



To: Sam Abed, Juvenile Justice Reform Council Chair

From: Maryland Youth Justice Coalition – MYJC

Re: Youth Detention and Placement, Recommendations for Consideration by the Juvenile Justice Reform Council

Date: October 28, 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to provide recommendations to the Juvenile Justice Reform Council (JJRC) on Youth Detention and Placement in Maryland's Youth Justice System.

The Maryland Youth Justice Coalition (MYJC) is a group of passionate advocates dedicated to creating a more fair and equitable youth criminal legal system where youth are given opportunities and options. MYJC aims to improve the lives of all system-impacted youth through legislative and policy advocacy. MYJC is made up of organizations and individuals, including directly impacted and youthful representatives, who share an equitable vision for the future of the youth criminal legal system and who are dedicated to supporting evidence-based, culturally competent solutions vetted by directly-impacted individuals and communities.

We urge this Council to consider the following recommendations:

1. Prohibit youth who are adjudicated delinquent for misdemeanor offenses and violations of probation from being committed for out of home placement.
2. Establish a plan to create a regional, community-based model of incarceration. Ensure every county has access to nonresidential, community-based services that employ evidence-based, culturally competent programming.
3. Prohibit out-of-state placement for youth, especially young women, except in cases where the regional location will benefit the youth. Build up programs in Maryland based on our population's needs and support rehabilitation close to home.





4. Require all facilities that house Maryland’s youthful residents, both Department-run and contracted, to employ evidence-based programming that is focused on positive youth development.
5. Establish requirements for adequate clinical, mental health, and positive youth development staffing that includes necessary education, training, and background in education, child development, social work, or equivalent fields.
6. Require access to comprehensive educational programming.

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