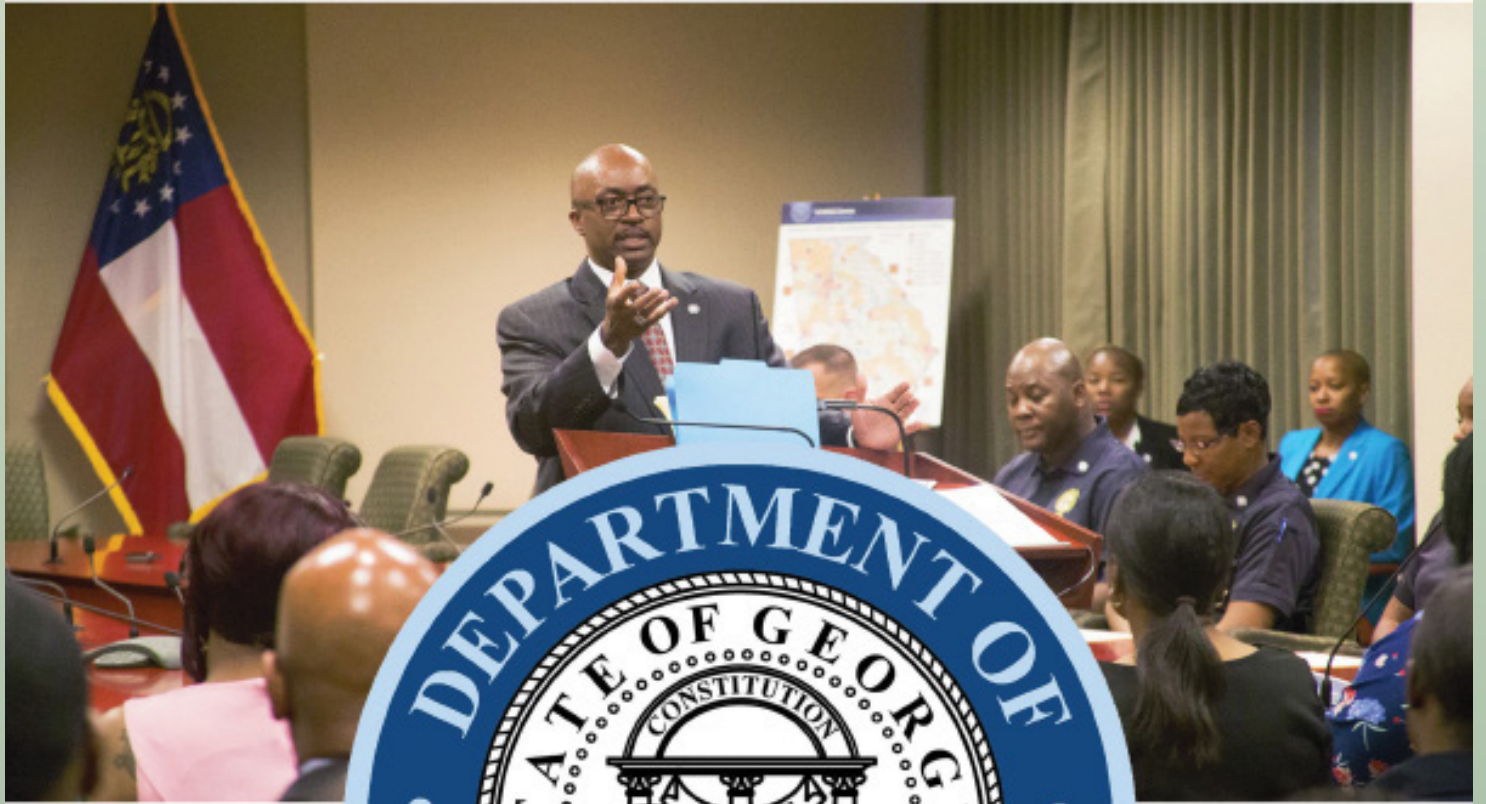


**FY 2018 - 2021**



Department of Juvenile Justice  
**STRATEGIC PLAN**

## **ACRONYMS USED IN THIS STRATEGIC PLAN**

- ACA – American Correctional Association
- BJCOT – Basic Juvenile Correctional Officer Training
- CEA – Correctional Education Association
- CQI – Continuous Quality Improvement
- CTAE – Career, Technical and Agricultural Education
- DJJ – Department of Juvenile Justice
- EBP – Evidence-Based Practices
- ESA – Enterprise Support Agencies
- ETC – Education Transition Center
- FY – Fiscal Year
- GED – General Education Development
- GPA – Georgia Preparatory Academy
- IP-CCTV – Internet Protocol Closed Circuit Television
- JCO – Juvenile Correction Officer
- JTC – Juvenile Transition Center
- NCCD – National Councils on Crime and Delinquency
- OCI – Office of Continuous Improvement
- OPB – Office of Planning and Budget
- PBIS – Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports
- PREA – Prison Rape Elimination Act
- RYDC – Regional Youth Detention Center
- SACS – Southern Association of Colleges & Schools
- SIR – Special Incident Report
- SPEP – Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol
- STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
- SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
- TCSG – Technical College System of Georgia
- YCRT – Youth Centered Reentry Teams
- YDC – Youth Development Campus



# Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice

## Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 – FY 2021 Strategic Plan

Nathan Deal  
Governor

Avery D. Niles  
Commissioner

Elaine P. Snow  
Chairman  
Board of Juvenile Justice

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## MISSION

The DJJ mission is 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

DJJ will lead the nation in preparing young people in its care to develop and sustain productive lives.

## VALUES

DJJ will 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.

## MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER



Avery D. Niles  
Commissioner

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the creation of the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). It is a privilege to present the Department's Strategic Plan, which is our way ahead for the next four years. This plan serves as our roadmap to ensure that we continue to fulfill our statutory charge to rehabilitate youth in our care, and outlines some of our priorities relating to safety and security, juvenile justice reform, family engagement and the education of our youth.

DJJ realizes that for our youth to be successful we must foster positive relationships with other state entities, non-profit organizations, local communities, and the justice system and we have established this strategic plan with these relationships in mind. This plan reflects the commitment of the DJJ Board and staff to enhance juvenile justice processes and programs across Georgia to better serve the youth in our care.

Once youth are in DJJ's care, it is the responsibility of its staff to ensure their physical and mental well-being while providing quality education. Therefore, DJJ staff across the state safeguard the citizens of Georgia while helping the youth in DJJ care receive innovative physical and mental care, increased opportunities for education and expanded reentry services, thereby preparing them for a successful return to communities across our state.

Keeping young offenders in a safe and secure environment is the Department's primary responsibility, but the longest-lasting impact it can provide for these youth is to enhance their educational experience and improve their chances of becoming law-abiding citizens. While they are in the agency's care, staff members seek to help them develop or improve the skills they will need to function as productive members of society.



## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

DJJ is responsible for thousands of Georgia's young citizens as they move through the juvenile justice system. Most youth remain in their communities as they serve their sentences; only a small fraction of youth receive services in a secure setting. This is possible because DJJ works with juvenile court judges across the state on community alternatives to confinement. DJJ also collaborates and coordinates with judges, attorneys, law enforcement agencies and applicable stakeholders to serve the youth under our care with a range of resources while protecting the citizens of Georgia.

During the coming fiscal years, DJJ will continue construction and renovation projects to replace/upgrade aging Regional Youth Detention Centers (RYDCs). Currently we have a facility under construction in Wilkes County to replace the Sandersville RYDC in December 2017, and will start construction in Laurens County in August 2017 to replace the Eastman RYDC. Improvement projects were completed and/or are underway at many other facilities. DJJ is also continuing upgrades to educational buildings/classrooms and technologies at Youth Development Campuses (YDCs). These upgrades will ensure compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) and American Correctional Association (ACA) requirements as well as elevated educational standards. In addition, there is an ongoing emphasis on building capacity in the Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) program. Each of these improvements is anticipated to contribute to enhanced service and program delivery.

