



Children Youth & Families Department

New Mexico  
Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee

# New Mexico

## Three-Year Juvenile Justice Strategic Plan

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*Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee Role and Influence*  
*Youth Voice and Engagement*  
*Cross-Departmental Collaboration*  
*Training and Capacity-Building*  
*Mental Health and Substance Abuse*  
*School-Based Interventions*  
*Tribal and Rural Interventions*  
*Reduced Use of Detention*

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2021 – 2023

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## NM Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee Members

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Helen Cheromiah	Angie Schneider
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## Introduction

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### **PURPOSE AND MISSION**

The New Mexico Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) was created by state statute, (Section 9-2A-14 through Section 9-2A-16 NMSA 1978) and carries out responsibilities under the Federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act as well as the State Juvenile Continuum Act.

The JJAC is appointed by the Governor and is advisory to the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD), the Governor and the Legislature. JJAC members come from all walks of life and professional disciplines who, together with allied individuals and organizations, seek to improve the circumstances of vulnerable and troubled children, youth and families involved with the courts, and to build safe sharing best practices, innovations, policy recommendations and peer support.

The JJAC advocates for the prevention of delinquency, alternatives to secure detention, improvement of the juvenile justice system, and gender-specific services for juveniles in local communities. The JJAC allocates federal and state grant funds to communities in New Mexico for these purposes.

JJAC's mission is to advocate for the prevention of juvenile delinquency and the provision of a continuum of high quality services throughout the New Mexico juvenile justice system. This is accomplished by:

- Advising the Governor and the legislature on juvenile justice issues and compliance with federal legislation (Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, as amended);
- assessing juvenile related problems, identifying community needs and gaps in services; and
- fostering innovative program responses.

The purpose of New Mexico's Three-Year Plan is to ensure New Mexico's compliance with the four core requirements of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, set priorities for use of federal fiscal year Title II Formula Grants and to provide prevention and treatment programs and services to youth at-risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system. The Plan is based on a full collection and review of data, including juvenile crime trends data as well as a custom statewide survey for local community input.

### **JUVENILE CRIME TRENDS**

The New Mexico Children's Code, NMSA 1978 §§32a-2-1 to 32a-2-33 identifies three referral types: Delinquent Referrals, Status Offense Referrals, and Probation Violations. Of New Mexico's 222,073 youth, aged 10-17 years, 6,329 unique clients (2.8% of the youth populations) were referred to Juvenile Justice Services, in state fiscal year (SFY) 2020. This is a 28% decrease from 8,134 in 2018 (3.2% of the youth population), and 143% decline from 15,402 in 2010 (6.7% of the youth population). These clients had accounted for 7,962 referrals (some clients

had multiple referrals); 81.7% (6,508) were delinquent referrals, 5.9% (468) were status referrals, and 12.4% (986) were probation violations.

The top five offenses for delinquent referrals from SFY 2020 were battery (855); use or possession of drug paraphernalia (680); battery/household member (610); criminal damage to property (532); and possession of alcoholic beverages by a minor (506). This reflected increases of battery/household member, criminal damage to property and possession of alcoholic beverages by a minor and decreases in public affray and possession of marijuana or synthetic cannabis (1 oz or less/1st offense) compared to SFY 2018 and 2019.

There were 362 unique clients referred for probation violations in SFY 2020, accruing 468 referrals and 1,265 offenses. The unique client number is down 31.4% from 527 in SFY 2018, while referrals are down 29.0% and offenses are down 44.7%.

A total of 880 clients were referred to the New Mexico juvenile justice system with a status referral. These unique clients collected a total number of 986 status referrals, with a cumulative 992 offenses. The status offenses were incorrigible (355; 35.8%), truancy (324; 32.7%), and runaway (287; 28.9%). There has been a 57.7% decline of status referrals over the past 10 years; from 2,333 in 2011 to 1,727 in 2018 and 986 in 2020.

