



**STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE**

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 25, 2019 PCI-18-001
TO: All Probation Staff
FROM: Paul Hatcher, Jr., Assistant Secretary for Probation and Community Intervention
SUBJECT: Juvenile Justice System Improvement (JJSI) Sustainability (Amendment 1)

The Statewide Juvenile Justice System Improvement (JJSI) Sustainability Team has determined it necessary to 1.) Clearly define JJSI in plain language for employees and stakeholders, 2.) Explain why JJSI sustainability is critical to the Department's core mission, and 3.) Establish minimum expectations for Probation and Community Intervention to follow in our ongoing efforts to improve juvenile offender outcomes.

What is JJSI?

The Juvenile Justice System Improvement (JJSI) Sustainability is the collective ongoing efforts of the Department towards continuous improvement and reform of the Florida juvenile justice system. JJSI is a continuation of the Department's participation in the Juvenile Justice System Improvement Project (JJSIP). Administered by Georgetown University's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) was selected, in 2011, as one of four states to participate in the JJSIP, a national initiative to reform the juvenile justice system. JJSIP is a reform initiative founded in research and designed to reduce juvenile delinquency by improving outcomes for juvenile offenders throughout the continuum of care (i.e., diversion, probation, commitment, and aftercare) by utilizing interventions that have demonstrated effectiveness. Put another way, interventions proven to be effective should be included in everyday practice for all youth and families, regardless of whether the youth is a first-time offender participating in diversionary services or a high-risk offender coming out of a residential facility.

Why is Sustainability Important?

Research has demonstrated that properly matching the specific risk(s) and need(s) of offenders with services and interventions is critical to reducing juvenile delinquency. The goal of sustainability is to integrate these principles into the Department's operational framework and continue to keep Florida's families safe, by reducing juvenile delinquency and improving the lives of youth and families.

Improving the effectiveness of the Department's programs and services often entails unforeseen challenges or complications; we must be willing to constantly assess and adapt to meet those challenges. System improvement requires more than just skills, knowledge, and expertise; it requires all juvenile justice professionals constantly evolve and intentionally avoid complacency.



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Sustainability Requires:

1. Utilizing **data and research** to develop best practices and make informed recommendations to Department leadership, the Legislature, and stakeholders in the juvenile justice system.
2. Fostering positive working **relationships** with staff and key stakeholders. This requires constant collaboration with the key stakeholders and decision-makers in the juvenile justice system, keeping them informed, working together to resolve issues, and meet goals.
3. On-going **training**. Training is not a one-time event. It is on-going and essential to staying up-to-date on best practices based in research, changes in juvenile justice policies, and changes in programming, etc.
4. Utilizing **tools, resources, and strategies** to create a framework for effective interactions with youth and families, the courts, other juvenile justice stakeholders, as well as within the Department, internally, across program areas.
5. Utilizing **case studies** as a recommended best practice. Case studies are excellent opportunities for staff and partners to reflect on cases to develop new system improvement methods to allow the Department to better serve Florida's youth and families.
6. Committing to **re-evaluating, adapting, and improving** our efforts Statewide. Research and Data will provide tools to assist with assessing on-going effectiveness.

Minimum Expectations:

Data and Research

- Headquarters (HQ) will collect all data and develop comprehensive trainings on data access and interpretation.
- HQ will draft and revise policy, based on data and empirical evidence, to provide field staff with the latest tools to aid and assist supervision efforts.
- HQ will provide feedback and technical assistance to staff members in the field and to stakeholders.
- The office of Research and Data will review statewide dispositional patterns.

Relationships

- Regional Directors (RD's) and Circuit management teams (Chief Probation Officers, Assistant Chief Probation Officers, Unit Supervisors, and Reform Specialists) will maintain positive working relationships with local partners and stakeholders to educate, share ideas, and ensure common understanding with partners (e.g., law enforcement, judiciaries, community partners, local advisory boards, etc.).
- HQ will work with RD's and local circuit management teams to meet with partners and stakeholders in resolution efforts



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Training

- Regional Directors (RD) and circuit management teams will keep judicial partners (i.e., judges, state's attorneys, and public defenders) up to date on the Department's reform initiatives.
- RD's and circuit management teams will keep Juvenile Probation Officers informed of the Department's reform priorities and will provide on-going training at the local level.
- HQ will provide up-to-date training materials to the circuit management teams.

Tools – Resources – Strategies

- HQ will develop and provide system improvement tools and interventions aimed at supporting all staff.
- Circuit management teams will utilize the Disposition Matrix tool as well as the Department's various research driven tools such as the DJJ Delinquency Profile, Civil Citation, and DCF/DJJ Crossover dashboards.
- Circuit management teams will update the Continuum Service Mapping Tool on a **quarterly basis**.
- Circuit management teams will identify service gaps in the mapping tool and request additional services, from HQ, when necessary.

Re-evaluate – Adapt – Improve

- HQ is committed to listening to staff as it relates to best workplace practices and system improvement.
- Research and Data will provide tools to assist with assessing on-going effectiveness. Based on trends and conditions, HQ may issue follow-up reviews and assignments as deemed necessary by Assistant Secretary of Probation or Director of Research and Data.

Case Studies

- HQ strongly recommends each circuit continue to complete two-to-three case study reviews per year.
- Case study reviews provide invaluable opportunities for field staff to reflect on interactions with youth and families in addition to providing circuit management with insight on best workplace practices.
- Case study reviews may be conducted on open or closed cases no matter the supervision type. Staff should also aim to complete at least one review, jointly, with relevant agency stakeholder and community partner involvement.
- HQ strongly recommends each circuit management team utilize the case study results to develop systemic improvements for their circuit, in addition to, providing feedback to circuit staff and providers.



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Appendix A
JJSI CASE STUDY INSTRUCTIONS

Table with 2 columns and 5 rows: Circuit, Date, Facilitator, DJJID #, Status of Case

What staff and/or community partners were represented in this case study?

(Explain what agencies, community partners, staff and positions were represented – specific names not needed here)

Three empty rows for text input.

What strengths within your circuit were identified because of this case study?

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Within your circuit, what gaps in services or areas in need of improvement were identified?

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What ways will you use this case study to improve service delivery within your circuit?

Three empty rows for text input.

If an open case was reviewed, was there a transition, follow-up plan specified for this youth?

Three empty rows for text input.

*Send a copy of this completed form to _____ at Probation HQ – _____ @djj.state.fl.us

