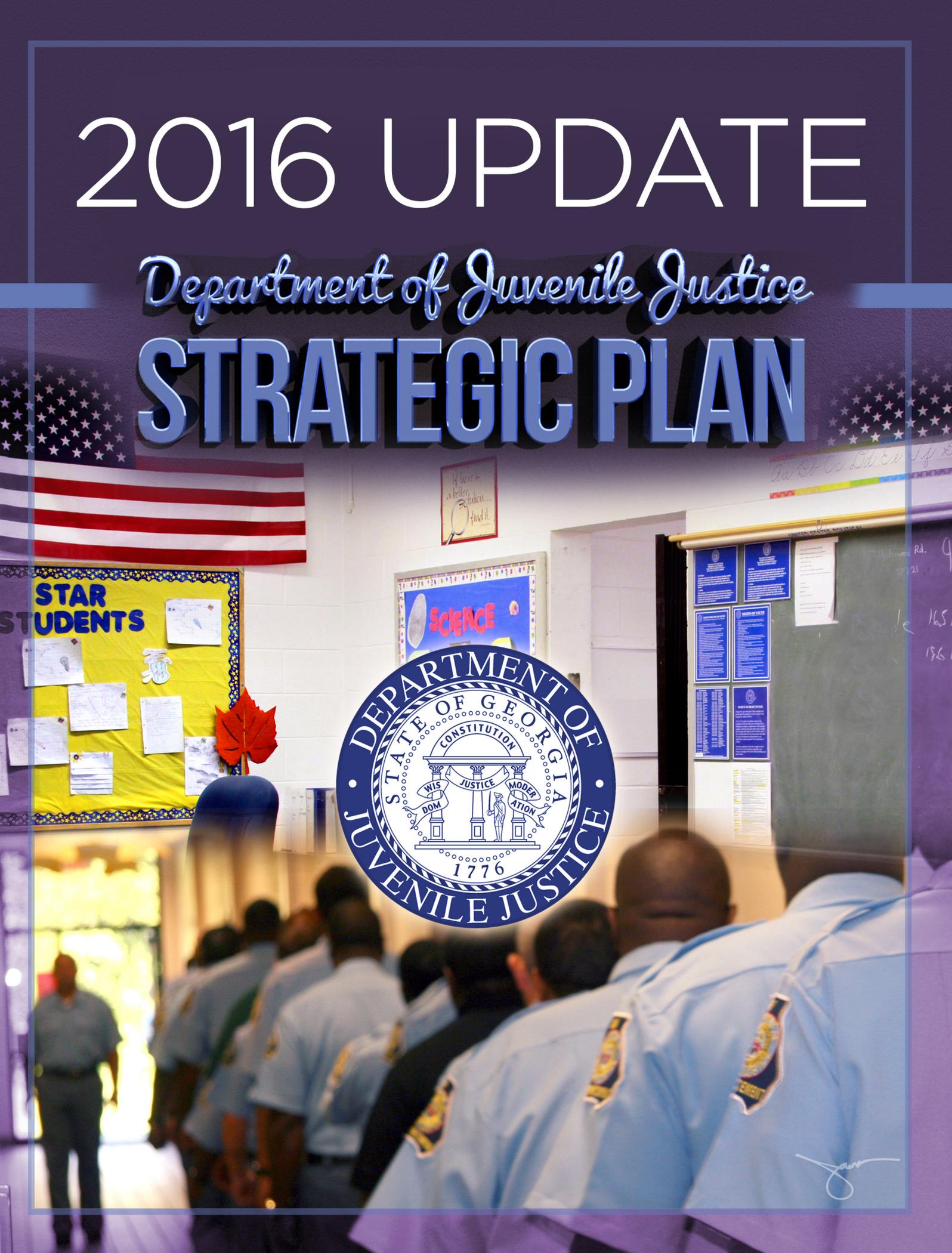


# 2016 UPDATE

*Department of Juvenile Justice*

# STRATEGIC PLAN







Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice

# FY 2016 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Nathan Deal  
Governor

Avery D. Niles  
Commissioner

Elaine P. Snow  
Chairman  
Board of Juvenile Justice

FY 2016 DJJ Strategic Plan Update  
“A Full Service Juvenile Justice Agency”

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## **MISSION**

To protect and serve the citizens of Georgia by holding young offenders accountable for their actions through the delivery of services and sanctions in appropriate settings and by supporting youth in their communities to become productive and law abiding citizens.

## **VISION**

**OFFER HOPE AND YOUTH CHANGE.** The Department of Juvenile Justice will lead the nation in preparing young people in its care to develop and sustain productive lives.

## **VALUES**

We strive to create and sustain an agency culture that values accountability, integrity, security, superior performance, ongoing personal growth, intellectual curiosity, innovation, teamwork, and leadership not only in our staff, but also in the young people in our facilities and programs.



**AVERY D. NILES**  
**COMMISSIONER**

### **MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER**

The Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) has achieved significant milestones entering its second year of juvenile justice reform measures. The four thousand-plus members of the DJJ Team posted throughout Georgia's 27 secure facilities, 92 court service offices and the DJJ Central Office-Decatur have shouldered a burden of substantial change. But I am pleased to report that Juvenile Justice Reform is working! This dedicated cadre of men and women consistently uphold DJJ's mission, "to protect and serve the citizens of Georgia by holding youthful offenders accountable for their actions through the delivery of services and appropriate sanctions that support youth in becoming productive and law abiding citizens in their communities."



## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE



We continue to refine the ways and means by which Georgia enhances safety and security for its citizens. Our challenge this past year has been to implement more fiscally responsible practices while applying a greater wealth of scholastic, therapeutic and risk assessment tools that benefit Georgia's troubled youth. By matching youth needs inside confinement facilities and in our community programs, DJJ will continue to pave the way with a reentry strategy that represents a national best-practices model that helpsto reduce the high costs of recidivism in dollars and detention time. This directly aligns with the Governor's Task Force on Reentry Services, whose partnership continues to enhance programming and



education service delivery for Georgia's juvenile correctional population. At DJJ, Education is on the move!

## 2016 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

DJJ's growth includes professional training for our staff as well as ongoing improvements to our secure facilities. By fielding the most contemporary programs, techniques and equipment, we are poised better now than ever to succeed in our mission. The 2016 Department of Juvenile Justice Strategic Plan builds on Governor Deal's Strategic Goals for Georgia by implementing my "Top Five" priorities for DJJ:

- o Operate Safe, Secure Facilities and Communities, while providing educational opportunities (for all youth)
- o Implementing Juvenile Justice Reform
- o Recruitment, retention and succession planning
- o Classification and Placement of Youth
- o Offender/Youth Re-entry



# GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE



The application of the 2015-2018 DJJ Strategic Plan aligns my administration's top five priorities with the Governor's vision to continue this State's juvenile justice reform process. This plan emphasizes the implementation of evidence-based programs (EBPs), enhanced classroom technology and a strengthening of our reentry architecture that will truly allow Georgia's citizens to observe DJJ's vision to "Offer Hope and Youth Change". We are honored to continue leading the way in offering Georgia's troubled youth an improved path to achieving more productive lives. As one of our dedicated staff once noted, "DJJ is a great place to make your work count!"

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Avery D. Niles", is placed on a white rectangular background.