SFY 2020 saw four of the 8 county-operated juvenile detention centers in New Mexico close – Chaves, Luna, Santa Fe and Curry counties, leaving detention centers in Bernalillo, San Juan, Lea and Dona Ana counties. This accounted for a reduction in detention beds from 297 to 195 statewide. The average daily population was 72 juvenile detainees, compared to 109 in 2018.

**STATEWIDE SURVEY**

JJAC along with CYFD’s Juvenile Justice Field Services’ Special Program Unit completed a statewide survey in the fall of 2020 to gather local stakeholder, parent and youth input on the state Three-Year Plan. The survey addressed youth needs & issues, system improvement, reducing racial and ethnic disparities, and funding/services. Responses were received from 1,199 people representing 32 of 33 counties, and 45 tribal members representing 11 New Mexico tribes. Additional breakdown of respondents showed:

114 youth (60 system; 54 non-system-involved)	292 parents (90 system and 202 non-system-involved)
206 justice system community stakeholders	337 health, BH, education community stakeholders
144 community members	106 other

Respondents identified substance/alcohol abuse, truancy, running away, family conflict, vandalism and violent behavior as the top 6 risky behaviors by juveniles in the community. They identified the following service needs for juveniles in their communities: (1) life skills, (2) positive youth development, (3) suicide prevention, (4) alternative/vocational education, (5) youth employment services and (6) violence prevention. Parents and youth identified (1) suicide prevention, (2) life skills, (3) alternatives to education, (4) youth employment, and (5) violence prevention. There was general agreement that local communities respond to juvenile crime in a coordinated fashion, though participation of youth in coordination efforts was deemed as low. There was understanding of system improvement efforts, with probation

supervision shifting from compliance to support, from sanctions to incentives, and from standard conditions to individualized goals and expectations.

Respondents saw importance in having youth mentoring, delinquency prevention, and juvenile community corrections services in their communities. They identified afterschool programs, day treatment services and intensive community monitoring as the top three alternatives to detention they would like to see.

Understanding of race equity efforts, with New Mexico's implementation of Annie E. Casey Foundation's State to Scale system improvement model was mixed and understanding of how youth of color were treated in their communities was also mixed. Respondents felt that community investment in their youth was mixed, and sometimes tied to state and other funding sources, which may or may not match up with their local youth needs. JJAC published its Race Equity Statement in March of 2021 to ensure JJAC funds and actions are guided by principles of equity for all young people in New Mexico.

## **JJAC PLANNING**

Juvenile Crime Tends and Statewide Survey Data was reviewed and used for JJAC to set strategic federal and state priorities for the next three years, as provided in this Plan. Note, Federal priorities are specifically identified when relevant to a specific goal. The Plan will be monitored and updated annually by JJAC as needed.

The service area under this Plan is statewide and delivered through a Continuum of Care Site Model that includes local Juvenile Justice Boards and Continuums of Care currently serving 22 of the State's 33 counties. The target population is juveniles arrested or referred to juvenile probation; or are at risk of such referral. The Continuums, per State statute, are guided by local juvenile justice boards, whose membership must include local or tribal government representatives, children's court, district attorney, public defender, local law enforcement, and school district. Boards identify local program needs and execute their goals and objectives in coordination with New Mexico's Three-Year Plan. They also provide the State Advisory Group with feedback regarding issues, outcomes, and obstacles encountered at the community-based level. Progress on use of federal and state funds will be measured through a process for each subgrant which includes monthly reports, desk audits, and site visits, and reporting via the Juvenile Justice Services Grant Management System (JJS GMS).

The New Mexico Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee meets quarterly, and information about JJAC, its meeting schedule, and relevant documents, can be found at:

<https://cyfd.org/jjs-special-programs/juvenile-justice-advisory-committee-jjac>

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## Race Equity Statement

### of the New Mexico

### Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee

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We, the New Mexico Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) stand against institutional racism, inequality and oppression. In pursuit of justice for all our children, we are committed to ending deeply rooted systemic, institutional and structural biases in the juvenile justice system.

