

**Recommendations of the
FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON JUVENILE JUSTICE (FACJJ)**

February 2020

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON FACILITATING COMPLIANCE WITH
THE JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM ACT**

Issue Statement

In December 2018, the Juvenile Justice Reform Act (JJRA) of 2018 was signed into law, reauthorizing and substantially amending the JJDP Act. The amendments made by the JJRA became effective in FY 2020 (October 1, 2019). Several of the provisions of the JJRA pose implementation and compliance challenges for OJJDP and for the individual states. It is the role of OJJDP and the FACJJ to provide guidance to SAGs and state compliance officers on implementation. These recommendations seek to address two of the largest and most pressing questions raised by new JJRA language.

Recommendations

The Subcommittee on Facilitating Compliance with the Juvenile Justice Reform Act offers the following recommendations:

1. Second or Subsequent Violation Language:

OJJDP should advise states that this language prohibits a juvenile from being continuously re-incarcerated based upon a single violation of a court order. Detention time may still be imposed on a valid court order violation, but once a juvenile has served that time, in order for them to be returned to detention, a second or subsequent violation would have to occur, be charged, and be determined to be true.

2. Effective Monitoring Universe Language:

OJJDP should be empowered to implement an effective monitoring system that ensures state compliance with federal requirements across all state facilities that are subject to the Act's provisions. Further, the new use of the word 'effective' should permit OJJDP staff sufficient leeway to develop a compliance review plan that utilizes tiered, rotational, or multi-year reviews in a manner that is intended to garner maximum effectiveness with minimal burden on individual state systems. Of utmost importance is that OJJDP staff be permitted sufficient leeway to determine the compliance review system that is most likely to be 'effective.'

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATING THE FIELD

Issue Statement

Juvenile justice is a unique area of law and jurisprudence. All juvenile justice professionals – whether they are judges, prosecutors, defenders, law enforcement professionals, educators, probation officers, or staff from community-based organizations – need foundational resources to help them carry out their work effectively. While existing OJJDP resources are of phenomenal quality and value to the juvenile justice field, they are not widely recognized and are underutilized. Easily accessible information for professionals, families, and youth is needed to effectively serve the unique interests of judicial systems and communities. Better trained and more aware professionals will lead to improved and optimal results.

Recommendations

The Subcommittee on Educating the Field offers the following recommendations:

- 1. OJJDP creates a juvenile justice primer that is easily accessible to new juvenile justice professionals.** This primer would provide learners with an adequate knowledge base regarding the purpose and function of the juvenile justice system. It also would direct learners to existing resources that could better prepare them as they advance in their careers.
- 2. OJJDP publishes its resources in an intuitively organized and searchable manner and thereby increases awareness of these resources in the juvenile justice field.** A better organized and searchable website will fill the void of this valuable information and will elevate OJJDP properly as the lead agency in the field of juvenile justice for states and localities.
- 3. OJJDP fosters relationships among federal staff, the FACJJ, and juvenile justice professionals by more clearly and deliberately engaging the State Advisory Groups (SAGs) in the work of the office. This includes specific trainings on the role of the SAG, its relationship to the community, and its obligation and commitment to the ideals of the JJDP Act.** This type of engagement will encourage SAG members to endorse OJJDP as a training mechanism and will build awareness of existing resources among SAG members and therefore the larger field of professionals.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SPECIAL TOPICS

Issue Statement

Rural communities face several challenges, including higher rates of poverty, limited access to quality health services, lower academic attainment, a lack of workforce development opportunities, and poor infrastructure. Compared to their urban counterparts, rural areas have less economic growth and internet access, fewer educational institutions and hospitals, and higher rates of poverty and unemployment. This places greater demands on the nation's rural counties and municipalities. OJJDP, the FACJJ, and SAGs can play a role in supporting rural communities in their efforts to address the significant social, educational, and health-related

challenges facing at-risk and system-involved youth through meaningful engagement and capacity-building.

Recommendations

The Subcommittee on Special Topics offers the following recommendations:

- 1. OJJDP increases access and opportunities for rural communities to apply for federal and state-level grant funding.** This includes:
 - a. Providing assistance to rural communities in basic grant-writing skills;
 - b. Developing a marketing strategy specific to rural communities;
 - c. Where appropriate/allowable, including language in solicitations that prioritizes awards to rural communities; and
 - d. Where appropriate/allowable, streamlining solicitations to encourage and enable rural communities to apply for funding.
- 2. OJJDP provides training and technical assistance to help increase the capacity of rural communities to sustain youth-serving programs.**
- 3. OJJDP encourages collaboration with other federal partners – including the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Agriculture, and Education – to implement comprehensive programs to address the needs of children in rural communities.**
- 4. OJJDP designates staff as rural community subject matter experts.**