The Department of Juvenile Justice continues to improve relationships and coordination with other state agencies to create more efficient processes to serve the citizens of the state. As the 25th year of the agency continues, DJJ staff remain committed to continuously improving Georgia's juvenile justice system. Moreover, DJJ staff remain focused on their primary task – returning the youth in the agency's care back to their communities with the mindset and skillset to become productive and law-abiding citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Avery D. Niles".

Avery D. Niles, Commissioner



## RATIONALE FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Georgia state code lists the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) as the agency that coordinates the strategic planning process for the state and requires state agencies to develop plans consistent with the state goals (see OCGA 45-12-73 and OCGA 45-12-175). This code section also outlines the specific content required for agency plans.

OPB uses the state’s strategic planning process to coordinate among agencies to ensure 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 demonstrate the priorities of the state. Georgia’s key enterprise support agencies (ESAs) conduct an overview of each state agency’s strategic plan to survey for major capital investments in technology, real estate and human resources. Additionally, all proposed strategic investments are evaluated against the state’s goals and indicators.







DJJ grounds its strategic planning methodology in the Governor’s framework, thereby ensuring that agency goals are appropriately aligned to the applicable policy areas. Additionally, this Strategic Plan Update affords DJJ the opportunity to reevaluate ongoing strategies and initiatives against current legislation and the juvenile justice landscape at both the state and national levels to ensure continued relevance and applicability to the youth served.



# GOVERNOR'S STRATEGIC GOALS FOR GEORGIA

Governor Nathan Deal has identified six (6) policy areas which provide his vision, direction and priorities for the State of Georgia. Each policy area itemizes State-level priorities that provide guidance to agencies for strategic plan alignment. The policy areas and associated priorities are listed below.

## **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: Developing and maintaining Georgia's transportation infrastructure to move people and products in a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy**

- 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 inter-governmental cooperation for successful infrastructure development



# GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

## 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







**DJJ'S STRATEGIC PLAN IDENTIFIES GOALS, STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES THAT COLLECTIVELY SUPPORT THREE (3) OF GOVERNOR DEAL'S STRATEGIC GOALS FOR GEORGIA, NAMELY:**

**SAFE:**

**PROTECTING THE PUBLIC'S SAFETY AND SECURITY**

**EDUCATED:**

**DEVELOPING LIFE, COLLEGE AND  
WORK-READY STUDENTS**

**RESPONSIBLE AND  
EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT:**

**FISCALLY SOUND, PRINCIPLED, CONSERVATIVE**

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN/ CHALLENGES

To assess DJJ's internal and external environments, we analyzed information gathered from different sources to include statistical data analysis, gap analysis, planning meetings, structured conversations with internal stakeholders, and a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis.

Employees acknowledged some strengths across the board as merits of the Department:

- A talented workforce comprised of subject matter experts across disciplines
- A team-centered environment conducive to increased productivity
- Availability of professional growth opportunities for career development
- Increased collaboration within and outside the Department for improved service delivery to youth
- Exceptional customer service
- Stable leadership that provides a clear vision and direction



## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

Employees also highlighted the Department’s focus on Juvenile Justice Reform and Reentry as progressive. Some described DJJ as a “Full Service Agency,” referring to the spectrum of programs, treatments and services DJJ provides to the youth in its care – in addition to being an accredited school district.









Opportunities and threats are factors external to the Department for which DJJ requires outside involvement to address. The objective is to take advantage of the opportunities and eliminate the threats to the Department whenever possible. Employees presented opportunities in these areas:

- Expand Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) services in rural areas of the state
- Revisit salary structures of mission-critical and high-turnover positions to lower turnover rates
- Adopt an ethics training program for correctional staff to improve the work environment
- Supplement the Basic Juvenile Correctional Officer Training (BJCOT) with additional facility-based supports for new hires to ease the transition from training to work conditions
- Institute a part-time or reserve security staff program to help with holdovers in facilities
- Explore enhancements to statewide contracts above the Department level for recurring improvements
- Improve efficiencies in filling information technology requisitions dependent on external vendors

We evaluated the information gathered for areas of weaknesses to be addressed by the Department. These are categorized by goal area on the following pages. We will begin work on some of these through strategy implementation in FY 2018 through FY 2021.

### Operate Safe and Secure Facilities and Communities While Providing Quality Education

- Employ a comprehensive radio system expansion that would allow communication between facilities and units operating in the field
- Increase radio interoperability between security, investigations and probation staff
- Enhance the key-watch system, the mechanism that tracks and monitors the movement of keys in facilities to promote staff accountability

### Juvenile Justice Reform

- Explore options to reduce gaps in service delivery statewide
- Address the therapeutic needs of the juvenile population
- Expand interactive platforms that enhance family engagement
- Strengthen youth-family relationships as a rehabilitative and reintegration component of case management



## Recruitment, Retention and Succession Planning

- Develop staffing plans that consider multiple facility-specific factors
- Standardize performance and supplemental incentives
- Implement a succession planning framework that addresses agency needs
- Explore retention strategies for DJJ subject matter experts
- Improve retention tactics in facilities to prevent loss of talent pool
- Explore and adopt innovative avenues to strengthen the applicant pool
- Increase professional growth opportunities
- Expand and enhance communication channels department-wide to encourage information exchange
- Formalize cross-training opportunities among job functions

## Youth Reentry

- Increase public-private partnerships to expand networking options available to youth and their families
- Focus on preparing youth for careers in their communities

Overall, the environmental scan provided useful insights that are reflected in the strategies and tasks documented in this strategic plan.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice is working diligently to support Governor Deal's Strategic Goals for our state under the leadership of Commissioner Avery D. Niles. With specific focus on education, safety and responsible and efficient government, it is the priority of the Department to have a positive impact on these core areas to benefit the youth we serve.

With continuous emphasis being placed on Juvenile Justice Reform in Georgia, the Department will continue to work diligently to ensure success in shifting the paradigm within our agency. The Department is projected to increase the number of Georgia youth participating in community-based services and is expected to integrate evidence-based services, delivered by qualified providers. Increasing the level of supervision provided to the growing numbers of youth served outside of secure facilities has become one of the Department's top priorities. The number of youth served in community-based programs will continue to be determined by updated assessment instruments. DJJ will also remain steadfast in its implementation of data-driven decision-making to determine the appropriate level of care and services for each DJJ youth.

In addition to this continual focus on Juvenile Justice Reform, it is also a priority of the Department to operate safe and secure facilities and community-based services while providing educational opportunities to DJJ youth. Consequently, the Department has begun the accreditation process with the ACA.



## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

ACA's standards are recognized as best practices in the field of corrections. Accreditation ensures that DJJ facilities are 100 percent compliant with mandatory requirements that promote youth and staff safety and security; enhance staff morale; improve record maintenance and data management capabilities; assist in protecting the agency against litigation; and improve efficiencies at the facility and agency levels. The Department will work diligently to achieve ACA accreditation at eight (8) facilities over the next year.

The leadership of the Department understands that none of these goals can be accomplished without a properly trained, motivated and qualified staff. Accordingly, emphasis will continue to be placed on providing additional incentives for our Juvenile Correction Officers (JCOs) based on training levels and job tenure. These officers are the cornerstone of operations in Secure Facilities. The agency will also develop a workforce plan that systematically addresses resource challenges, with continued focus on maintaining and increasing allocations to support staff.

To enable these system-wide improvements, the Commissioner's Top Five Priorities (listed below), were adopted in FY 2014 to align with and support Governor Deal's Strategic Goals for Georgia.

- Operate Safe, Secure Facilities and Community-Based Programs while providing Educational Opportunities
- Implement Juvenile Justice Reform
- Recruitment, Retention and Succession Planning Classification and Placement of Youth<sup>1</sup>.
- Youth Re-entry

<sup>1</sup> DJJ has met the objectives of this goal. Monitoring and oversight of operational improvements will be ongoing.

