

Proposal: Detention Alternatives Subcommittee

Regarding: One Stop Shop, Drop Off Center, Reception Center, Juvenile Services Center, (The name needs to be chosen now designated as the **Site**.)

The Concept: Throughout San Juan County, law enforcement officers come into contact with a variety of youth who are alleged to have committed delinquent acts. There needs to be an entry point into the Juvenile Justice System that addresses the risk to public safety, ensures the youth appear in court and identifies and addresses the needs of the youth in an efficient manner while allowing law enforcement officers to return to the field as quickly as possible. Youth requiring secure detention will be booked into juvenile detention, those requiring services will receive an assessment and a referral to a program which is appropriate to address those needs. There is a presumption that the sooner there is an appropriate intervention the better the long-term result.

The Detention Alternatives subcommittee proposes the creation of the **SITE**, which will be designed in collaboration with the Courts, San Juan County, CYFD, and the Office of the District Attorney, the Public Defender and Law Enforcement.

Mission: The Mission of the **Site** will be to determine the most appropriate placement of youth who are in the custody of law enforcement with an emphasis on community safety, accountability, and an immediate response to the needs of youth and the community.

Process: When law enforcement is called out with allegations of delinquency and come into contact with the alleged offender(s) they must first determine if there is a basis to believe a crime has been committed. The next decision involves custody. Law enforcement has broad discretion to either detain, release, cite, arrest or contact JPPO and request secure detention. Currently this is accomplished by law enforcement contacting JPPO who will gather information, contact the Call Center in Albuquerque, call the officer back and authorize or not authorize secure detention based on the Risk Assessment, (RAI). Under the proposal, law enforcement will immediately transport youth in custody to the **SITE**, entering the Justice Complex through the detention Sally Port. San Juan County Juvenile Detention staff will receive the youth and gather the same information from the officer that JPPO would have gathered. Staff will contact the Call Center who will complete the RAI and inform staff of the RAI score. Clients who are arrested or detained by Warrant or other court order will be immediately detained in secure detention. Youth with an RAI score of 12 or above will also be detained in secure detention. Law enforcement will be cleared to return to the field after they have either documented the warrant or completed the Statement of Probable Cause. JPPO will later be notified by detention staff and will either set up a detention hearing or determine if an alternative to secure detention exists.

If the RAI score is between 6 and 11, detention staff will contact the on call JPPO (24-7) and staff the case to determine the need for secure detention or an alternative to detention.

JPPPO is needed to override the RAI (with approval of a supervisor). For those youth who score less than six points, the detention staff will arrange a release to parents or guardian. After the RAI score has been received, law enforcement will be clear to leave. Clients who are eligible for release will wait for their parents at the Shelter at the Complex.

Assessments: For those youth eligible for release, staff from the San Juan County Juvenile Assessment Center will go to the Shelter and will administer the MAYSI-II, an assessment tool and an additional risk assessment tool. If indicated a SASSI (substance abuse inventory) will be administered. If the youth is 16 years or older the youth can participate voluntarily; youth younger than this need their parents' permission. When the parents arrive to pick up their child, the assessment center staff will complete the assessment and offer recommendations to the youth and their family.

Referral Process: If the result of the assessment indicates a need for services, the assessment staff will complete a referral form and give the youth a copy which indicates the services referred to and contact information. The assessment staff will retain copies of the assessment result and referral form. The child and family will leave with the referral and a brochure from CYFD describing the process involving the delinquency allegations, including timelines for the Preliminary Inquiry, contact numbers, possible outcomes and the Court process. It will also stress the need to report any change of address.

Preliminary Inquiry: For detained youth, the Juvenile Probation Office will conduct a Preliminary Inquiry and will determine the continued need for secure detention or seek an alternative placement. If detention is warranted, they will schedule a detention hearing within 24 hours. For non-detained youth JPPPO will process the police reports and assign the case to a JPPPO within 72 hours of the receipt of the report. JPPPO will schedule a Preliminary Inquiry and process the referral.

What is needed for the **SITE** to be successful?

A Memorandum of Understanding signed by all participants.

The cross training of San Juan staff on RAI protocols and relevant questions to be asked of Law Enforcement during the admission process and the training of JPPPO regarding the assessments.

Also needed is an outreach to all law enforcement agencies in the county informing them of the **SITE**.

Buy in from CYFD, the CCA, Public Defender, the Court and Law Enforcement.

Long Term Possibilities: The sub-committee recognizes the connection between truancy and delinquency. With a city ordinance or MOU with the School Districts in the County and Law Enforcement, truants would be transported directly to the non-secure area of the **SITE** and an assessment would be completed as to their needs and to determine the need to bring the parents to Court for permitting Habitual Truancy.

Why have a centrally located facility that would “widen the net” and bring even more youth to the Justice Complex? There would be a benefit connecting wayward youth to services shortly after their involvement with law enforcement rather than several weeks later after the police report has been received and JPPO has conducted a Preliminary Inquiry. When the Preliminary Inquiry does occur the JPPO will take note that the youth and the family have voluntarily begun to resolve their issues or that the family was unwilling to participate proactively.

When could this start? Immediately following training and the signing of the MOU.

Who would participate? San Juan County Staff, JPPO, Law enforcement and treatment/counseling providers.

Benefits: There would be appropriate detention of youth who are a danger to the community or themselves or are unlikely to come to Court. There would be an almost immediate referral to services to address needs which might obviate the need for formal court action. There would be an increased understanding and appreciation of the juvenile justice system by law enforcement. There would be an ability by law enforcement to quickly process the youth and return to the community to resume patrol; they would not have to spend hours waiting at the station for parents to arrive. They would be more likely to transport the youth knowing that the “system” would be taking action. And finally there is an opportunity for the juvenile justice collaborative to demonstrate to the county and the state that local juvenile justice professionals can respond in a manner that will benefit the community, is pro-active and cost effective. It may also encourage the creation of other initiatives with similar benefits to San Juan County.