022 we were able to begin in-person audits again. The division takes great pride in our high scores and work with PbS including survey outcomes with youth, families, and staff.

The Division of Juvenile Justice fully implemented a new Electronic Health Record (EHR). The transition to the new EHC through TechCare was successful and staff are fully trained and using the new system.

There was continued work and progress with new legislation regarding waived minors being housed with the Division of Juvenile Justice until they reach 18 years, at which time they are transferred to the Department of Corrections (House Bill 105). This was a requirement of the Juvenile Justice Reauthorization Act of 2018. Alaska Juvenile Justice was able to implement this new requirement after significant work with the Department of Corrections ahead of many other states and these youth are being successfully served by DJJ.

Key RDU Challenges

DJJ has historically experienced long-term employee retention with few vacancies. However, following the COVID-19 pandemic, the national workforce changed, and all employment sectors are having serious difficulties recruiting and retaining staff. For DJJ this has resulted in two facilities reaching critical staffing levels and the need to combine detention and treatment units to safely cover shifts and provide services. With so many vacancies, staff are working significant overtime, and, in some situations, staff have traveled from one facility to another to have enough staff to cover all shifts. Additional vacancies across the division have negatively impacted programs, administration, and mental health programming. Senior leadership has been working on improving recruitment efforts and at the same time evaluating retention. A division wide survey was conducted, and active efforts are being made to improve new employee onboarding, supervision practices, training, and benefits for staff to improve division culture. Despite these challenges, the division team has worked together to cover duties and each other ensuring consistency in the services provided.

When needed due to critical staffing levels, the division will continue to serve youth by combining units until the employment crisis has stabilized. The detention and treatment youth will continue to be separated as much as possible but with limited staff some services will not be available. The staffing situation has not changed the division plans to complete the specialized treatment units. The division plans to continue the training and program structure needed for the substance abuse and violent offender units. All of the specialized units were designed to target treatment for the highest risk factors involved in youth success and in some cases recidivism.

Division of Juvenile Justice facilities and probation offices continue to manage acutely mentally ill juveniles and those impacted by severe trauma who cannot find appropriate community or residential placement. Most of these youth have a long history with the Office of Children's Services and have exhausted both in-state and out-of-state placements prior to DJJ involvement. The result is long stays in detention or secure treatment orders in a Division of Juvenile Justice facility due to their accompanying delinquent behavior and extreme risk and needs. The department is working on solutions for these youth, but as this population continues to increase so will the challenges for the division and staff.

During the COVID-19 pandemic referrals from law enforcement were down across the state. As the pandemic has regressed, referrals have increased resulting in overcapacity in three detention units. If the large numbers continue, the Division of Juvenile Justice will not be able to provide the level of service needed within the existing facilities. Senior leadership has started to collect data and will continue monitoring. One solution is the expansion of the Mat-Su Youth Facility. The population in this area of the state has continued to grow and expanding this facility maybe the best long-term solution. Complimentary to that solution is to expedite processing youth court cases. Quicker times for Adjudication and Disposition is best practice for the youth as well as the victims.

After a department wide cyberattack several Division of Juvenile Justice Systems went down, and it took almost a year to get some of them back up and running. This included the statewide Youth Court Database (YODA) which was recently recovered. The cyberattack resulted in the Information Technology department being focused on the attack and delays in other division wide systems such as SharePoint. Other projects such as updating division websites and data improvements were delayed. After COVID-19 it is more important than ever to have virtual platforms and tools current for internal and external users. With the department bifurcation, there has been steady progress on these issues and improving division electronic resources.

Regional probation offices are reporting a significant shortage of juvenile sex offender assessors and treatment providers. Historically there have been limited providers throughout the state who are trained to work with juvenile sex offenders. Recently, several providers had either retired or closed their practices which increases the difficulty in providing risk-assessments and subsequent community-based treatment.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2024

The division has hired its first Occupational Therapist to work with the girl's unit at the Johnson Youth Center. The division is hoping to continue work with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to support an additional occupational therapist position at the Bethel Youth Facility. These positions will provide individual and group occupational rehabilitative therapy to youth with mental health disorders or disabilities. As a member of the interdisciplinary team along with medical, clinical, and juvenile justice staff, the occupational therapist will evaluate skills, adaptive behaviors, and patterns of behavior related to daily function to promote occupational programs to promote, maintain, or restore physical or mental health, and functional independence in the daily lives of the youth in care.