Since the adoption of these priorities as goals, the Department has diligently and collaboratively implemented and evaluated strategies and projects that support them. While effort on other goal areas will be sustained in the coming years, the Department will retire its emphasis on the Classification and Placement of youth as operational processes that adequately and efficiently guide this sector have been established, monitored and ratified as sustainable agency procedures.

Having completed the validation of the Custody and Housing Assessment in partnership with the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD), the Department will now undertake evaluation of initial implementation and effectiveness of the Custody and Housing Assessment and to develop a long-term Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) model. The evaluation will result in successful implementation, accurate data collection and empowerment of agency leadership and staff to make good decisions regarding custody and housing. Good decisions regarding custody and housing will ensure the following: youth and DJJ staff are safe within each facility; youth are housed in the least-restrictive manner possible; youth are housed and supervised based on their risk and need levels; positive youth behaviors are recognized and rewarded; and decreased incidents in facilities.

In conclusion, DJJ will conscientiously incorporate all initiatives associated with Juvenile Justice Reform into its service delivery processes. The Department will promote a quality workforce through consistent, appropriate and pertinent training for agency staff and leaders. DJJ will also systematically implement evidence-based programs to ensure the highest quality of transitional services are provided to youth returning to Georgia communities, thereby increasing the percentage of productive and law-abiding citizens while decreasing the recidivism rate among youth served by the Department.



## DJJ GOALS

In furthering its mission and vision, DJJ will continue to pursue the following Goals:

### Goal 1: Operate Safe and Secure Facilities and Community-Based Programs while Providing Educational Opportunities<sup>2</sup>.

Measurable Objective 1: Achieve ACA accreditation at all twenty-six (26) of DJJ's facilities by June 30, 2021.

Measurable Objective 2: Reduce the incidence of youth-on-youth assault in DJJ facilities from 83 percent as measured on June 30, 2017\* to 56 percent by June 30, 2021.

\*statistically projected on May 10, 2017

Measurable Objective 3: Increase the number of Georgia Preparatory Academy (GPA) schools (29 in total) that offer the GED curriculum via a dedicated adult education/GED instructor from 11 schools as measured on June 30, 2017 to 22<sup>3</sup> schools by June 30, 2021.

Measurable Objective 4: Increase computer-based CTAE courses in each RYDC by one per year to conclude June 30, 2021.

<sup>2</sup>. All statistically derived measurable objective values are selected based on the option recommended by the moderate model as opposed to the conservative or aggressive statistical models. The values are rounded to the nearest whole number.

<sup>3</sup>. This number includes all DJJ schools except for those in 30-bed facilities which typically do not have enough students to warrant an instructor; however, these schools will have some type of GED instruction that may be a combination of online instruction, some part-time instruction and access to printed GED resources.

DJJ is constantly exploring opportunities to enhance the safety and security of its facilities to ensure both public safety and the safety of juvenile offenders in the care and custody of DJJ. The agency is committed to the safety of both the youth in our care and our staff. We believe that if we provide a safe environment then our youth will have more success with education, treatment, programming opportunities and re-entry back into the community.

### G1: Strategy 1: Enhance Safety and Security Measures in Secure Facilities (RYDCs), Secure Campuses (YDCs) and in Community Settings

DJJ is committed to operating safe and secure spaces and continues to implement nationally recognized security measures, practices and innovations to ensure the agency remains proactive rather than reactive.

#### **Some of these leading practices include:**

- **Regional Youth Detention Center Facility Masterplan:** Continue to replace the aging facilities (first-generation RYDCs): Wilkes RYDC replaces Sandersville RYDC December 2017; Cadwell RYDC replaces Eastman RYDC in December 2018; Waycross and Dalton RYDCs also need to be replaced (refer to ESA document).
- **Youth Development Campus Facility Masterplan:** The Department will operationalize the YDC master plan to consider reducing all YDC campuses to 72 beds and establish additional campuses to increase family engagement, better manage safety and security, and help support youth rehabilitation (refer to ESA document).
- **Internet Protocol Closed Circuit Television (IP-CCTV):** Complete the IP-CCTV upgrades at eight remaining facilities: four facilities in FY 2019 and four in FY 2020. These cameras feature the ability for remote access to facility activities.





- **Key Control:** Continue installation of key control systems in all DJJ facilities to allow for an auditable trail of accountability for facility keys.
- **Radio Communication:** Finalize the rollout of the communication infrastructure statewide. Phase II involves the purchase and distribution of additional radio equipment in FY 2018 and Phase III involves the installation of antennas and repeaters to allow for radio communications statewide.
- **Youth-Service Kiosk:** At a minimum, the kiosk will enable youth to access additional educational resources, communicate with parents, discretely file grievances and earn Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) incentives. The rollout of the first phase of kiosks in YDCs is planned for FY 2018.
- **Case Management System:** Implement a case management system for the Investigations Unit which will enhance the agency's ability to process cases in a timely manner by June 30, 2019.
- **Body Cameras:** The Division of Community Services will equip all law enforcement juvenile probation officers and school resource officers with body cameras by January 2018 to improve accountability and safety for youth, staff and the community.
- **Metal detectors:** The Division of Community Services has identified 13 high-traffic Community Service Offices (CSOs) of its 97 CSOs to be equipped with metal detectors to enhance the security of the environment (refer to ESA document).



### G1: Strategy 2: Promote Effective Standards of Care, Custody, Training and Treatment in Custodial Settings

DJJ is committed to a continuous quality improvement process and is currently pursuing ACA accreditation for its secure facilities and campuses. This will ensure that the agency's mission to manage safe and secure correctional operations is guided by national best practices. There is a concerted, ongoing work effort on DJJ policy revisions and updates to ensure compliance and consistencies with practices across all DJJ settings. All DJJ policies will be reviewed and approved by July 31, 2017. The Department is using PowerDMS, an interactive workflow application platform that synchronizes and streamlines the policy review process, to complete this review and will continue utilization of the tool to ensure all policies and operating procedures are updated annually. In addition, the Department's Office of Continuous Improvement (OCI) will deploy a self-audit tool to enable facilities perform self-evaluations on predetermined criteria periodically in advance of OCI-led inspections.

#### **Some strategy-informed progress milestones are:**

- The Department's 19 RYDCs and six YDCs have been divided in three phases for accreditation. The first phase is scheduled to achieve ACA accreditation by August 30, 2018, second phase by December 31, 2019 and the third phase by December 31, 2021.
- The OCI will implement the self-audit tool in all facilities by June 30, 2018 to allow each DJJ facility to self-assess the quality of services being provided.



## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

### G1: Strategy 3: Explore and Implement a Range of Education Options to Address the Diverse Academic Needs of Youth

DJJ places a premium on education. GPA is located within the DJJ school system and is the State of Georgia's 181st school district. There are currently twenty-nine (29) GPA schools across the state of Georgia: Nineteen (19) in RYDCs, seven (7) in YDCs and three (3) in Education Transition Centers (ETCs). GPA is accredited through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Correctional Education Association (CEA). All teachers, principals and guidance counselors hold certificates from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.



DJJ staff members understand the importance of serving each youth by addressing their diverse interests, strengths and growth areas and providing individualized learning opportunities that target specific needs.

**To accomplish these goals, GPA will pursue the following education initiatives:**

- Implement an evaluation process to determine educational gaps. The objective of this effort is to better align the components of the curriculum to the identified gaps and needs of individual youth.
- GPA currently provides a dedicated adult education/GED instructor and GED curriculum in the seven YDCs, three ETCs and one of its 19 RYDCs (Gainesville) for a total of 11. Within the next year, GPA plans to increase the number of dedicated staff in the RYDCs by four and to increase the available curriculum to all 19 RYDCs through a combination of instructional modalities.
- To expand CTAE programming, GPA will request waivers from the Georgia Department of Education to allow non-certified CTAE instructors with adequate industry experience to provide instruction in a range of technical classes to youth who will receive a certificate of completion upon graduation.
- GPA, in conjunction with DJJ's Division of Community Services, implemented ETCs to afford youth under DJJ community supervision who have been expelled from traditional schools the opportunity to continue their education. DJJ currently has three ETCs: in Augusta (Richmond County); Macon (Bibb County); and Savannah (Chatham County) and plans to open an ETC in Columbus (Muscogee County) before December 2018.