Avery D. Niles, Commissioner  
Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice



# INTRODUCTION

## Why the 2016 Strategic Plan Update?

The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) uses the state's strategic planning process to coordinate within and between agencies to make sure Georgia continues to move forward in key areas. The State of Georgia has outlined goals and statewide indicators for each of the Governor's key policy areas, itemized below, which provide the vision, direction and set the priorities of the state. All strategic investments proposed during the budget process will be evaluated against the state goals and indicators.





## Governor's Strategic Goals for Georgia

### Educated: Developing life, college, and work-ready students

- Increase percentage of students reading at or above grade level by the completion of 3rd Grade – a strategic benchmark for lifelong learning
- Increase percentage of Georgians who hold a postsecondary credential
- Improve and expand science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education
- Increase teacher and school leader effectiveness
- Increase the percentage of high school graduates who are college and career ready
- Empower citizens with public school options and local flexibility for the purpose of improving student achievement

### Mobile:

- Improve the movement of people and goods across and within the state
- Expand Georgia's role as a major logistics hub for global commerce
- Leverage public-private partnerships and improve intergovernmental cooperation for successful infrastructure development

### Growing: Creating jobs and growing businesses

- Implement strategic tax and regulatory reforms that make Georgia more competitive
- Promote small business growth and entrepreneurship
- Maximize access to capital for startups and growing businesses
- Conserve and enhance natural resources, with an emphasis on increasing state water supplies and security

### Healthy: Accessible care and active lifestyles

- Reduce childhood obesity in Georgia
- Increase access to health services throughout the state
- Increase consumer choice and personal responsibility in health care
- Improve access to treatment and community options for those with disabilities

### Safe: Protecting the public's safety and security

- Implement alternative sentencing options to improve offender rehabilitation
- Promote successful offender re-entry and compliance
- Reduce injury and loss of life on Georgia's roads
- Promote safe communities and stable families where children thrive



## Responsible and Efficient Government: Fiscally sound, principled, conservative

- Maintain Georgia's AAA bond rating
- Increase availability of state services through innovative technology solutions
- Build and maintain a quality state government workforce
- Focus state resources on essential services and employ enterprise solutions
- Enlist community support and public-private partnerships to leverage available resources



# THE FOUR STATE GOALS SUPPORTED BY THE PLAN

The Department of Juvenile Justice FY 2016 Strategic Plan specifically supports four of Governor Nathan Deal's Strategic Goals for Georgia namely:

Safety – Protecting the public's safety and security;

Education – Developing life, college, and work-ready students;

Responsible and Efficient Government - Fiscally sound, principled, conservative.

Health – Accessible care and active lifestyles;

Additionally, Georgia is in its second year of juvenile justice reform based upon a new bill (HB 242) that was passed by the Georgia General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Nathan Deal in 2013. This legislation has helped to position Georgia as a role model for nationwide changes in juvenile justice system reforms (DJJ Annual Report, DJJ 2014 a year of juvenile justice reform in Georgia). As a result of the effectiveness of reform, significant portions of youth with lower level offenses are being placed into evidence based programs receiving the appropriate services in their communities. Juvenile justice reform has enhanced DJJs ability to fulfill its responsibilities to the citizens of the State of Georgia. DJJ will continue to meet the following objectives:

# GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE



## Operate Safe and Secure Facilities and Communities while providing Educational Opportunities

This priority continues to be the core task of the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. The operation of secure facilities ranks among the principal duties for ensuring both public safety, a secure workplace, and the safety of youth in the agency's care. It is also the most visible correctional component provided by DJJ to the citizens of Georgia. DJJ will investigate and incorporate national trends in security management into its continuum of strategies where feasible. The services available within secure

facilities include education, medical and dental care, food services, and mental and behavioral health



counseling, truly making DJJ a "full-service" juvenile justice agency. As this agency continues to progress through the second year of juvenile justice reform, DJJ is placing strong emphasis on Re-entry Services to better prepare juvenile offenders for successful transition back into the community. DJJ has created a continuum of essential services, including mental health resources and quality education, to ensure committed youth experience a successful reintegration into the community.

Educational requirements are some of the most significant differences between adult incarceration and juvenile secure confinement. DJJ operates the State of Georgia's 181st School District, distinguished by its dual accreditations. The newly named Georgia Preparatory Academy (GPA) employs professionally certified and innovative teachers to educate Georgia's committed youth and implements the latest classroom technology to bring quality education components into the school system. GPA is now in full implementation of the Georgia Standards of Excellence statewide education curriculum for English language arts and mathematics. These Standards are relevant and rigorous benchmarks that teachers use to guide instruction. The GPA has also administered the new Georgia Milestones Assessments. These are standardized tests for middle school students (End of Grade Assessment) and high school students (End of Course Assessment). Results of the testing will be analyzed to determine areas of strengths and weaknesses to be focused on in improving student achievement within the DJJ school district. GPA has revived vocational programs to promote job readiness upon release from custody. DJJ embraces state-of-the-art educational opportunities to prepare youth for re-entry to their neighborhoods and communities.

In addition, GPA is embedding School Resource Officers in select facilities in order to ensure the safety and security of all teachers and youth.



The Department of Juvenile Justice uses planning and improvement forecasting to keep the agency positioned and prepared to meet future construction needs for facilities and youth. Concrete examples of these preparations include capital improvements to existing facilities, and design and construction of replacement facilities to position DJJ to meet current and future educational, programming and security standards for juvenile justice agencies.

### Implementation of DJJ's responsibilities under the Juvenile Justice Reform Act

The Juvenile Justice Reform Act is projected to increase the number of Georgia youth participating in community-based services and is expected to create additional need for evidence based services. Providing added supervision for growing numbers of youth outside non-secure facilities becomes a Departmental priority requiring additional Juvenile Probation and Parole Specialists. The number of youth served in community programs will be determined by accurately tracking the actions of juvenile offenders and by use of updated assessment instruments by the judiciary. In order to support these updated measures, which include DJJ's new Detention Assessment Instrument, Pre-Disposition Risk Assessment Instrument, and the Juvenile Needs Assessment Instrument, DJJ has new requirements to gather, process, and distribute additional tracking information. Management of data harvested by these updated tools will require information technology capable of gauging the success of newly employed programs. These assessment tools must be accessible to all statewide Juvenile Courts to ensure appropriate sentencing decisions are being made in accordance with new legislation. In support of these efforts, DJJ is providing Independent Court Staff as well as Prosecuting Attorneys and Public Defenders, access to background information in its Juvenile Tracking System (JTS). As another component of the reform legislation, a Juvenile Justice Case Management Repository is being implemented to create a platform for all juvenile court judges and their respective courts access to a seamless view of juvenile justice data across systems.

## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE



DJJ has collaborated with the judges, the juvenile justice technology committee, the Administrative Offices of the Courts (AOC), and other stakeholders to identify core data elements for the repository and a data schema is presently being developed for the repository. The ultimate goal of this initiative is to allow disparate systems to transfer data to the repository. A web portal will be developed for the repository, allowing a seamless view of juvenile justice data across multiple systems. Finally, a GAP Analysis was recently performed to identify functional and technical gaps in JTS with the goal of exploring enhancement options for improving DJJ business processes while accommodating legislative reforms and mandates.



