



Pennsylvania: Pilot Counties

ModelsforChange

Systems Reform in Juvenile Justice

Pennsylvania: System Snapshot

Court intake, probation supervision, and aftercare supervision are organized at the county level under the administrative authority of the juvenile court judge. Judges decide where juveniles will be committed and for how long, and relatively few end up in state facilities. Wherever they go, youth remain subject to local court custody and probation department supervision. The Bureau of Juvenile Justice Services administers a network of non-secure youth forestry camps, non-secure and secure youth development centers, and secure treatment units.

Legal Framework

Juvenile Court Purpose Clause / Primary Emphasis

Balanced and Restorative Justice

Juvenile Court Jurisdiction in Delinquency Matters

Lower Age

10

Upper Age

17

Extended Age for Disposition Purposes

20

Transfer Provisions: Minimum Age / Offenses

(As of 2004 legislative session)

Discretionary Waiver

14 / any felony

Presumptive Waiver

14 or 15 / certain person offenses

Mandatory Waiver

No provision

Statutory Exclusion

No age specified / murder; 15 / certain person offenses

Reverse Waiver

Yes

Once an Adult, Always an Adult

Yes

Blended Sentencing Provisions

No provision

Delinquency Services

Delinquency Services Model

Decentralized State

Level / Branch of Agency

Detention

Local/Executive

Probation Supervision

Local/Judicial

Juvenile Corrections

State/Executive

Aftercare Supervision

Local/Judicial

Suggested Citation:

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Pennsylvania System and Statistics Snapshot.
 Pittsburgh, PA: National Center for Juvenile Justice.



Key Agencies	
Court(s) with Delinquency Jurisdiction	Courts of Common Pleas
Type of Jurisdiction	General jurisdiction
Court's Authority / State Commitment:	
Placement Decisions	Court may have a role in placement decisions
Length of Stay Decisions	Indeterminate commitments with minimums and maximum
Release Decisions	Court makes release decision
Court's Authority to Place w/o State Commitment	Yes, used extensively
Prosecution	County District Attorneys Offices
Authority to File Petition / Intake decision making	The DA has the authority to file a petition charging a youth with an offense. Typically, intake probation officers review allegations, conduct intake conferences, and make determinations as to how to proceed with cases, notifying the DA of this determination. In a growing number of counties, the DA participates in the intake decision-making process, particularly where allegations of serious crime are involved.
Indigent Defense*	No statewide system; each county appoints a public defender
State Funding	0%
Juvenile Probation	County probation departments
Supervision Range	JPOs conduct intake screening, prepare predisposition reports, and supervise offenders in the community, in placement, and on aftercare
Juvenile Corrections Agency	Bureau of Juvenile Justice Services
Resides in	Department of Public Welfare
Facilities	Seven youth development centers, youth forestry camps, and secure treatment units
State Advisory Group	Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee staffed by the Office of Juvenile Justice, PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency

*Please refer to the National Juvenile Defender Center's web site (www.njdc.info/state_data.php)

Please refer to NCJJ's State Juvenile Justice Profiles web site (www.ncjj.org/stateprofiles) for more information.

Pennsylvania: Statistical Snapshot

Demographic	State	% change* 1990-2005
Juvenile (0–17) population, 2005	2,816,739	0.6%
Black, non-Hispanic proportion of juvenile population, 2005	14.1%	24.9%
American Indian, non-Hispanic proportion of juvenile population, 2005	0.2%	27.8%
Asian, non-Hispanic proportion of juvenile population, 2005	2.4%	65.2%
Hispanic** proportion of juvenile population, 2005	6.4%	107.3%
Health	State	National
Teenage birth rates (per 1,000 females, 15–17), 2003	17.5	22.4
<i>Percent change in teenage birth rate, 1991–2003</i>	-40.1%	-42.1%
Suicide rate (per 1,000,000 persons, 7–17) 1981–2003	25.7	27.4
Homicide rate (per 1,000,000 persons, 7–17) 1981–2003	23.7	34.4
Education	State	National
Average freshman graduation rate* of public high school students, 2002-03	81.7%	73.9%
Percent of population (25 year and older) who are high school graduates*, 2005	86.7%	84.2%
Economic	State	National
Proportion of children (0–17) in poverty, 2005	16.9%	17.6%
Proportion of children (0–17) without health insurance, 2000	7.1%	11.9%
Median income for families with children under age 18, 1999	\$49,798	\$48,196
Arrests*	State	National
Juvenile (0–17) proportion of all arrests, 2004	23.2%	15.8%
Juvenile (0–17) Violent Crime Index (VCI) arrest rate**, 2004	399	271
<i>Percent change in juvenile VCI arrest rate, 1995–2004</i>	-14.7%	-44.9%
Juvenile (0–17) Property Crime Index (PCI) arrest rate**, 2004	1,159	1,346
<i>Percent change in juvenile PCI arrest rate, 1995–2004</i>	-37.7%	-45.2%
Custody	State	National
Commitment rate* (per 100,000 juveniles, 10–17), 2003	224	219
<i>Offense profile** of committed juveniles, 2003:</i>		
Person offenses	31%	36%
Property offenses	22%	30%
Technical violations	11%	11%
Detention rate* (per 100,000 juveniles, 10–17), 2003	67	83
<i>Offense profile** of detained juveniles, 2003:</i>		
Person offenses	25%	31%
Property offenses	18%	24%
Technical violations	32%	23%