## Goal 2: Continue to Implement Juvenile Justice Reform Measures

Measurable Objective 1: Decrease the one-year juvenile delinquent recidivism rate from 34 percent for the FY 2013 release cohort to 32 percent for the FY 2016<sup>4</sup> release cohort.

*The one-year juvenile delinquent recidivism rate was 33 percent for the FY 2011 release cohort. For the FY 2012 release cohort, it remained at 33 percent and increased slightly to 34 percent in FY 2013. It fell back to 33 percent for the FY 2014 release cohort. Measurements for later cohorts can be computed beginning in July 2017.*

Measurable Objective 2: Decrease the two-year juvenile delinquent recidivism rate\* from 41 percent for the FY 2013 release cohort to 39 percent for the FY 2016 release cohort.

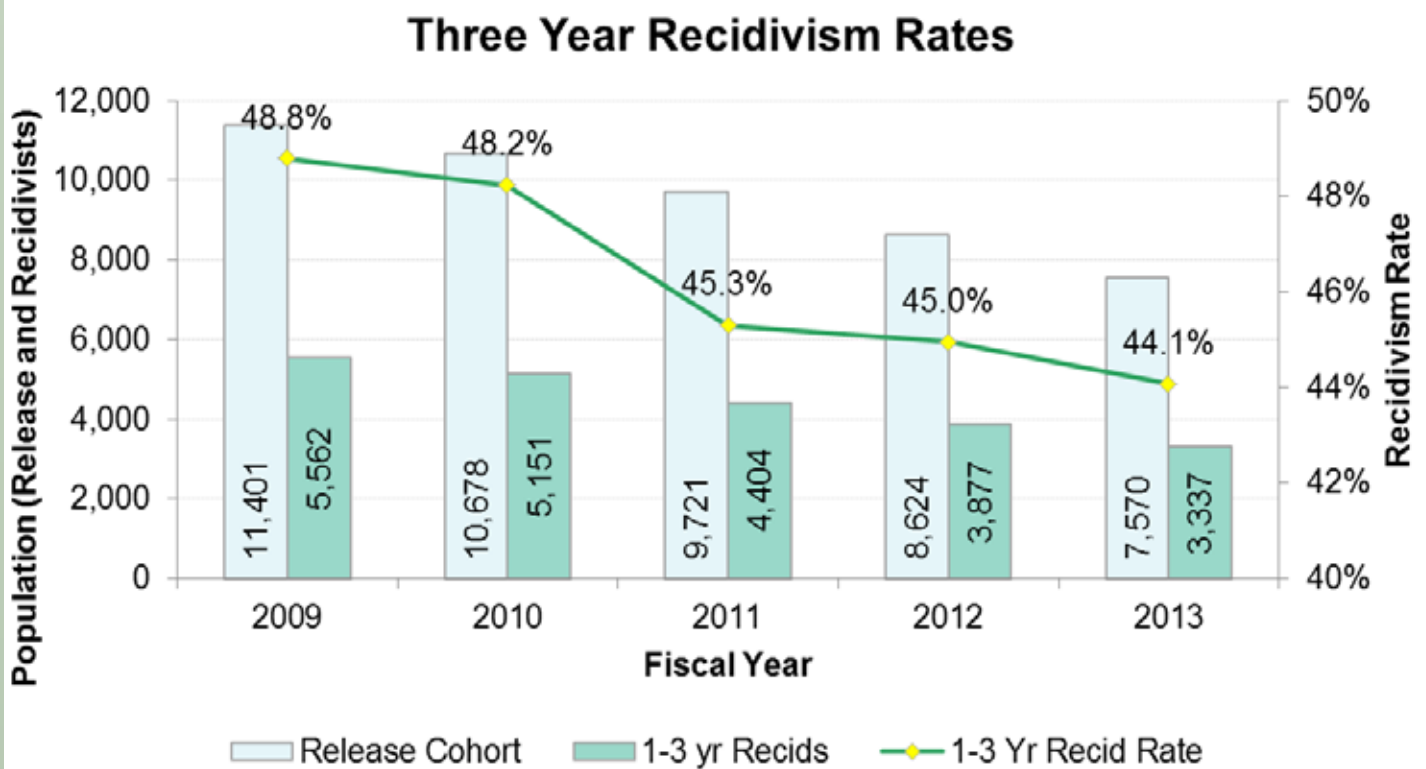
*The rates for the cumulative two-year juvenile delinquent recidivism rate for FY 2009, FY 2010, FY 2011, FY 2012 and FY 2013 release cohorts were 45 percent, 44 percent, 41 percent, 41 percent and 41 percent respectively.*

<sup>4</sup>The rationale for selecting FY 2016 as a target year in the recidivism measurable objectives is that moving the recidivism base and projected time frame years forward would drastically reduce our forecasting capability. The data availability for the release cohort, and the number of one year recidivists would become restricted, which are the two predictor variables that are used as input into the current forecasting model. Without the required variables (release cohort, one-year recidivists) more fluctuation and variability would be added to the projected target range, which would alter our ability to select an achievable goal for the Strategic Plan.

\*Georgia DJJ defines recidivism as the re-adjudication of a juvenile that was previously adjudicated and released.

Measurable Objective 3: Decrease the three-year juvenile delinquent recidivism rate from 44 percent for the FY 2013 release cohort to 41 percent for the FY 2016 release cohort.

*The rates for the three-year juvenile delinquent recidivism rate for FY 2009, FY 2010, FY 2011 and FY 2012 release cohorts were 49 percent, 48 percent, 45 percent and 45 percent respectively. The rate for the FY 2013 cohort was recorded at 44 percent on May 9, 2017.*



Measurable Objective 4: Increase the percentage of youth who do not reoffend while in our care from 85 percent for the FY 2015 served cohort to 89 percent for the FY 2021 served cohort.

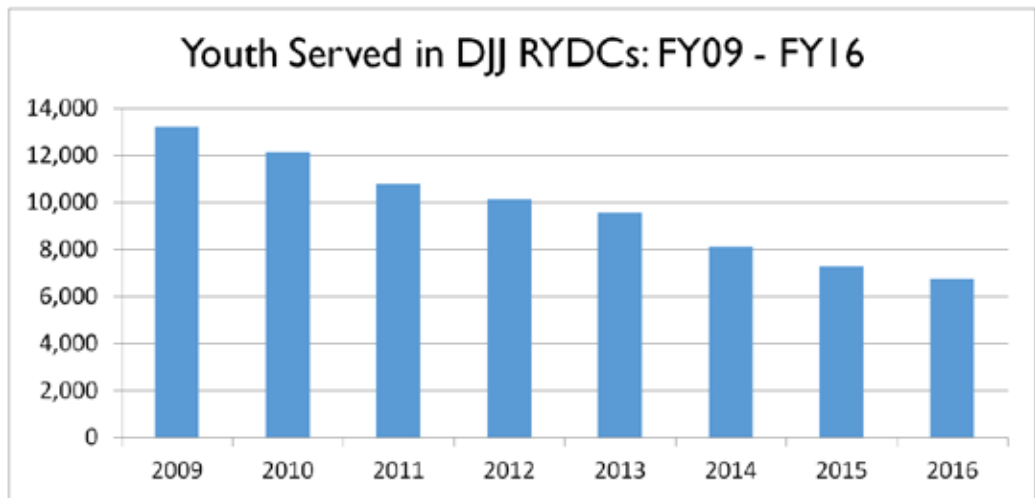


Governor Nathan Deal appointed a Special Council on Criminal Justice Reform (Council) to develop recommendations for improving public safety and decreasing costs in the state justice system. One anticipated benefit of the cost-savings realized from reduced confinement in secure facilities is the reinvestment of dollars for additional programs and services in the community for at-risk youth.