## 2016 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

### Recruitment, Retention, and Succession Planning

DJJ strives to provide the best juvenile care, service, and supervision in the country. This can only be achieved by employing and retaining the best quality juvenile corrections staff. Professional Juvenile Correction Officers (JCO's) are the cornerstone of successful secure facilities operations. DJJ must retain appropriate staff levels, especially those recently achieved through accelerated recruiting efforts. DJJ will continue to examine options to provide additional incentives to JCOs. DJJ's retention efforts will focus on high value attributes which include training levels and job tenure. DJJ has now implemented an education competency exam and a job compatibility exam into the hiring selection process. These candidate assessment exams will position agency recruiters where they can select higher caliber recruits who are better qualified to complete their initial training and, in the final analysis, will make strong, well-adapted officers. Once hired, retaining a workforce of DJJ's best officers is critical both to the Department's current success and to its coming abilities to grow future leaders from within.





## Organizational Structure

DJJ is constantly reviewing its policies, processes and procedures to ensure the optimization of organization and workforce capabilities. As a means to challenge the processes of hiring, retention and personnel management, a recent review of training and personnel services revealed that DJJ would be better served by the Human Resources Office providing direct feedback to the commissioner's office. This new internal restructuring facilitates a more coordinated on-boarding process not only for security personnel, but for professional positions as well. By using a more streamlined review process for new employee hiring as well as the implementation of a new discipline process that will be implemented for FY 2016, DJJ's personnel management activities will be more responsive to the needs of the workforce.

DJJ's latest organizational update includes the addition of a second Assistant Commissioner. This will provide the opportunity for the DJJ to devote more executive level oversight to our Community Services Division and to the Support Services as DJJ continues to increase the emphasis on preparing the youth to re-enter their communities.



### Classification and Placement of Youth

DJJ supports the implementation of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act through updated assessment tools designed to determine the appropriate level of care and services for each DJJ youth. Through a collaborative effort between the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Council of Juvenile Court Judges, and several other stakeholders, Georgia has implemented three new juvenile assessment tools in keeping with the Juvenile Justice Reform Act. These assessment instruments (the pre-disposition risk assessment (PDRA), detention assessment instrument (DAI), juvenile needs assessment (JNA)) are providing data on the appropriate levels of security, education, and mental and behavioral health services needed by juvenile offenders for advancement opportunities. The common adoption of these instruments in both the dependent and independent courts across the state is providing a consistent and uniform way of dealing with youth in DJJ care and for recording their information more accurately. This assessment process is expected to continue to provide a standardized set of information available for use as DJJ continues to make progress with the implementation of new evidence-based programs to provide improved services for Georgia's young offenders. DJJ has expanded the individual assessments and counseling available to youth. The most significant change is the initial work now happening with youth in the Regional Youth Detention Centers (RYDCs). The expansion of counseling staff has established an earlier start to services for youth in DJJ care. Counselors anticipate the results of this early programming start will initially show up as improved program completion and eventually as a reduction in recidivism rates.



## Offender/Youth Re-entry

DJJ has created an Office of Re-entry Services aligned with the Department's Education Office. The newly formed Division of Education and Re-entry Services is responsible for DJJ's adoption of the principle that juvenile justice systems should be planning for a juvenile offender's exit of custody as early as intake. This concept has a direct correlation with the addition of counseling staff at the RYDC's. The Office of Re-entry Services is designed to ensure the synchronization of all services provided to DJJ youth from the time they enter intake, through their confinement, and as they transition into their communities under DJJ supervision. DJJ continues to expand capabilities in this area through increased internal coordination and by bringing on additional partners in community based educational, programming, and work opportunities for transitioning youth.

Continuity of care, programming and education is a principle of sound reentry practices. Therefore, DJJ has implemented the Infinite Campus student information system which provides DJJ with the capability of transferring school records between the Georgia Preparatory Academy and other school districts throughout Georgia. Electronic transfer of a student's academic records decreases the transition period between a youth leaving DJJ's Georgia Preparatory Academy and the student's re-enrollment into their home school. Finally, the Department has emphasized an increase in the involvement of volunteer organizations with DJJ youth in confinement, and youth participation in community-based programs.

## 2016 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Providing links to groups or organizations involved with youth to assist them during their community transition is a key to successful reintegration and crucial to the reduction of recidivism. In conclusion – Commissioner Niles’ “Top Five Priorities” are aligned to ensure improvements in daily operational activities which have been provided with optimal service as the goal. DJJ will continue to work diligently to incorporate all reform updates associated with the Juvenile Justice Reform Act. The Department will continue to improve the quality of the workforce through appropriate, relevant and on-going training for agency staff and leaders. DJJ will incorporate new evidence based programs to ensure the best services are provided to youth to adequately prepare them for a successful return.





## DJJ GOALS

### Goal 1: Operate Safe and Secure Facilities and Communities while providing educational opportunities

**Measurable Objective 1:** Decrease the 1-year juvenile delinquent recidivism rate from 33.2% for the FY2011 release cohort to 29.5% for the FY 2014 release cohort.<sup>1</sup>

**Measurable Objective 2:** Increase the percent of facilities meeting fidelity of the Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS) model, a behavior management program, from 25.9% as of April 2014 to 75% by June 2016.

**Measurable Objective 3:** Increase the percentage of facilities compliant with PREA standards from 0% as of FY 2013 to 100% by August 2016.

**Measurable Objective 4:** Increase the percentage of eligible students in the High School track from 83.8% as of the 2012/2013 school-year to 84.9% for the 2016/2017 school-year.

**Measurable Objective 5:** Increase the number of vocational programs in the facilities from 7 in FY 2013 to 9 statewide by June 2016.

<sup>1</sup> For these purposes, a cohort is defined as youth released from a DJJ secure facility in any given fiscal year.

### G1: Strategy 1: Enhance Safety and Security in Secure Facilities and Communities:

DJJ is committed to operating safe and secure facilities and continues to implement nationally recognized security measures and innovations. These measures include the possibility of utilizing body cameras and a key control mechanism within facilities.

Additionally, DJJ is planning radio communication system upgrades to extend coverage statewide so that field units, facilities, probation and investigations officers can all communicate during major incidents. A statewide upgrade of metal detectors is also planned.



# GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE



One of the main components of administration of a safe and secure environment is the use of U.S. Department of Justice Certified PREA Juvenile audits which are the major determinant of Georgia DJJ's compliance with the PREA certification standards. The agency has 26 secure facilities that are covered under the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Juvenile Facility Standards. These facilities are required to be audited every three years for compliance with PREA standards.

