



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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County Executive

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## Commission on Juvenile Justice Fiscal Year 2010 Work Plan

June 2009

General Statement of Purpose for Fiscal Year 2010:

The Commission's committee structure for the upcoming fiscal year will include four standing committees: Executive; Government and Community Relations; Care, Custody, and Placement; and Evaluation and Analysis. *Ad hoc* committees are established as needed (e.g., for naming of officers and new Commission member interviews). Committees will meet on the second Tuesday of each month, except in August and December.

**The Commission** will continue to be proactive in reviewing proposed legislation at the State and local level.

**Each member** will participate in the work of the Commission, including serving on at least one committee.

**The Commission** will continue to review and address how Montgomery County assesses needs and delivers treatment to its juvenile justice population.

**The Commission** studies, reports, monitors, and advocates for the issues identified on the attached pages.

### **Executive Committee – Chair Mary Poulin**

**Members:** Christine Bartlett (Vice Chair), Mark Resner (Secretary), Francha Davis (Government and Community Relations Committee Chair), Nancy Gannon-Hornberger and Elijah Wheeler (Care, Custody, and Placement Committee Co-Chairs), Pam Littlewood and Carrie Mulford (Evaluation and Analysis Committee Co-Chairs).

The Executive Committee represents the Commission at meetings with the Health and Human Services Director, County Executive, and County Council; drafts and presents testimony on legislation of interest; and provides administrative support to the Commission. The Executive Committee organizes Commission membership, orientation, the annual work plan, and the annual report. The Commission Vice-Chair facilitates committee meetings.

### **Government and Community Relations Committee – Chair Francha Davis**

**Members:** Christine Bartlett, Marcus Gladstone, Rob Goldman, W. Jawando, Ashok Kapur, Dylan Presman, Mark Resner, Irv Slott, and Ronald Wright.

Over the next fiscal year, the Government and Community Relations Committee will seek to:

(1) foster greater collaboration among state and county officials and agencies with the goal of ensuring that services for juveniles are responsive to local needs and, in particular, to Montgomery County and the Montgomery-Prince Georges County region, and (2) advocate for necessary changes to state and county resource allocation and, in particular, the re-allocation of responsibilities and resources from the state level to the county/regional level for programs and services that the Commission identifies as being more appropriately managed at the local level.

Such collaboration and advocacy will be accomplished through targeted involvement in the state legislative process, the state and county policy development process, and the county budget process. This will involve building relationships at the county, state and national levels with individuals, organizations and agencies that impact the treatment of juveniles in the county/region.

During the coming year, the Government and Community Relations Committee will focus its outreach on three specific areas:

1. Small institutions: Research has proven that smaller, more localized facilities improve treatment outcomes for juveniles, reduce recidivism, and encourage family participation that is vital to a juvenile's continued success after commitment. Maryland law already limits state-owned facilities to no more than 48 slots/beds. The Commission will endeavor to have the 48 bed limit applied to all privately owned facilities that are licensed by the state.
2. Expanding the availability of evidence-based treatment options in Montgomery County: Research has shown that evidence-based practices can cost a fraction of secure detention or group homes while demonstrating significantly better results. Funds were allocated to support a small number of evidence-based treatment slots in Montgomery County during fiscal year 2009. The Commission would like to see a significant increase in the number of juveniles and their families receiving these services.
3. Alternatives to placing youth in detention: Research has shown that community-based alternatives to detention reduce crowding, reduce the costs of operating juvenile facilities, shield juveniles from the stigma of institutionalization, help offenders avoid association with juveniles who have more serious delinquent histories, and help juveniles maintain positive ties with the family and community. Research has also shown that community-based programs are more effective than traditional correctional programs in reducing recidivism and improving community adjustment. The Commission believes that reliance on detention for delinquent juveniles must be reduced and the number of effective community-based alternatives to detention must be increased.

### **Care, Custody, and Placement Committee: Co-Chairs Nancy Gannon-Hornberger and Elijah Wheeler.**

**Members:** Jennifer Barmon, Margaret Burrowes, Sharon Kelly, Susan Farag, Jacob Frenkel, Maurice Sessoms, Mary Siegfried, and Martha Young.

The Care, Custody and Placement Committee monitors and describes the quality and accessibility of care provided to Montgomery County youth who are under juvenile court supervision, receiving court services, and/or in community/residential placements located in or outside of the County. Its

duties include examination of mental and physical health care, education, programming, family support, transportation and overall cultural competence.

Specific committee tasks over the next year will include the following:

1. Identify and describe existing services provided to Montgomery County youth under supervision of the juvenile court or Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) with a focus on mental health and substance abuse services available to such youth and their families, and whether they are evidence based and adequate to fulfill the needs in the County.
2. Map the service continuum for Montgomery County youth at risk and adjudicated delinquent (including status offending youth) to pinpoint whether existing services match the service needs along a full service continuum from delinquency prevention through point of arrest—point of disposition—point of placement and sanctioning, including detention and corrections—as well as at the point of re-entry and transitional support. Make recommendations to address any service gaps and/or unmet needs.
3. Learn more about the process by which DJS determines what services are appropriate for particular youth, including:
  - the involvement of child and parent in the process, including non-English speaking families;
  - who are the decision makers?;
  - who conducts the evaluations of the youth that DJS uses in making its decisions?;
  - how to improve the process?;
  - how can the County and DJS work in partnership to respond to any unmet needs or service gaps?
4. Evaluate the mental health and related services available to youth detained at Noyes, examining how mental health screening and assessment is conducted and what, mental health services are available. Make recommendations as appropriate.

**Evaluation and Analysis Committee: Co-Chairs Pam Littlewood and Carrie Mulford.**

**Members:** Jacob Frenkel, Madeleine Jones, Jeffrey Penn, Wendy Pulliam, Kathi Rhodes, Michael Subin, and Leon Suskin .

The Evaluation and Analysis Committee's role is to evaluate, analyze, review, and monitor programs, plans, and Commission issues. In the course of the next two years, the committee will conduct an analysis of data used for decision and policy making in the juvenile justice system. In the absence of data, it is difficult to appropriately identify service needs for youths and assess where service gaps/needs exist. The Committee will conduct a review of available data and make recommendations to improve data, close service gaps and meet service needs, as needed. In addition to the focus on data, the Committee will work with the Government and Community Relations Committee to develop a message strategy regarding the Commission's juvenile justice vision statement.

The Committee envisions a system whereby high quality data will be collected and used to identify system and youth needs and ensure accountability. Collection and use of data should be an evolving process whereby data are continuously analyzed to ensure that services provided remain responsive to the needs of the county. The data review will include:

1. Identify available sources of system data from youths' first to last contact with the system (arrest to case close). Sources may include; Department of Juvenile Services, Collaboration Council, police, courts, University of Maryland Innovations Institute, ACY, MJJC, and Mid-Atlantic Defenders Center.
2. Determine what other sources of data are available that may support system data (e.g., data on youths at-risk of delinquency)
3. Determine what and how data are used for planning, service, placement and sanctioning decisions, and policy-making.
4. Review available data and reports from DJS. Reconcile information produced in these reports with those produced by other sources (e.g., Independent Monitor's Office vs. DJS)

### *Message Strategy*

Over the past two years the Evaluation and Analysis Committee has conducted research used to develop a vision statement and series of objectives for the Commission's recommendations regarding juvenile justice services in Maryland (as well as Montgomery County).

The next step toward carrying out this vision is to develop a message/communications strategy to broadly and consistently share this vision with system stakeholders. The Evaluation and Analysis Committee will work with the Government and Community Relations Committee to develop message strategy to circulate among system stakeholders.