We, JJAC, acknowledge that the New Mexico juvenile justice system has historically, disproportionately impacted young people and their families based on race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, and disability. We unapologetically stand opposed to systems tolerant of racist, inequitable policies and practices that do not hold individuals accountable for such behavior. We stand in defense and support of young people and their families in all of New Mexico's rural and urban communities, tribes, pueblos, and nations. We support the healing of historical trauma.

We, JJAC, acknowledge we do not have all the answers, we are not the experts of the needs of individual communities, and we always have more to learn from the communities we serve. We pledge to yield to the expertise of local communities to identify local needs. We are accountable to the communities, tribes, pueblos and nations we serve. We invite critical input and feedback. We, JJAC, commit to analyzing our governing statutes through a race centric and equity lens and advising on needed changes. We commit to transparency of the data that supports our decision making.

We will be transparent of and accountable for our decision-making by providing public access to our data.

Approved March 18, 2021, by Unanimous Vote

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### *Issue Area 1: JJAC Role & Influence*

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JJAC is currently not positioned to provide assistance to the governor, the legislature and entities created or funded pursuant to that act in developing new or improved approaches, policies or legislation designed to improve juvenile justice in New Mexico. JJAC is not reaching out, collaborating, or advocating for statewide, tribal and local change.

**Goal 1:** Mobilize the potential and genius of JJAC members' experience and energy by building Committee members' understanding of their role, influence, and the issues JJAC is trying to affect.

**Objective 1.1:** Create collaboration with state, tribal, judicial, law enforcement and local leaders, community stakeholders, and youth and families with lived experience.

**Objective 1.2:** Create collaboration with other groups and community-based organizations in the State that are focused on juvenile justice issues.

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### *Issue Area 2: Youth Voice & Engagement*

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JJAC is not fully engaging youth from diverse backgrounds and harnessing their perspectives and experiences in its work. This includes system-involved youth as well as youth from local communities, especially those with an interest in the youth development and juvenile justice profession. JJAC needs to be intentional with its youth engagement efforts to be fully responsive to the needs of New Mexico's youth.

**Goal 2:** Create and implement a JJAC strategy for youth engagement, voice, and leadership on the Statewide and local levels.

**Objective 2.1:** Assess how local continuums are engaging youth on their Boards and share best practices and innovative ideas to promote local youth engagement.

**Objective 2.2:** Support continuums with resources for youth engagement.

**Objective 2.3:** Reach and engage youth through JJS-funded and -operated programs: Mentoring, Probation, JCC, Reintegration Centers, Secure Facilities.

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### *Issue Area 3: Cross-Departmental Collaboration*

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JJAC is not involved in internal- and external-departmental collaborations that provide information on youth-related federal and state funding, across State departments. Local juvenile justice continuum boards experience the same issue to varying degrees locally. This impacts the ability of JJAC and local continuum boards to make informed funding recommendations that coordinate with other youth-related funding streams.

**Goal 3:** Initiate or connect with cross-system information sharing between State departments; support local community-level stakeholders' coordination efforts and youth and family involvement, to better understand community needs and service gaps and create opportunities for partnership/integration.

Objective 3.1: Initiate sharing State-level funding program information with other relevant state Departments and programs (e.g., Children, Youth and Families Department, Public Education Department, Human Services Department).

Objective 3.2: Develop and share strategies to support local program coordination and partnership (e.g., Continuum Boards/board chairs, law enforcement, school administration, faith community, community colleges, community-based organizations, organizations doing promising/innovative work).

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### *Issue Area 4: Training & Capacity-Building*

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Young people in New Mexico face a range of challenges and issues, requiring specialized services and interventions. JJAC members and local continuum boards need to understand needs of special populations (e.g., dual-system youth, youth on the spectrum, racial and ethnic disparities) and service responses (e.g., ACES and trauma-informed care and practices) within the local continuums of care.

**Goal 4:** (Federal Funding) Expand the knowledge and capacity of JJAC members, community stakeholders and direct service providers in serving the needs of our young people.

Objective 4.1: Provide training and appropriate services regarding special population youth.

Objective 4.2: Provide ongoing training resources and conversations on ACES and trauma-informed care.