Following intensive research and collaboration with stakeholders, 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 and disposition decisions and assess juvenile needs. These tools have been in use since October 2013. One realized outcome since adoption of the tools is enhanced assessment and risk-level designation. The Council recommended that the most restrictive placement settings be reserved primarily for youth with higher risk levels. This fosters a rehabilitative environment where youth have the right supports, programs and services needed. DJJ has since been collecting and tracking data to facilitate performance measurement and oversight of the implementation of juvenile justice reform. This will allow for data-driven decision-making that contributes to the best outcomes for at-risk youth.

### G2: Strategy 1: Implement Performance Measurement, Evaluation and Sustainability Efforts of Programs and Services

Juvenile Justice Reform, with its focus on serving youth in community settings, has resulted in a steady decline in our RYDC population over the past eight years, as demonstrated by the 49 percent decrease in distinct youth served from 2009 to 2016.



While this culture shift has caused the RYDC population to be reduced, it has also resulted in a stark change in the offense types, levels of risk and treatment needs among youth served in DJJ's long-term secure facilities. This demographic requires a more intensive approach to program and service delivery. As such, a multidisciplinary workgroup is reviewing the current continuum of programs, services and supports available across all 26 facilities. The Department will continue to collaborate with qualified community providers to serve youth using Evidence-Based Practices. In addition, DJJ will also consider establishing a governance mechanism to serve as a centralized repository of all program providers statewide, and standardize all provider partnerships and legal agreements.





## Key strategies and initiatives include:

- The facility-focused gap analysis will be completed by September 2017. DJJ's Division of Support Services will begin to address identified gaps beginning in October 2017, continuing until programs and services adequately and consistently meet the needs of the population.
- The Division of Community Services will train case management staff in trauma-informed practice<sup>5</sup> to enhance the continuum of care by September 2018. This effort will increase the trauma-informed nature of community services through training, enhanced trauma screenings and use of trauma-informed principles while working with youth and family members.

<sup>5</sup>Over the past decade, it has become clear that the impact of psychological trauma on youth involved in the juvenile justice system is a significant contributor to those behavioral and emotional factors that place a youth at risk. However, as indicated in the collaborative efforts of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, merely acknowledging the role that trauma has played in the lives of these youth is not sufficient. In order to be maximally effective, a juvenile justice system should endeavor to incorporate trauma-informed practices at all points of the agency - policy, screening, referrals, service selection, staff training and well-being, family partnerships ([http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/jj\\_ee\\_final.pdf](http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/jj_ee_final.pdf)).

- A new case management approach will be developed and implemented by September 2018 to improve service to youth, enhance parent engagement and provide for increased data collection.
- A PBIS evaluation tool will be implemented by October 2018 to provide insight into the correlation between PBIS and recidivism of youth released from DJJ.
- DJJ will continue to enforce performance-based contracts with program and service providers with monitoring and control processes to ensure that the desired outcomes of contracts are clearly defined and achieved.

### Goal 2: Strategy 2: Introduce and Expand Opportunities for Partnerships with Families, Stakeholders and Communities in Youth Care

Across the nation, juvenile justice systems are employing innovative methods to foster rehabilitation of youth. These initiatives rely on the collaboration and commitment of youth-serving stakeholders, including families, community and non-profit organizations, and other state agencies. Family engagement is a cornerstone among effective juvenile justice practices to reduce recidivism, so DJJ will increase outreach to families through family-centered events and activities. Additionally, the Department leadership understands the importance of involving community partners and stakeholders throughout the rehabilitation process to support and connect youth with the right interventions and resources. Therefore, DJJ will expand its mentoring focus to harness the knowledge, skills, experience and abilities of community partners and stakeholders such as faith-based communities, non-profit organizations and juvenile justice advocates. The mentoring initiative will optimize the role that community stakeholders play in addressing the needs of youth in the Department's care. This effort will foster a seamless process in which youth and their families can connect with positive community role models and link with community resources. It will also afford youth an added avenue to build life skills and competencies necessary for successful reintegration back into community life while it promotes positive interactions between youth and the community.



## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

### Some tasks that will be completed as part of this strategy are:

- Increase opportunities for family engagement to promote and build a family-driven system of care.
- Provide training for staff and stakeholders on effective family engagement strategies such as sensitivity training, cultural awareness, motivational interviewing and trauma-informed care.
- Implement a Parent Café by September 1, 2018 to improve interaction, service delivery and communication among parents and families of youth in DJJ's care.
- Build capacity for statewide mentoring in Georgia through a collaborative alliance with key external stakeholders for youth involved with the Department. DJJ anticipates a statewide footprint by FY 2020.
- DJJ will utilize external and internal databases to map and address resource and service gaps for youth and families statewide.



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

Measurable Objective 1: Decrease the JCO 1 and 2 turnover rate from 64.9 percent in FY 2016 to 63.4 percent in FY 2021.

### Goal 3 Measurable Objective(s)

DJJ's Office of Human Resources supports the strategic goals and mission of the Department by monitoring workforce trends and proposing initiatives to address trends and challenges. DJJ strives to attract, develop, motivate and retain a diverse workforce. The Office of Human Resources supports the daily processes of the agency workforce including staff retention and recruitment. DJJ has identified the following strategies as instrumental in realizing a desirable and functional workplace.

G3: Strategy 1: Restructure Human Resource Functions and Processes to Better Support Field Efforts and Talent Needs Statewide

- Realign the human resources (HR) administrative functions to create a more accessible and robust support system. The realignment will allow the Human Resources team to be more responsive to customer needs without compromising adaptability and scalability.
- A recruiting data repository will be developed by December 31, 2018 which will collate up to six (6) recruiting indicators, such as number of vacancies for a given period and number of candidates per position, to support the development of a recruiting plan. DJJ's 26 secure facilities will begin using the repository and updating the tool weekly in July 2019.
- DJJ will streamline its recruiting process by solely and fully utilizing the functionalities in Taleo, the State of Georgia's onboarding platform, to increase efficiencies with tracking and reporting hiring information.



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G3: Strategy 2: Explore Succession Planning Initiatives with the Intent of Adopting a Plan for Agency-wide Implementation.

- Conduct an Environmental Scan, including a SWOT and data analysis, to determine whether the needs of the agency are in alignment with the availability and competencies of the workforce by June 30, 2018.
- DJJ will establish a preliminary workforce plan that adequately portrays the current workforce climate by June 30, 2019.
- Implement a pre-employment assessment by June 30, 2018 to evaluate job-fit of correctional officer applicants against position demands.
- Consistently conduct exit interviews with correctional staff who separate from the Department to better understand and address retention challenges in facilities.