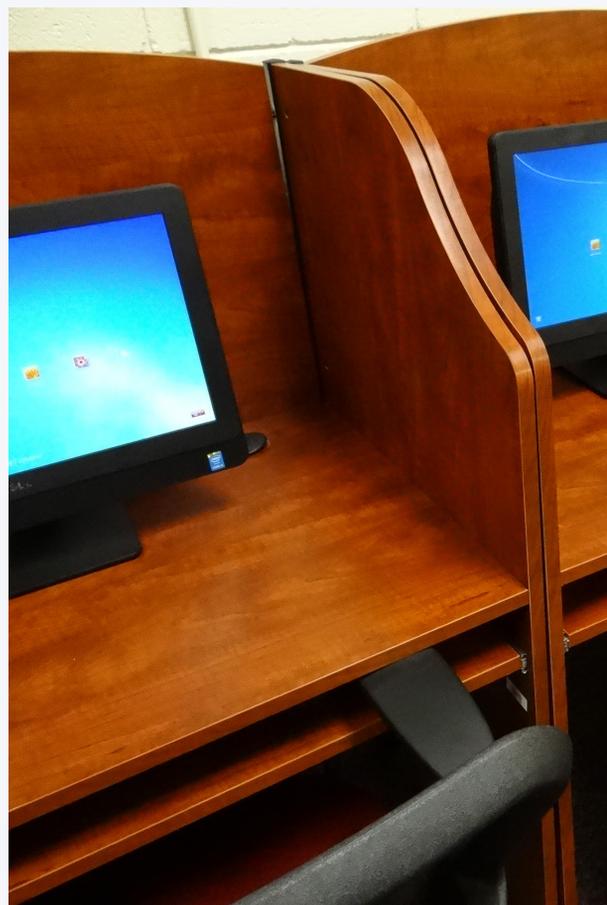
The current audit cycle commenced in August 2013 and will conclude in August 2016.

Seventeen DJJ facilities have been audited to date and were all determined to be (100%) fully compliant with the PREA standards.



### G1: Strategy 2: Provide Quality Education and Expand Vocational Program Offerings Statewide:

DJJ will continue to provide conducive and effective learning environments for GPA students. This agency will continue to improve in its instructional delivery and be prepared daily to provide innovating and exciting lessons. Technology and manipulatives will be embedded into lessons to ensure learning is relevant and interesting to the students. Students will be encouraged to continue developing their skills with good constructive response activities.



Georgia Preparatory Academy is committed to fulfilling DJJ's vision of offering youth hope for change and success. DJJ's professional educators, teachers and administrators will continually become better equipped to support the movement of its students toward higher levels of success.



## G1: Strategy 3: Modify Long Term Facility Plan

This strategy is to establish a long-term facility plan that addresses aging facility problems and aligns with juvenile justice reform, increased safety and security needs, and new education



requirements from the Department of Education. DJJ continues to utilize population trends and data analysis for planning and service delivery. An assessment that our first generation facilities, constructed in the 1960's, are nearing the end of their life cycle and require improvements has necessitated planning efforts to repurpose former Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) facilities. The Terrell probation/detention center (PDC) is

identified to replace Albany RYDC; the former GDC Wilkes PDC will replace the Sandersville RYDC; and the former GDC Central PDC will replace the Eastman RYDC<sup>1</sup>. Additionally, facilities will be equipped with safety and system upgrades which support current security, educational and programming standards, including but not limited to Electronic Key Control systems, Kiosks systems, Panic Buttons, and Energy Efficient Options.

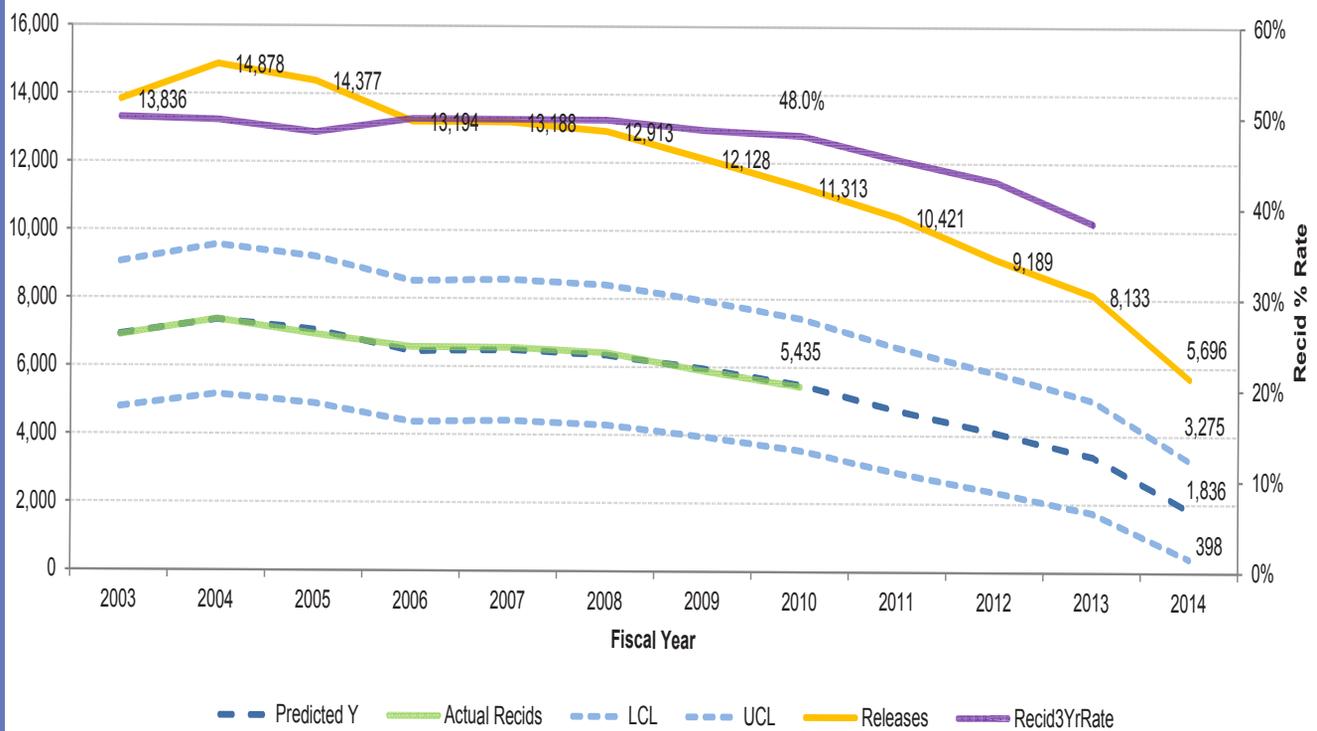
<sup>1</sup> Subsequent planning efforts and post-reform data analysis may result in the reconstruction of Dalton RYDC and the replacement of the Waycross RYDC

## Goal 2: Implement the Juvenile Justice Reform

**Measurable Objective 1:** Increase the percentage of regular committed youth placed in non-secure residential programming within 90 days as indicated by the youth's placement screening from 56.64% as of FY 2013 to 73% by FY 2016.

**Measurable Objective 2:** Decrease the 3-year juvenile delinquent recidivism rate from 48.8% for the FY 2009 release cohort to 45.2% for the FY 2014 release cohort.

3Yr Recidivism Forecast as of June 26, 2015





In 2011, Governor Nathan Deal appointed a Special Council on Criminal Justice Reform to develop recommendations for improving public safety and decreasing costs in the justice system. Following intensive research and collaboration, the council issued recommendations that guided new reforms in December 2012. Among those recommendations was the requirement to develop new assessment tools to help guide detention & disposition decisions and assess juvenile needs. The statewide use of enhanced assessment and decision-making tools, signed into law as House Bill 242, has been placing youth in appropriate settings for supervision, care and rehabilitation maximization while promoting public safety. The secure confinement juvenile population has decreased as lower risk offenders are being diverted to evidence-based programs in the community. In collaboration with partners and stakeholders, DJJ is collecting and tracking data to facilitate performance measurement and oversight of the implementation of juvenile justice reform. Standardized reporting requirements will continue to be implemented for DJJ, all juvenile courts, and local probation agencies in order to monitor and track progress towards the desired outcomes. The collection and tracking of key outcome measures will allow for data-driven decision making and performance assessment for the agency and its stakeholders.