Objective 4.3: Ensure that training captures the need for and principles of equity (including but not limited to racial equity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, socio-economic status, etc.).

Objective 4.4: Coordinate and sharing with other partners and resources (e.g., community colleges, state agencies, education and behavioral health systems, courts, hospitals).

*[Federal Priority Are: T. Mental Health Services]*

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### *Issue Area 5: Mental Health & Substance Abuse*

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Alcohol/substance abuse were the leading risky behavior of youth in communities statewide according to the JJAC survey administered in the Fall of 2020, followed by truancy, running away, and family conflict. JJAC and local continuums need more information and resources on how to identify and deal with substance abuse and mental health issues, and how to access local mental health and substance abuse resources for youth.

**Goal 5:** (Federal Funding) Increase access to substance abuse treatment, recovery, and rehabilitation support to include financial support/benefits support, to not refuse treatment for youth.

**Objective 5.1:** Collaborate with partners to streamline access of services/programming to children to remove financial and capacity barriers.

**Objective 5.2:** Provide training resources on mental health and substance abuse issues.

*[Federal priorities: K. Substance and Alcohol abuse and T. Mental Health Services]*

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### *Issue Area 6: School-Based Interventions*

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Relationships of local Continuums with their local school districts, charter schools, private schools, alternative schools and home-schooled population vary widely across the State. The result is uneven collaboration and JJAC-funded service provision. Concerted efforts to develop School/Continuum collaborations, with Children, Youth & Families Department and Public Education Department guidance and support, and JJAC funding priorities could allow for early prevention and intervention services for JJAC's target population.

**Goal 6:** (Federal Funding) Expand JJAC-funding to pilot targeted school-based prevention and intervention services for the JJAC target population.

**Objective 6.1:** Collaborate on the state level and local level with school and JJS stakeholders to identify best practices for school/juvenile justice/community-based organization/community member collaborations, with youth involvement.

**Objective 6.2:** Collaborate with local school, community-based organization, community members and JJS stakeholders to partner on JJAC-funded programming, with youth involvement.

*[Federal priorities : E. School Programs and Q. After School Programs]*

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### *Issue Area 7: Tribal and Rural Interventions*

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Tribal governments and communities and rural communities are not familiar with JJAC and its funding resources. There are special populations in those areas not being served. There is a need to reach and serve these underserved populations.

**Goal 7:** (Federal Funding) Prioritize JJAC funding for population-specific programs operating in rural or tribal areas and engage and partner with Tribal governments and rural counties currently not familiar with JJAC funding and state juvenile justice resources in accordance with local needs.

**Objective 7.1:** Examine means for CYFD to streamline the process to access to the JJAC reverting fund balance for interventions targeting rural and tribal areas/populations.

**Objective 7.2:** Invite tribes to collaborate with JJAC and local continuum boards and support the development of tribal continuum boards, where appropriate.

**Objective 7.3:** Support development of new Continuum Boards where there are not Boards currently.

*[Federal Priority: Native American Tribe Program]*

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### *Issue Area 8: Reduce Use of Detention*

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Efforts reducing use of secure juvenile detention should continue with a focus on reducing lengths of stay and reducing special use of detention (e.g., specialty courts, probation violations.)

**Goal 8:** (Federal Funding) Recommend and promote policies and practices that speed up the adjudication process and allow for alternatives to detention which will reduce length of detention stay and ensure detention is only used for high-risk youth/last resort.

**Objective 8.1:** Support efforts for the judicial system (Judges, lawyers) and local stakeholders (county juvenile detention centers, law enforcement officers) to address timelines and warrants in collaboration with CYFD (e.g., juvenile probation workgroup).

**Objective 8.2:** Encourage local stakeholders to include local youth and families with lived experience (residents/clients) in detention reduction planning.

**Objective 8.3:** Promote and support strategies to bridge community resources (e.g., academics, vocational) to juvenile detention centers to ensure the needs of youth in detention are being addressed.

*[Federal Priority: B. Community Based Programs and Services]*