### G3: Strategy 3: Incorporate Non-traditional Outreach Methods to Enable More Robust Recruitment Efforts.

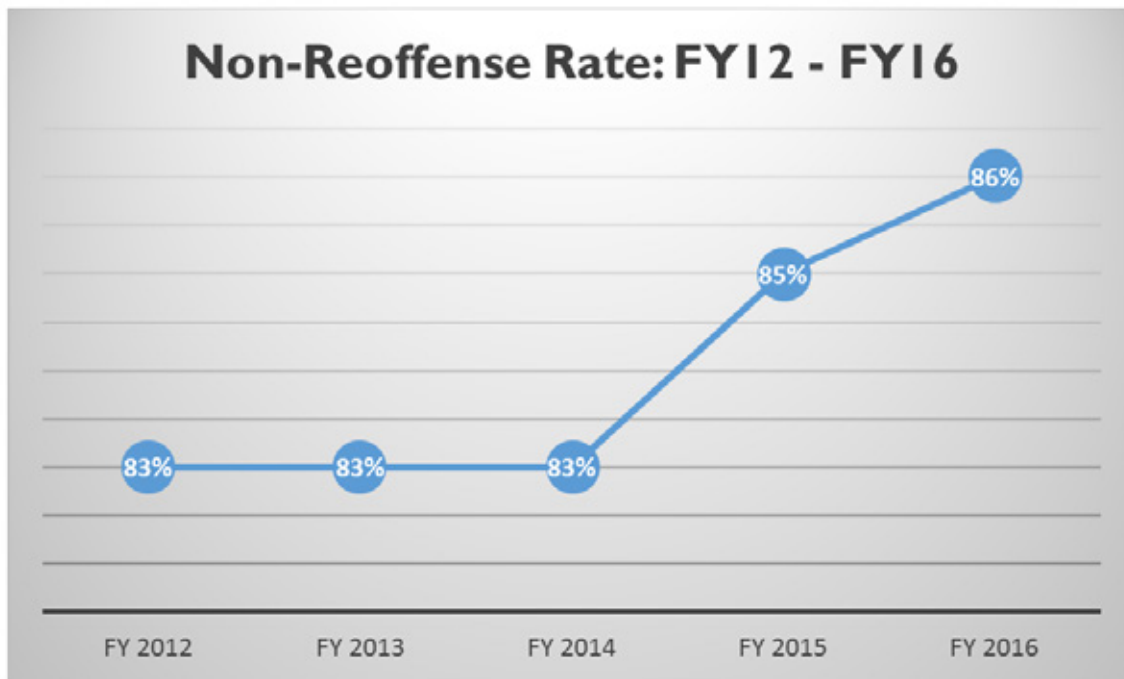
- Beginning in FY 2018, DJJ will implement innovative, grassroots efforts, including the addition of new recruiting sites and strengthening community partnerships to address recruiting challenges associated with mission-critical positions.
- DJJ will revise select job positions to further attract talent with the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to support key program areas by June 30, 2018.
- DJJ's recruitment-focused advertising – including the agency's human resources subsite on the agency website, social media presence and informational materials – will undergo rebranding by June 30, 2018.





## Goal 4: Promote Youth Re-entry Focused Programming and Service

Measurable Objective 1: Increase the percentage of youth who do not reoffend while in our care from 86 percent for the FY 2016 Served cohort to 89 percent for the FY 2021 Served cohort.



Measurable Objective 2: Increase Family Engagement by 10 percent between FY 2017\* and FY 2019 by using the Youth Centered Reentry Teams (YCRT) process as the mechanism of measuring family participation.

*\* Once a firm baseline is established for FY 2017, the goal is to increase it by 10 percent by FY 2019*

The Department's objective is to prepare youth for successful reentry to their communities early in their commitment to DJJ. This planning process ensures that youth receive the required services and programs to meet their needs and foster rehabilitation while in our care. To target needs, case managers create a transition plan for each youth which identifies tasks to be completed prior to release to ensure youth are linked to all the services, programs and resources they need. Case managers, youth, families and relevant staff convene regularly for YCRT meetings during which they discuss and address unresolved aspects of the transitional plan.

The Department will strengthen and formalize the YCRT process to make sure all case managers and stakeholders are fully engaged, information is shared and exchanged, and the interests of youth and their families are served. Additionally, DJJ will fully implement the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) in all its programs. SPEP is a tool that evaluates reentry-focused programs to ensure they are supported by research and evidence of effectiveness in reducing recidivism. DJJ will establish processes to periodically assess program fidelity to research-based models proven to support desirable outcomes in youth.





## G4: Strategy 1: Engage All Case Management Processes in Youth Release Planning Early in Commitment

DJJ is committed to improving all areas of youth case management during custody to prepare for a successful reentry. The Department will institute a Reentry Framework that enables quality, consistency and centralizing of case management processes to improve reentry outcomes. One process the Department will focus on to improve continuity of care in case management is the enhancement of its current pre-release process. DJJ will invest in youths' success by adopting a 120-day reporting system which is designed to assess readiness for transition at 120, 90, 60 and 30 days prior to release. The 120-day report provides a channel for coordinated, consistent and centralized information sharing so all gaps in case management are tackled prior to release. This report will also track youth released the previous month to evaluate progress in the community.

### **Some tasks to be completed include:**

- Implement the transition reporting system which assesses youth release readiness by January 2018.
- Implement youth release action plans to fill service gaps identified in the 120-day report.
- Perform a Reentry Framework gap analysis to reevaluate barriers in case management by June 30, 2018.
- Address barriers to be identified in FY 2018 gap analysis by FY 2020.

### G4: Strategy 2: Enhance Transition Processes to Facilitate Successful Reintegration into the Community by Linking Youth with Relevant Services, Resources and Supports

DJJ has established relationships with state, local and non-governmental organizations and will consistently promote public-private partnerships to strengthen the network of support for youth and families. DJJ's objective is to have a coalition of resource and service providers for transitioning youth. The Department will proactively encourage community partnerships, collaboration and connections to better serve youth and their families. As an added support for youth, DJJ will open its first Juvenile Transition Center (JTC) in the state, specifically designed for transitioning youth. This new facility will provide an array of programs and services such as life-skills coaching, job-readiness preparation, family counseling, mental health services, and educational classes to prepare youth for their release. Additionally, DJJ's Education Division will expand its services for transitioning youth.

#### **Some tasks to be completed as part of this strategy are:**

- Open a fully operational JTC by FY 2021 in Gwinnett County.
- Add ten (10) youth-serving community partners by June 30, 2019.
- Build partnerships with local businesses to employ youth and allow them to gain work experience and/or job readiness skills
- Add four (4) Educational Liaisons to the education staff to assist youth with transition back into their home school district by June 30, 2019.
- Build capacity for the Graduate Education Program to teach youth soft skills, interview skills, test preparation and tips for completing applications and writing resumes while working with our technical colleges.
- Transition Paulding RYDC to a Commercially Sexually Exploited Receiving Center. The center will be available to provide youth who have been sexually exploited with immediate alternatives to detention and a secure setting where emergency mental health and medical needs can be properly addressed.



## WORKFORCE PLAN SUMMARY

The HR team will continue its transformation into a true partner which supports DJJ's mission. The transformed team will be regionalized and streamlined to provide more support to field functions. Specifically, the emphasis will be on recruiting talented individuals who are committed to serving youth and making a difference. The transformed HR team will work together to develop relationships with entities that can enhance the Department's candidate pool. These relationships would include two- and four-year colleges, technical schools, Chambers of Commerce, local politicians, military sites, veterans' groups, social networking, Department of Labor and others. Branding and disseminating recruiting brochures will be integral to building a reputation as an employer of choice. Similarly, encouraging employee participation in community events will promote DJJ as a great place to work and contribute.

Job fairs will have prominent promotional materials and displays and will be manned by recruiters and managers who understand the value of marketing DJJ as an employer. Facilities should have closed loop videos which display the life of an employee and the value employees bring and receive with a career at DJJ. The HR subsite of the DJJ website should be redesigned to attract candidates.

The On-Boarding process needs complete revamping. An Orientation Program will be developed and regular follow-up meetings with new employees established. Welcoming and including our employees will decrease turnover, increase engagement and reduce the costs of hiring. Recruiting talent must be accompanied by retention strategies. The HR Team will conduct engagement surveys to determine where opportunities lie for management to improve our culture. Leadership development classes and HR training programs will lead to increased engagement and morale and lower turnover. Moreover, as our reputation as a good employer grows, we will attract more and better talent.

Employee relations efforts will also lead to enhanced morale. Independent HR representatives provide a sounding board and recourse for all kinds of employment issues. Keeping HR close to employee issues is integral to a stable and motivated workforce. Consistent application of disciplinary policies is the goal of HR to ensure employees feel equitably and fairly treated. A goal of discipline is to change behavior, not to be merely penal. HR presence as a coach and mentor can be invaluable in raising performance standards. Regionalization of HR will facilitate a consistent approach to DJJ employee relations.