Another recommendation of the Special Council was that DJJ investigate the cost effectiveness of utilizing Title IV-E funding. Title IV-E of the Social Security Act provides federal matching funds to states for justice-involved youth meeting eligibility requirements. DJJ has engaged in a number of activities to better position itself to maximize funding. This includes modifying its Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Department of Family & Children's Services (DFCS) for Title IV-E claiming, collaborating with individual judges & the Juvenile Court Judges Association, developing a mechanism to track and monitor all new juvenile justice related Title IV-E cases, and conferring with other states & national consultants to address the complexities of Title IV-E eligible youth. Because Juvenile Justice Reform has proven successful in reducing DJJ caseloads, this has reduced the potential revenue that can be realized by DJJ through Title IV-E claims. Potential barriers to full implementation of Title IV-E funding maximization have been identified and are being addressed in partnership with other entities. In partnership with DFCS, DJJ will become an entity that can assist youth and their parents in applying for benefits once released from secure confinement. DJJ will also partner with the Department of Community Health (DCH) to develop a mechanism by which youth re-entering the community after secure confinement can have access to an expedited Medicaid application process to ensure seamless access to health care services and medications, thereby promoting continuity of care.



Furthermore, as a result of implementing Juvenile Justice Reform, DJJ has diverted select categories of juveniles away from the agency resulting in a reduction in the number of juvenile admissions and a consequent decline in the number of releases.

		Fiscal Year	Releases	Recidivists	3 YR Recidivism Rate
	<b>Base</b>	2010	11,313	5,435	48.0%
		2011*	10,421	4,729	45.4%
		2012*	9,189	3,950	43.0%
		2013*	8,133	3,124	38.4%
Conservative	<b>Target (1)</b>	2014	5,696	2,574	45.2%
Moderate	<b>Target (2)</b>	2014	5,696	2,402	42.2%

\* Recidivism rates are as of June 24, 2015

Duplicate recidivists are not included

This shift in the juvenile population committed to DJJ has impacted DJJ’s ability to use some historical data for predictive analytics. Pre-reform custodial populations included a large percentage of “status offenders”, or, what is now statutorily defined as Children in Need of Services - CHiNS kids. Therefore, a more conservative approach was taken in setting the 3-year recidivism target for the FY 2014 release cohort until at least 3 more years of post-reform data is available.

### G2: Strategy 1: Enhance Community-Based Options for Placements and Services by Increasing Evidence-based and Best Practice Interventions in the Community

DJJ will increase evidence-based programming in its service delivery continuum. Appropriate non-secure placement solutions for lower risk offenders and those with the highest needs will be utilized and expanded in areas of the state where currently limited or unavailable. DJJ will continue to establish and enforce performance-based contracting with community service providers with greater emphasis on monitoring outcomes of youth. These services will be evaluated based on their adherence to national best practice models and evidenced based practice interventions, quality, and types of services offered which are relevant to the needs of the current offender population. DJJ will also collaborate with educators to expand school-based supervision sites to provide alternative consequences to suspension. For example, when youth are expelled from traditional schools, they become candidates for one of DJJ's newly established Education Transitional Centers (ETC) in areas such as Savannah, Macon, Augusta, Atlanta, and Columbus.



## G2: Strategy 2: Collaborate with Key Stakeholders Using Validated Assessment Instruments to inform detention, commitment, and placement decisions

One of the tools recently developed, the Juvenile Needs Assessment (JNA) is the strength and needs instrument now used as the primary tool to drive programming and services for the youth. It is the companion tool to the risk assessment for pre-dispositional youth and has been in use since October 2013. The JNA is used to determine the current strengths of each youth and to systematically identify areas of needs for effective intervention. Utilization of the JNA fosters consistent and objective consideration of each youth, provides relevant information to link the youth to appropriate programs, and delivers assessment data to track outcomes of services provided on an individual and aggregate level.

The Statewide use of enhanced assessment and decision-making tools is expected to promote public safety while positioning youth in appropriate settings for supervision, care & rehabilitation. The secure confined juvenile youth population is projected to decrease as lower risk offenders are diverted to evidence-based programs in the community. In collaboration with partners and stakeholders, DJJ will collect and track data to facilitate performance measurement and oversight of the implementation of juvenile justice reform.

The Pre-Disposition Risk Assessment (PDRA) Tool, a research-based risk assessment instrument utilized post-adjudication and prior to disposition of cases in order to inform appropriate placement/program settings for youth based on criminality risk level and offense type, was developed by DJJ in collaboration with stakeholders statewide, and has been in use since October 2013. DJJ, in partnership with other agencies and organizations, has continued providing technical assistance to independent county courts and continues to promote best data archiving practices statewide to position the State of Georgia to make data-driven decisions while effectively evaluating reform outcomes.

# GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE



Similarly, a research-based, Georgia-specific Detention Assessment Instrument (DAI), which assesses the risk level of youth upon contact with law enforcement and prior to court appearance, was developed with the assistance of nationally recognized experts & consultants and stakeholders statewide to inform the best custodial setting for the youth pre-court hearing date. The DAI underwent rigorous field testing and was deployed statewide in October 2014.



## Goal 3: Promote Strategized Recruitment, Retention and Succession Planning

**Measurable Objective 1:** Increase employee satisfaction from 61% as of FY 2013 to 68% by June 30, 2016 by implementation of Employee Satisfaction Enhancement Plan and enhanced training initiatives.

**Measurable Objective 2:** Decrease the job turnover rate for the JCO1 and JCO 2 positions combined from 47.4 in FY 2015 to 42.9% by June 30, 2017.

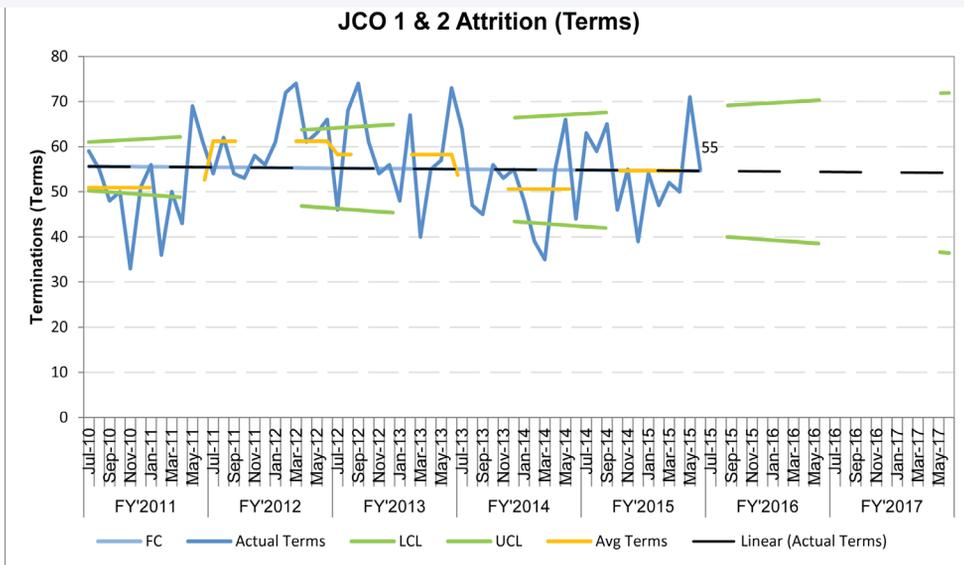
**Measurable Objective 3:** Increase the percentage of HITS Officers in DJJ employment as of June 2014 that are POST Certified from 0% to 100% by June 30, 2016.



# GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE



DJJ's Office of Human Resources (OHR) supports the strategic goals and mission of the Department by monitoring workforce trends and proposing initiatives to address challenges to DJJ Team performance. DJJ strives to attract, develop, motivate and retain a diverse workforce. Human Resources attends to the daily processes of the agency workforce, including recruitment and retention, background checks, appropriate compensation and benefits, EEO compliance, timekeeping, and absence management. A number of plans and programs have been introduced throughout the agency to foster and sustain an optimal work environment.



	Fiscal Year	Annual			Monthly Average			
		Headcount	Terms	Attrition Rate	Headcount	Terms	Attrition Rate	
Base Year	2012	16,578	734	53.1%	1,382	61.2	4.4%	
	2013	16,904	699	49.6%	1,409	58.3	4.1%	
	2014	16,918	607	43.1%	1,410	50.6	3.6%	
	2015*	16,618	656	47.4%	1,385	54.7	3.9%	
Target Year								
1	Conservative	2017	16,800	600	42.9%	1,400	50.0	3.6%
2	Moderate	2017	16,800	576	41.1%	1,400	48.0	3.4%
3	Aggressive	2017	16,800	552	39.4%	1,400	46.0	3.3%

\* Data subject to revision

Three years ago attrition rates for JCO1 & 2 started to descend; the addition of the Talent Quest personnel survey accelerated the decline. In FY'2013 the attrition rate for JCO's fell below 50%. Terminations declined initially in FY-2014 (607 terms) after Talent Quest personality tests were administered, but slightly increased in FY 2015 (656 terms). The monthly headcount for JCOs continues to remain in the 1,400 range.

## 2016 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

One approach that OHR employs in supporting the strategic goals of the Department is its targeted recruiting efforts for mission critical job categories. The Georgia Juvenile Justice Recruiting Team is focused on searching for top-notch candidates to post in professional corrections officer positions and is incorporating aggressive approaches like interviewing on-the-spot and immediately hiring qualified veterans and other mature applicants with the professional drive to help juvenile offenders achieve successful reentry into society as productive Georgia citizens.

In addition to basic requirements, DJJ seeks to onboard fulltime juvenile corrections officers with special personal motivation like workplace problem-solving abilities and proven leadership skills. The Commissioner heralds DJJ as “a great place to make your work count!”





### G3: Strategy 1: Enhance Employee Growth and Satisfaction by Implementing an Employee Satisfaction Enhancement Plan to Improve the Agency Work Environment

As its committed and dedicated employees are core to the fulfillment of its mission, DJJ is constantly looking to foster an environment conducive to employee growth and satisfaction and has recently instituted a mechanism for selecting and recognizing the outstanding accomplishments of identified employees quarterly. Similarly, an Employee Progressive Discipline Program, one that adopts a scaffolding and supportive model aimed at mentoring and nurturing employees in identified areas of need, has been developed and will be adopted in FY 2016. Additionally, as quintessential of a learning organization, an Employee Exit Interview Program was recently incorporated into the agency's operational procedures to serve as an information source for understanding turnover trends within the agency on a unit and system level with the objective of implementing enhancements and interventions when necessary.

### G3: Strategy 2: Adopt and Improve Retention, Recruitment and Succession Planning Initiatives

To achieve a high standard of staff, DJJ will continue to expand its recruiting efforts, and examine options to provide additional programs and incentives to retain valuable employees.

Recruiters will renew their commitment to attend local events to locate and identify potential applicants where they live. A new branded logo is being used to enhance DJJ recognition. By selecting the best suitable applicants, DJJ will be able to look within the organization for future leadership roles.

By creating opportunities to grow the organization internally, DJJ will design and implement a comprehensive Succession Planning Program and provide additional motivation for all employees to remain at DJJ.





## G3: Strategy 3: Provide Relevant Training to Equip Employees with the Tools and Resources Required for Success in the Workplace.

As in any thriving organization the administration of training is ongoing, progressive and relevant. To maintain DJJs standing as a great place to make its employees work count, the new employee orientation and on-the-job training within secure facilities and the community will be updated and monitored. This will include an annual In-Service training program for Community staff with a focus on current trends, evidence based programming, and required certifications, and a P.O.S.T. approved online training curriculum which allows secure facility and community staff to address immediate training needs while receiving P.O.S.T. approved online training hours. Additionally, tiered training programs will be tailored to the varying business requirements of the agency.

## Goal 4: Establish Systematic Classification and Placement of Youth

*Measureable Objective 1: Increase the percentage of youth who do not reoffend while in our care from 83.9% for the FY 2012 Served cohort to 88.0% for the FY 2016 Served<sup>1</sup> cohort*



<sup>1</sup> For these purposes, a cohort is defined as probated and committed youth served in non-secure community settings during the same fiscal year (July 1 in any given year to June 30 of the following year).



In order to continue to improve operations in support of classification of youth, the Assessment & Classification (ACS) positions within the Department have been realigned from the community functional area to one that has more comprehensive oversight of the classification and assessment process. Moving the full process under the administrative and programmatic supervision of a single office is a desirable and necessary step that better serves the needs and ensures the best possible assessment and care for youth in DJJ custody. This realignment also facilitates greater utilization of the clinical expertise and oversight of the screening process afforded by the skilled staff within the agency's Division of Support Services.



### G4: Strategy 1: Implement System & Process Improvements to Enhance Classification and Placement Decisions

DJJ will explore and implement changes intended to streamline the classification and placement process based on treatment & service needs as identified in the Juvenile Needs Assessment (JNA), program assignment, Behavioral support and intervention needs.

DJJ will focus on specific sub-sets of youth population by evaluating historical data to identify clusters of youth needs. Additionally, the screening committee will focus on strengthening the process of identifying educational, treatment, and programming needs early in a youth's commitment. Training that conveys the criticality of complete and accurate documentation on youth for appropriate classification will continually be provided to line staff. The Custody & Housing module will be updated and verified to ensure all critical factors for consideration in the assessment of youth facility placement are included.



## Goal 5: Promote Youth Re-entry focused programming and service delivery

DJJ's Office of Reentry Services, in consortium with agency subject matter experts, released the reentry strategic plan following the systematic cross referencing of existing policy areas to identify gaps and barriers in the case management process.

Committee workgroups consisting of representatives from other collaborative state agencies, non-profit organizations, private enterprises, the faith-based community, and



other interested stakeholders were established to begin exploring and enacting processes to address those barriers in the varying case management domains. In FY 2015, the diligent efforts of these subgroups resulted in proposed solutions to a number of the challenges youth have historically faced when reentering the community. One outgrowth of this collaboration within and external of DJJ is the institution of a Youth Centered Reentry Team (YCRT) tasked with pre-release planning within 20 days of a youth's admission into any DJJ long-term facility.