Data Sources and Notes

Demographic	
Data Source:	Puzzanchera, C., Finnegan, T., and Kang, W. (2006). <i>Easy Access to Juvenile Populations</i> . Online. Available: http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/
Notes:	* Percent change based on annual estimates for each population subgroup. ** Persons of Hispanic ethnicity may be of any race, i.e., white, black, American Indian, or Asian.
Health	
<i>Teenage birth rates</i>	
Data Source:	Martin J.A., Hamilton B.E., Sutton P.D., et al. (2005). "Births: Final data for 2003." <i>National Vital Statistics Report</i> , 54, (2) National Center for Health Statistics. Online. Available: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr54/nvsr54_02.pdf
<i>Suicide and homicide rates</i>	
Data Source:	National Center for Health Statistics, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. (2006). <i>WISQARS (Web-Based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System)</i> [interactive database system]. Online. Available: http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars
Education	
<i>Average freshman graduation rate of public high school students</i>	
Data Source:	Seastrom, M., Hoffman, L., Chapman, C., and Stillwell, R. (2005). <i>The Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate for Public High Schools From the Common Core of Data: School, 2002-03</i> . National Center for Education Statistics. Online. Available: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/2006601.pdf
Notes:	* The rate for 2002-03 is computed by dividing the number of regular diplomas issued in school year 2002-03 by the number of estimated first-time 9th graders in 1999-2000.
<i>Percent of people (25 years and over) who have completed high school</i>	
Data Source:	U.S. Census Bureau. (2005). <i>American Community Survey</i> . Educational Attainment: Table R1401. Online. Available: http://factfinder.census.gov
Notes:	* Includes high school equivalency. Data are limited to the household population and exclude the population living in institutions, college dormitories, and other group quarters.
Economic	
<i>Proportion of children in poverty</i>	
Data Source:	U.S. Census Bureau. (2006). Current Population Survey. <i>Annual Social and Economic Supplement</i> . Table POV46: Poverty status by state, 2005. Online. Available: http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032006/pov/toc.htm
<i>Proportion of children without health insurance</i>	
Data Source:	U.S. Census Bureau. (2005). <i>Small Area Health Insurance Estimates Program</i> . State Data Files, 2000. Online. Available: http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/sahie/data.html
<i>Median income for families with children under age 18</i>	
Data Source:	U.S. Census Bureau. (2000). <i>Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3)</i> . Sample Data. PCT39. Median Family Income in 1999 by presence of children under age 18. Online. Available: http://factfinder.census.gov
Arrests	
Data Source:	Puzzanchera, C., Adams, B., Snyder, H., and Kang, W. (2006). <i>Easy Access to FBI Arrest Statistics 1994-2004</i> . Online. Available: http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/ezaucr/
Notes:	* In many states, data reported to the FBI are incomplete. The data presented in Easy Access to FBI Arrest Statistics are based on estimates that account for missing data. Each state has a Coverage Indicator that represents the proportion of the state population for which arrest counts were available in a given year and for which no estimates were required. The lower the coverage indicator; the greater the likelihood that the estimates do not accurately reflect the arrest activities of the state. As a result, only jurisdictions with a coverage indicator at or above 70% are displayed for this presentation. To view state coverage indicators, please visit http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/ezaucr/asp/coverage.asp ** Juvenile arrest rates are calculated as the number of arrests of persons under age 18 per 100,000 persons age 10 to 17 in the United States.
Custody	
Data Source:	Sickmund, M., Sladky, T.J., and Kang, W. (2005). <i>Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement Databook</i> . Online. Available: http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/cjrp/
Notes:	* The rate is the number of youths in residential placement per 100,000 youth ages 10 through the upper age of original juvenile court jurisdiction in each state. ** The offense profile detail will not sum to 100%; drug, public order, and status offenses are not included for this presentation.