## DJJ Preliminary Workforce Plan

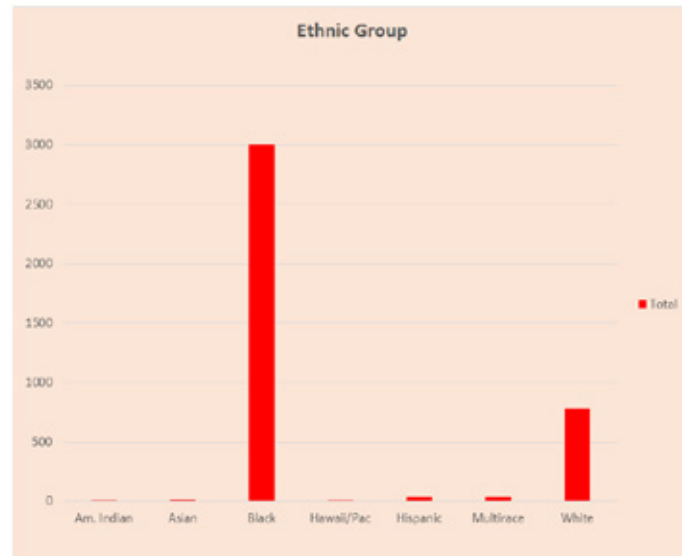
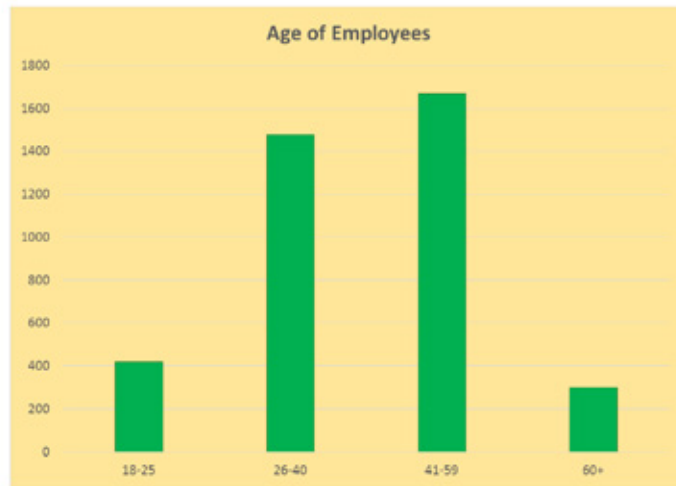
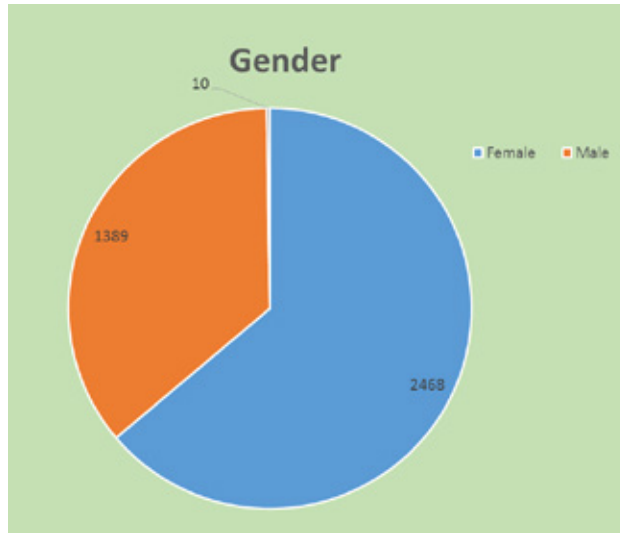
Over the last year the Department of Juvenile Justice has undergone a lot of changes in its workforce, including some many changes within the Human Resources Unit. One of the major task that the new HR team will be embarking upon is a gap analysis to solidify some of the assumptions that are currently being made about the workforce. As a result, this year's work plan is a document that will provide insights on who makes up our work force, workforce data and some assumptions that are being made based on the current data that is available. Some of the greatest workforce challenges that seem to be facing the organization are: retention, succession planning and transference of knowledge.

Without having any additional data, it is difficult to say whether we have a recruitment problem, but recruitment is an area that is a focal point for the HR team currently. Some other broad assumptions that are being made is that geographical location of some of our facilities makes it difficult to recruit for certain positions (teachers, counselors, and in some instances facility directors). However, the gap analysis will provide a much clearer picture of the internal/external barriers that are impacting DJJ's workforce.

## Workforce Overview

DJJ is a multifaceted agency that serves the needs of the state's young offenders up to the age of 21. The Department has 4,315 budgeted positions at its headquarter, 26 secure facilities and 97 CSOs. Currently the workforce is divided across four (4) program areas: RYDCs, YDCs 68.70 percent; Community Service 24 percent; and Administration 7.29 percent.

Agency Workforce: The charts below show DJJ’s workforce distributed by gender, age group and ethnicity.