## 2016 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

**Measurable Objective 1:** Increase the implementation of Thinking for a Change, an evidence-based practice; with youth re-entering community supervision from 1 community site as of April 2014 to 12 sites by June 30, 2016

**Measurable Objective 2:** Increase the implementation of Aggression Replacement Training (ART), an evidence-based practice, with youth re-entering community supervision from 0 community sites as of April 2014 to 8 sites by June 30, 2016.

**Measurable Objective 3:** Increase the implementation of Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS), an evidence-based model that increases positive outcomes from offender supervision, from 0 community site as of April 2014 to 10 sites by June 30, 2016





In collaboration with community partners, technical consultants, and stakeholders, the Office of Reentry Services is developing a robust framework that targets barriers in the core areas of the youth case management process: Behavioral & Physical Health, Family & Living Arrangements, Education & Schooling, Vocational Training & Employment, Peer Groups & Friends, and Leisure Time, Avocational, & Recreation. The reentry framework is developed with the goal of implementing processes that fill these identified gaps and results in an all-inclusive holistic continuity of care system. The finalized reentry model will focus on these major features: Continuity of Care that integrates services across different placement platforms; overarching case management that incorporates elements of risk and needs assessment, service matching, family engagement, planning for and monitoring of release readiness, and delivery of appropriate services & supervision. Staffing, personnel practices, & training which assesses the competencies of the available workforce and evaluates personnel & training needs, caseload size and workload; job responsibilities & division of labor; and data monitoring and quality assurance which utilizes data for ensuring fidelity to the reentry model with regard to assessments, development of service plans, case management, and release & permanency planning.

## G5: Strategy 1: Begin Release Preparation Early in the Youth's Commitment by Engaging All Components of the Service Plan in the Case Management Process

DJJ recently enacted a Youth Centered Reentry Team policy to focus primarily on guiding an early start to youth release planning. Within twenty days of admission into a Youth Development Campus, the multi-disciplinary team convenes to



begin planning for a successful transition back into the community, regardless of the youth's length of stay order.

Ongoing effort is being placed on completing the design and

implementation of an integrated, state-of-the-art reentry model consistent with research and evidence-based practices, the Governor's guidance, and the Department's mission and policies.



## G5: Strategy 2: Enhance Transition Processes to Facilitate Successful Reintegration into the Community by Linking the Youth with Relevant Services, Resources, and Supports and Implementing System and Process Improvements to Ensure Continuity of Care

DJJ is implementing processes to ensure that the current and future programs for youth in secure facilities and the community programs that serve those youth during re-entry are supported by research evidence of effectiveness for reducing recidivism. DJJ is working hand-in-hand with subject matter experts and technical consultants to implement the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) for periodically assessing program fidelity to research-based models. Selected DJJ Staff will be trained to guarantee sustainability of the process after the technical assistance period. DJJ will also focus efforts on improving family engagement and involvement in the youth's care while in its facilities, thereby supporting release preparation and successful reentry to the community.



### G5: Strategy 3: Establish & Expand Community Partnerships and Connections to Strengthen the Network of Supports Available to the Youth upon Re-entry

An evaluation of the gaps in case management processes will be continued to enhance linking of youth with the appropriate residential and community aftercare services upon release from DJJ facilities. DJJ has already partnered with over fifty state agencies and community partners and is committed to sustaining these relationships for the benefit of the youth it serves.



# SUMMARY

The Juvenile Justice Reform bill was the product of more than six years of code revisions that created sweeping reforms in state juvenile justice laws. During the initial year of implementation, the law produced the desired effect. In the last update to the strategic plan, DJJ committed to decreasing the percentage of long term committed youth spending more than half of their restrictive custody time awaiting beds in the short-term facilities by 11.5% by the end of FY 2016 (June 30, 2016). As of December 2014, about 1 year post-reform, this rate had dropped by 21.6%. Similarly, there has been a noticeable shift in the percentage of low-risk offenders detained (as indicated by the Detention Assessment Instrument) from 29.5% in FY 2013 to 12.4% as of December 2014, surpassing the forecasted rate of 27.9% for June 30, 2016 given historical trends.





In conclusion, DJJ's commitment of increasing the footprint of Evidence Based Practices (EBP) across its placement platforms is yielding desirable results. For example, the objective of having fifteen (15) community sites offering the New Freedom Curriculum, a program designed to promote youth change by creating awareness of problems and consequences of behavior was achieved by April 2015. Additionally, DJJ has implemented a total of 38 High Intensity Team Supervision (HITS) programs across 86 counties statewide actively operating the program.

This year, DJJ is working with the newly created Department of Community Supervision (DCS) in order to facilitate the transition of select probated youth to DCS in 2016.

All these, among many other indicators, suggest that the intent of Juvenile Justice Reform is working in the State of Georgia.

## **REFERENCES**

State Strategic Planning Framework, retrieved from <https://opb.georgia.gov/strategic-planning> on 6/23/2015

GA DJJ 2014 Annual Report

Report of the Special Council on Criminal Justice Reform for Georgians, December 2012

# APPENDIX A: CHALLENGES

DJJ has conducted an agency-wide SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) to ensure DJJ connects its objectives and strategies with a tangible plan and to determine its compatibility with the “Commissioner’s Top Five”. This opportunity has empowered DJJ to identify critical issues that impede the agency to meet its full potential. The most pertinent issues can be found below.

## COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

Currently, a lack of a robust communications infrastructure prohibits DJJ from communicating efficiently, especially during crisis events. The expansion of this capability would directly enhance a safe and secure environment by connecting facilities and units operating in the field. For example, the ability to communicate between secure facilities and field units such as probation and investigations officers would greatly enhance public safety during large area searches or expanding incidents. Additionally, transport safety of custodial residents between facilities would be enhanced by ensuring mobile DJJ units have access to statewide radio bands in the event of security breach or medical emergency. By joining current state initiatives for re-banding new radio systems, DJJ would benefit from the enhanced responsiveness of a multi-agency communications platform capable of meeting its requirements in mutual-aid situations and supporting DJJ’s overall goal of operating a safe and secure environment.



## SERVICE GAPS

One of the gaps identified is the availability of services youth need for a smooth transition back into the community. Many of such services are used throughout the spectrum of reentry activity and are the basis for maintaining continuity of care as well as aftercare following release. Although ample clinical and programming services would be beneficial for residential secure youth populations as well as those in the community, practitioners, program managers and field supervisors recognize that most of the programming resources needed by DJJ are not geographically distributed evenly across the state. Although Justice Reform undertakings included grant funding for over 110 counties identified as having rural service needs, many gaps still exist. For example, residential group homes are clustered around urban centers leaving dozens of counties absent of residential program locations. Although DJJ made good use of previous service grants, dozens of high-needs youth still come from rural counties and DJJ still must compete with other service agencies. This includes private, out-of-state businesses who also seek placement of youth in need in community bed space.

