

Washington's State Advisory Group:

The Washington State Partnership Council on Juvenile Justice (WA-PCJJ)

The Washington State Partnership Council on Juvenile Justice was established via Executive Order 10-03 on September 13, 2010. The Partnership Council is charged with being “*the primary state planning agency for matters pertaining to juvenile justice in the state of Washington.*”

The WA-PCJJ meets the requirements for state advisory group membership per 42 U.S.C. 5633, Sec. 223(a)(3)(A) of the federal JJDPA Act, including that at least one-fifth of the membership be under the age of 24 at the time of appointment. Gordon McHenry, Jr. is the appointed Chair of the WA-PCJJ, and Judge James Orlando, Pierce County Superior Court, is Vice Chair. The Council is staffed by the Office of Juvenile Justice, within the Rehabilitation Administration, DSHS.

WA-PCJJ - Juvenile Justice System Recommendations

Following are the WA-PCJJ annual juvenile justice recommendations to the Governor and Legislature, as required by the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (42.U.S.C.5633 sec.223).

The Washington State Partnership Council on Juvenile Justice supports juvenile justice reform efforts that reflect research and best practices in Washington State and around the country. The WA-PCJJ recognizes that the juvenile justice system and other child serving systems need to work better together to ensure that children and youth have access to services and receive the support they need so they can be successful in adulthood. The WA-PCJJ has identified a number of goals and strategies that would be steps towards these ends:

- 1. Washington State should reduce the need for formal processing of youth in the juvenile justice system and the use of incarceration to address behavior by changing policies and practices and increasing investments in community-based support and alternatives to detention.**
 - a. Expand the use of proven strategies for reducing detention population such as detention risk assessments, warrant reduction programs, and community based programs that give youth accountability without disrupting school, treatment or home connections.*
 - b. Develop and promote meaningful alternatives to detention that meet the needs of youth who are experiencing conflict at home, truancy, or other risky behaviors.*
 - c. Reduce or eliminate the use of the valid court order exception that allows the use of detention for status offending youth.*
 - d. Expand the ability of courts to divert youth from formal processing in juvenile court.*
 - e. Promote the reduction in out of school suspensions and expulsion of youth, especially youth of color, youth with disabilities and youth in poverty.*
 - f. Increase the quality of and access to evidence-based behavioral health strategies for youth with mental health issues, adverse childhood experiences, and trauma.*

Juvenile Justice System Recommendations

- 2. The juvenile justice system should provide fair treatment regardless of race and ethnicity. Policies, practices and fiscal investments should produce a reduction in Racial and Ethnic Disparities (R.E.D.) currently found in juvenile justice system decision points.**
 - a. Ensure that all statewide juvenile justice policies and practices, including legislation, are reviewed and analyzed for potential adverse impact on youth of color through the use of Racial Impact Statements.*
 - b. Improve the quality and consistency of data collection at each decision point of the juvenile justice system.*
 - c. Ensure that data is available and used in decision-making, policy development and implementation so that systems are fair, objective, and achieving positive outcomes for youth.*
 - d. Invest in evidence-based practices and promising strategies that reduce racial and ethnic disparities at key decision points in the juvenile justice system.*
 - 3. Washington State should ensure that our juvenile and criminal justice systems recognize the nature of adolescent development, trauma and disability when determining how and when youth who commit serious offenses are treated.**
 - a. Recommend implementation of recommendations for reform (as it relates to the intersection of the adult and juvenile systems) from the Task Force on Sentencing.*
 - b. Recommend review of the state's automatic and discretionary decline laws based on state and national research findings, and that take into account research on adolescent brain development.*
 - 4. Youth who are or have been involved in the juvenile justice system should have a continuum of support that leads to education success, housing stability, and economic independence.**
 - a. Ensure that youth released from incarceration are supported by family, have a place to live, are connected to education, and are on track to completing school or employment.*
 - b. Support policies and practices that minimize the stigma associated with having a record of juvenile justice involvement.*
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