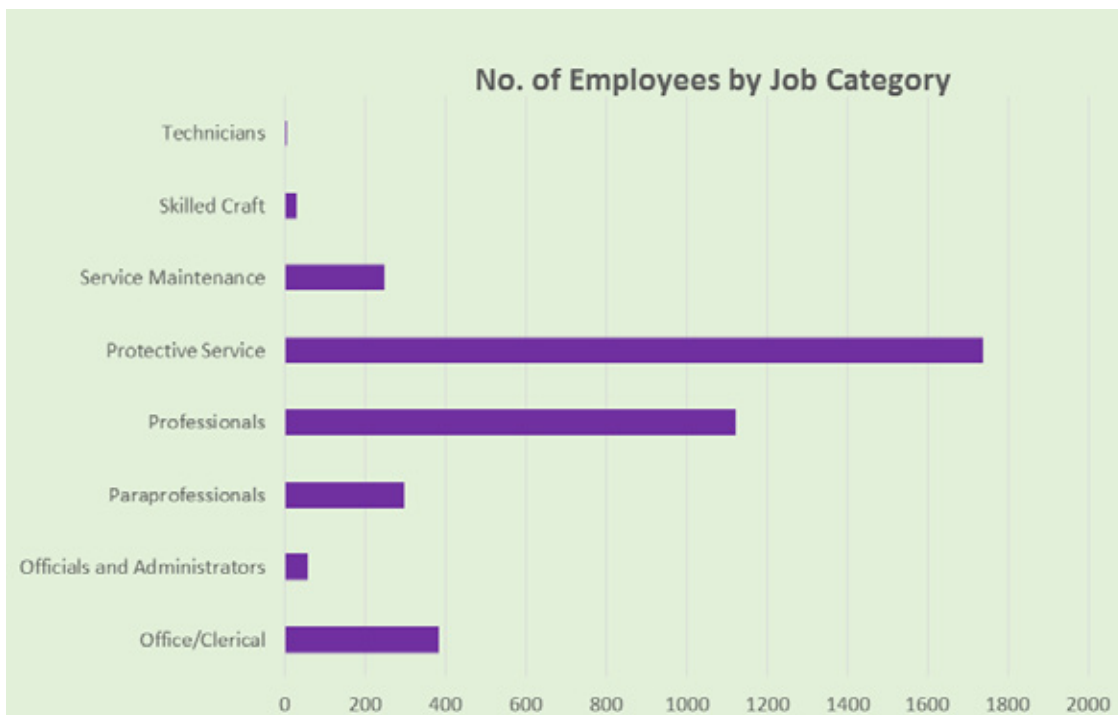




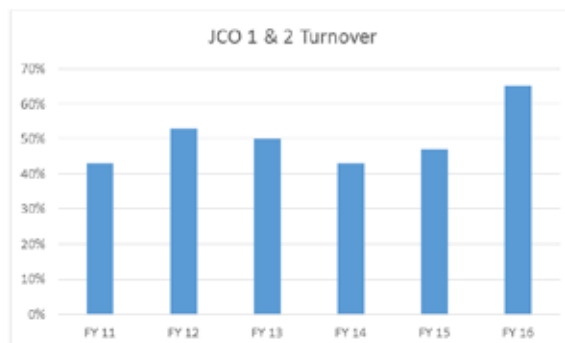
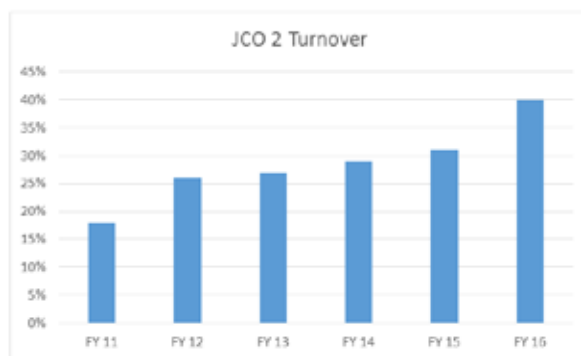
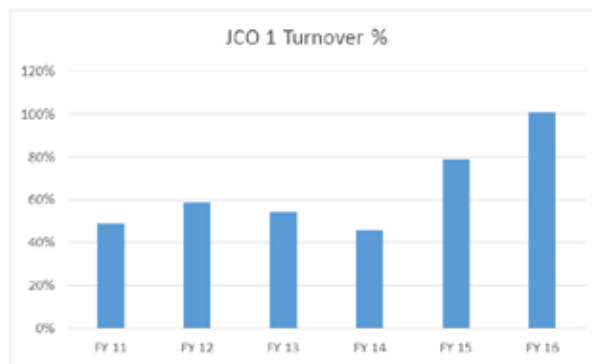
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We have a person in a position with a unique skill set or historical knowledge that no other person in the agency has to perform critical tasks. We are also dealing with the challenges of having new staff (less than one year in a position). This gap is not limited to hourly staff or local staff, but it is true of the agency executive staff. We currently have two executive team members that have been in their positions for less than one year and another six that have been in their role for less than two years.

The above challenges must be addressed because DJJ needs to ensure that we are requiring staff to cross-train or transfer knowledge in other creative ways. DJJ has to also consider staff training programs, on-the-job training opportunities and mentorships to maintain quality work and consistency in services to youth. DJJ has aligned these gaps with the initiatives that will be pursued over the next three (3) years. The chart on the next page shows the number of employees by job category. About 45 percent of the DJJ workforce is involved in protective services to include JCOs, Juvenile Detention Counselors (JDCs), Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers (JPPS), and other security staff in the facilities and community offices.



Of all the job positions in the protective services category, the only job position with a turnover rate greater than 50 percent as measured in Fiscal Year 2016 is the JCO 1 position with a turnover rate of 101 percent. Clearly, DJJ must implement strategies to address this high turnover. Interestingly, after JCO 1 officers transition into the JCO 2 position, the turnover rate dramatically decreases. The JCO 2 turnover rate in FY 2016 was 40 percent. DJJ must take intentional steps to understand what the challenges are in the first year of a JCO's tenure that results in their separating from the agency. DJJ must also explore interventions to retain JCO 1 officers beyond this trying period to enable them establish rewarding careers with the Department.







## Workforce Plan Overview:

This Workforce Plan outlines the most pressing priorities that DJJ will address over the next four (4) years. These priorities are mission-critical because if not addressed the agency may phase deficiencies in safety and security, education, facility maintenance and other support positions. While all of the goals in the strategic plan are important, the workforce plan serves as the foundation for having the staff to achieve the other goals and objectives. These tasks outlined in the workforce plan will help to build a stronger more stable workforce, ensure that we are being fiscally accountable with our resources and allow us to leverage technology to provide better service.

- Collect onboarding and off-boarding recruitment retention data
- Develop targeted recruitment strategies for hard-to-recruit positions and hard-to-recruit areas
- Update and implement human resource policies
- Develop a succession plan for critical positions
- Explore unique opportunities and incentives for employees that are in high turnover positions
- Build on the employment recognition program
- Enhanced training opportunities for staff
- Develop knowledge transfer plans and better on-the-job training programs

### **Workforce Trends, Forecasts and Assumptions:**

Now that DJJ has a new Human Resource leadership team, a thorough gap analysis will be conducted to look at workforce supply and demand. DJJ will leverage information such as competencies and staffing that will include consideration of labor market trends. DJJ will explore external factors that may be impacting the gap in the current workforce. Of course we will conduct meetings with divisions/units to receive input from business owners mission critical workforce gaps as well.

We will couple the information pulled from the gap analysis with the separation data to gauge a broader understanding of the workforce gaps. This means that we will consider the number of people that are set to retire over the next three years. In addition, based on the number of people that have been terminated over the three years and basis of those terminations we will evaluate trends.

### **Recruitment and Retention Assumptions:**

DJJ acknowledges that there is a retention problem that must be addressed especially with facility positions, but we are still looking for data to clarify whether we a recruitment problem. As a result, it is these gaps that have led us to the initiatives surrounding recruitment and retention.



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### Retention Assumptions:

**While we must perform a gap analysis to gain more thorough information, some of the issues that have been revealed to the Human Resource Team include the following:**

- Inconsistent personnel actions among divisions and units
- Lack of cross-training which would mean knowledge is lost when turnover occurs
- Challenges competing with other agencies or the private sector in key roles often due to work environment, work hours, salaries not competitive, etc.



### **Knowledge Transfer Assumptions:**

Once again even without a thorough gap analysis the Human Resource Team could gauge some information regarding gaps and risks:

- Lack of documented processes in divisions and units which creates knowledge transfer gaps
- There needs to be a review of professional development and training opportunities to ensure that staff have a good knowledge base to successfully perform their job task
- Need to strengthen the onboarding process for all employees
- We need to review key competencies for job classes to new employee selections and to help with retention

### **Succession Planning Assumptions:**

- We need to implement ways to document job processes at all levels to help with succession planning
- We need to look at implementing consistent on-the-job training for certain roles within the organization

The risk is obvious with succession planning, if we do not properly address succession planning then the knowledge walks out of the door with turnover. DJJ will begin to address the challenges and assumptions stated above, and in doing so will begin to develop a succession planning document it could build upon in the coming years.



## APPENDIX A

### Task Force Projects

Family and Living Arrangements  
 Parenthood Framework Initiatives:

- **The Parenthood Project**

The Parenthood Project supports the enhanced visitation initiative to promote a more meaningful interaction between DJJ youth and their children. This project supports youth who are parents by encouraging their child’s caregiver to bring the child for visitation. Toy carts with books, games, crayons, etc. are available to children when they visit and are currently in place at Atlanta, Eastman, Macon and Sumter YDCs, with Prison Fellowship and Foreverfamily partners providing the carts and toys. All seven long-term facilities will have their toy carts in place by August 2017.

- **Storybook Moms and Dads Program**

In this program, a youth parent in custody is recorded reading a children’s book and the book and recording are given to the child. The program is already being implemented at Atlanta YDC with Prison Fellowship volunteers coordinating and will be continuing in FY 2018. The program will be implemented at a second pilot site by July 2017.

- **Ferst Foundation Program**

Beginning in July 2017, for the 77-county area within the Ferst Program's network, children of DJJ youth-parents in YDCs will have their children under the age of five enrolled with the Ferst Foundation to receive one book per month until they turn five years old.

- **Nurturing Parenting**

Implemented at Atlanta YDC, Nurturing Parenting is an evidence-based program that promotes parenting skills, health and positive interactions between youth and their parents or children.



## **Education and Schooling**

- DJJ has a memorandum of understanding with Communities in Schools which supports youth returning home by helping them get back in their home schools and teaching soft skills, job readiness and independent living skills.
- Embark Referral Service is a student support network for youth in college who are homeless, in foster care or have a previous involvement with the justice system. Among other things it provides tutoring, counseling, food assistance and clothing assistance.

## **Vocational Training and Employment**

- Student Navigator Collaborative with Technical College System of Georgia connects students with points of contacts at technical schools statewide to improve the transition to college life.
- DJJ entered a no-cost mentoring contract with Metro Community Ministries to help increase capacity and implement a statewide evidence-based mentoring program.

## **Leisure Time, Recreation and Avocational Interests**

- In collaboration with Morehouse School of Medicine, DJJ completed a leisure time study of youth under supervision. The findings were analyzed by Morehouse and will be used to improve recreational opportunities for youth by ensuring our youth are engaged in constructive activities to prevent the possibility of engaging in risky behavior.

## **Behavioral and Physical Health**

- DJJ has developed a database of service providers and will integrate that database into the existing database of the Georgia Department of Community Supervision. This will allow our youth and their families easy access to service providers in their community.



## Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice

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