

Department of Legislative Services
2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised
(Delegate Dumais)

House Bill 721
Judiciary

Judicial Proceedings

Juvenile Services - Services and Programs for Females

This bill requires the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) to serve children in the juvenile services system with programming that provides females with a range and quality of services to meet their specific needs, including diversion programs, community detention services and programs, and reentry services and programs. The bill expands the duties of the State Advisory Board for Juvenile Services to include consulting with and advising the Secretary of Juvenile Services on the treatment and programming needs of females in the juvenile justice system. By December 31, 2017, DJS must submit an interim report to the Governor and the General Assembly on the implementation of the requirements set forth in the bill. DJS must submit a final report by December 31, 2018.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2017.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: DJS can meet the bill's requirements with existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: DJS must serve children in the juvenile services system with programming that:

- ensures the safety of the community and the children served;
- holds delinquent children accountable to victims and communities;

- assists children to develop competencies to become successful members of society;
- delivers services on a regional basis through at least four operational regions;
- ensures that a committed facility licensed by DJS serves no more than 48 children at one time, unless otherwise specified; and
- uses detention and committed facilities that are operationally separate from each other and that do not share common program space, including dining halls and educational or recreational facilities.

The State Advisory Board for Juvenile Services, in addition to other specified duties, must (1) recommend to the Secretary of Juvenile Services policies and programs to improve juvenile services in the State; (2) participate in interpreting for the public the objectives of DJS; and (3) participate in planning the development and use of available resources to meet the needs of DJS. It must also consult with and advise the Secretary of Juvenile Services on (1) each aspect of the juvenile services program in the State; (2) the educational programs and services of DJS; and (3) programs designed to divert children from the juvenile justice system.

Background: According to its *Data Resource Guide*, females accounted for 26.2% of the 22,429 complaints received by DJS in fiscal 2016. DJS has three detention facilities that serve girls, including the Thomas J.S. Waxter Children’s Facility, which is devoted exclusively to females. The other State-operated facilities that include a female detention population are the Lower Eastern Shore Children’s Center and the Alfred D. Noyes Center. Of the 2,297 youth in an alternative to detention program in fiscal 2016, 15.2% were females. DJS advises that, in fiscal 2016, female youth represented approximately 16% of its committed population. Options for committed females include community-based programs, such as foster homes or group homes, or the J. DeWeese Carter Center, a hardware secure DJS-operated co-ed facility.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 674 (Senator Kelley, *et al.*) - Judicial Proceedings.

Information Source(s): Department of Juvenile Services; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 22, 2017
fn/kdm Third Reader - March 16, 2017
Revised - Amendment(s) - March 16, 2017

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