The division continues to address the high recidivism rate for the Alaska Native youth population and the issues related to successful transition home after treatment. The division's relationship with tribes and tribal communities is an important factor in making improvements in these areas. The division continues to work with tribal communities to develop diversion programs as an early intervention to keep youth who commit lower-level offenses in their communities. The division will continue to work on Racial and Ethnic Disparity. This includes ongoing data collection, strengthening rural diversion programs, and continued partnership with RurAL Cap who provides targeted cultural services focused on delinquency prevention.

Probation leadership will continue efforts to develop and implement a victim services training statewide to improve its work with victims and prioritize focusing on identifying sex offender treatment providers who have experience working with youth. This will include the development of standards of care in place for the providers in urban and rural Alaska. Juvenile probation officers will expand their work with providers to ensure provider experience, training, and education to work with juveniles displaying sexual offending behaviors.

With the upcoming capital improvement project at the Fairbanks Youth Facility there will be programmatic changes needed throughout the remodel. The division will carefully evaluate the youth and what can be done to minimize program changes as well as the overall impact on the youth and staff.

Contact Information
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**Juvenile Justice
RDU Financial Summary by Component**

All dollars shown in thousands

	FY2022 Actuals				FY2023 Management Plan				FY2024 Governor			
	UGF+DGF Funds	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	UGF+DGF Funds	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	UGF+DGF Funds	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds
Formula Expenditures None.												
Non-Formula Expenditures												
McLaughlin Youth Center	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	18,370.3	588.0	20.0	18,978.3	18,753.6	589.9	20.0	19,363.5
Mat-Su Youth Facility	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,678.9	60.0	10.0	2,748.9	2,736.0	60.0	10.0	2,806.0
Kenai Peninsula Youth Facility	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,194.4	30.0	10.0	2,234.4	2,240.7	30.0	10.0	2,280.7
Fairbanks Youth Facility	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4,952.3	74.8	10.0	5,037.1	5,046.6	74.8	10.0	5,131.4
Bethel Youth Facility	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5,724.2	0.0	10.0	5,734.2	5,845.3	0.0	10.0	5,855.3
Johnson Youth Center	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4,758.6	82.3	10.0	4,850.9	4,850.3	83.7	10.0	4,944.0
Probation Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	17,568.9	154.2	326.0	18,049.1	17,898.6	155.4	330.7	18,384.7
Delinquency Prevention	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	226.7	1,155.0	1,381.7	0.0	226.7	1,155.0	1,381.7
Youth Courts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	447.3	0.0	0.0	447.3	448.2	0.0	0.0	448.2
Juvenile Justice Health Care	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,488.6	0.0	0.0	1,488.6	1,488.6	0.0	0.0	1,488.6
Totals	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	58,183.5	1,216.0	1,551.0	60,950.5	59,307.9	1,220.5	1,555.7	62,084.1

Juvenile Justice
Summary of RDU Budget Changes by Component
From FY2023 Management Plan to FY2024 Governor

All dollars shown in thousands

	<u>Unrestricted</u> <u>Gen (UGF)</u>	<u>Designated</u> <u>Gen (DGF)</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Federal</u> <u>Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2023 Management Plan	58,183.5	0.0	1,216.0	1,551.0	60,950.5
Adjustments which continue current level of service:					
-McLaughlin Youth Center	383.3	0.0	1.9	0.0	385.2
-Mat-Su Youth Facility	57.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	57.1
-Kenai Peninsula Youth Facility	46.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	46.3
-Fairbanks Youth Facility	94.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	94.3
-Bethel Youth Facility	121.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	121.1
-Johnson Youth Center	91.7	0.0	1.4	0.0	93.1
-Probation Services	329.7	0.0	1.2	4.7	335.6
-Youth Courts	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9
FY2024 Governor	59,307.9	0.0	1,220.5	1,555.7	62,084.1