## 2016 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Another important resource that mitigates the negative impact of service gaps is tele-health, or the use of video technology to extend clinical footprints to remotely located patients. Although a tele-health policy exists for DJJ, enhancing existing networks to synch more clinicians with custodial and community residential youth facilities would help reduce this gap. Through this type of technological capacity-building, DJJ would be better poised to sustain juvenile justice reform. As an example, a tenet of evidence-based programs used under juvenile justice reform is the frequency of patient consultation. Tele-health technology would help minimize skipped appointments due to clinicians having to





## TELEVISITATION

A “close to home” reentry strategy minimizes disruption to families and enhances reintegration back into communities to which youth must return. Despite this, secure placement decisions often result in youth being far away from their families for extended periods due to programming decisions or clinical requirements. As a new concept, tele-visitation would include providing field staff with portable electronic devices that interface with facility infrastructure to keep youth in contact with their families. Sadly, this technology application has received minimal attention in industry but represents a key technological component of sustaining continuity between youth in need and the critical developmental dynamics that home contact would provide. The youth-family dynamics were cited as a strong rehabilitative opportunity during DJJs environmental analysis as it provides that capability to enhance reintegration efforts following extended periods of confinement. Youth-centered reentry processes could potentially be smoother if contact could be maintained via available technology. Unresolved issues require further investigation for compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and confidentiality requirements.

## APPENDIX B: WORKFORCE PLANNING

In order to reduce our time-to-hire and to increase retention, DJJ has standardized the agency's onboarding process for Juvenile Correctional Officers to be implemented in FY16. DJJ's plan is to use this standardized process to increase communication to applicants (employees) and between organizational units, provide stronger guidance, and increase structure during the first weeks of a cadet's employment.

### WORKFORCE GAPS

**RETIREMENT OF LEADERSHIP-** Statistics indicate that 20% of DJJ current leadership in pay grades 18 and above are eligible for retirement within the next 3 years increasing the need for the department to develop future leaders. DJJ's objective is to finalize the development of a succession planning tool that,

upon implementation, will assist leadership in determining the best candidates for future leadership vacancies.





**HIGH TURNOVER** - High turnover in frontline service provider jobs that deliver programming directly to youth in custody is an ongoing issue impacting the department's workforce stability. Institutional knowledge, particularly with senior security staff such as JCO Sergeants is a focus area of DJJ's retention efforts. DJJ's objective is to utilize tools such as the newly implemented Employee Satisfaction and the improved Exit Interview Surveys to determine the reasons for employees' dissatisfaction and address these challenges accordingly. DJJ Office of Human Resources (OHR) will increase the use of non-compensatory incentives such as the Employee Recognition Honors Program to recognize employees quarterly and annually. DJJ continues to expand new ideas to thwart turnover; for example, participation in the HR Professional Development Conference OHR which introduced the new OHR Employee Exit Interview Program and the proposed Employee Progressive Discipline Program. By implementing an Employee Recognition Honors Committee for the program, bi-monthly discussions will determine award winners among the nominees. OHR has recently conducted training with the leadership of the Division of Secure Facilities (July 14, 2015) and the Division of Community Services (July 22, 2015). Mandatory training will begin in August for all staff and there have been 13 dates reserved thus far through the DJJ Training Academy. Finally, DJJ will increase partnership with workforce development agencies and technical colleges and universities.

## 2016 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

**RETENTION** - DJJ would benefit from state administered incentive options that are often used in the private industry or by local governments. For example, a tuition assistance program would have the added benefit of professional development of the workforce and might be coupled with a

service obligation. Improvement of state medical and retirement benefits would also prove helpful in closing the gap between government employees and the private sector. Despite recent compensatory incentives, JCOs still exhibit a turnover rate of 47%, followed by maintenance staff at 36 %, and both medical and food service workers at 21%. DJJ will continue to explore strategies to retain DJJ subject matter experts and highly qualified staff in facilities to prevent the loss of talented professionals such as medical staff which currently exhibit a 21% turnover rate, as well as security staff such as JCO 2 (Sergeants).





# APPENDIX C

## STRATEGIC PROJECT PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT

DJJs Strategic Projects Portfolio outlines major initiatives being utilized to achieve the strategies that support DJJ Goals.

DJJ FY 2015 STRATEGIC PROJECTS PORTFOLIO REGISTER

PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	PROJECT #	PROJECT TITLE	PROJECT #
<b>GOAL 1: OPERATE SAFE AND SECURE FACILITIES</b>		<b>GOAL 3: RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND SUCCESSION</b>		
1	Investigations Modification ● 100	26	Employee Recognition Pgm Enhancement ○ 75	
2	Investigations Communications System ○ 25	27	HR e-Form Process Automation ○ 80	
3	Facility Youth Telephone System ● 100	28	Employee Accountability and Discipline ● 100	
4	PREA Implementation ○ 75	29	Workers Comp ○ 80	
5	Sex Offender Tx Program ○ 50	30	Employee Exit Interviews ● 95	
6	ITU ● 100	31	Succession Planning Plan ○ 60	
7	BMU Enhancement ○ 75	32	Leadership Institute ○ 90	
8	Infinite Campus ● 100	33	GLECC PMP Program ○ 90	
9	Cirriculum Alignment; GA CCC ● 100	34	Juv Probation Officer Training ● 100	
10	Title 1A School-wide Transition ● 100	35	Non-Sec Fac On the Job Basic Tng ○ 75	
11	Microsoft IT Academy ○ 75	36	Emergency Planning / NIMS Certification ○ 75	
12	Key Control ○ 30	<b>GOAL 4: CLASSIFICATION AND PLACEMENT</b>		
13	Terrell Construction ○ 50	37	Housing and Custody Assessment ● 50	
14	Wilkes Construction ○ 25	<b>GOAL 5: REENTRY</b>		
15	Cadwell Construction ○ 10	38	Service Plan Database ○ 75	
16	Bar Code Scanners ○ 75	39	Juvenile Service Plan ○ 75	
<b>GOAL 2: IMPLEMENT CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM</b>		40	Commissioner's Youth Council ○ 20	
17	School-Based Supervision Sites ○ 75	41	Reentry Service Framework ● 100	
18	Community Ev-based program expansion ○ 50	42	Reentry Checklist ● 100	
19	Performance based contracting ● 100	43	Reentry Promotional Campaign ● 100	
20	DJJ Contract management System ● 100	44	Reentry Strategic Plan ● 100	
21	Title IV-E Funding Initiative ● 100	45	Electronic Health Records ○ 50	
22	Detention Assessment Instrument ● 100	46	Youth Service Rpt Assessment Integration ○ 15	
23	Juvenile Information Mgmt System ○ 75	47	Case Note Integration ○ 50	
24	Juvenile Needs Assessment ● 90	48	Transition Specialty Dorms ○ 20	
25	Graduated Incentives Sanction Tool ○ 50	49	Career Guidance Centers / Facilities ○ 75	
<b>GOAL 3: RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND SUCCESSION</b>		50	Evidence Based Programming Eval (SPEP) ○ 50	

○ 10	15% or less of project lifecycle complete
○ 30	Greater than 15% but less than 50% of project lifecycle complete
○ 50	50% of project lifecycle complete
○ 75	Greater than 50% but less than 90% of project lifecycle complete
● 100	Greater than 90% of project lifecycle complete

Some projects are scheduled to begin later in the 2015-2016 planning cycle.



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<https://twitter.com/GeorgiaDJJ>



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Recommended citation: APA

Georgia. Department of Juvenile Justice. Office of Strategic Planning (2015) FY 2016 Strategic Plan Update. Retrieved from: [http://www.djj.state.ga.us/Resource Library/DJJResourceLibrary.shtml](http://www.djj.state.ga.us/Resource%20Library/DJJResourceLibrary.shtml)



**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE**  
**3408 COVINGTON HIGHWAY**  
**DECATUR, GEORGIA 30032**