

Commission on Juvenile Justice Reform & Emerging & Best Practices

Commission Manual

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Mission and Duties

The Commission on Juvenile Justice Reform & Emerging & Best Practices was established during the 2024 Legislative Session through House Bill 814. The Commission is responsible for reviewing youth programs and services provided by State, local, and community-based agencies, researching promising youth practices and programs, monitoring certain juvenile justice system services, processes, and outcomes, and making recommendations to improve youth programs and services.

The Commission is charged with the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Review and Report on
    a. All juvenile services, facilities, and programs in Maryland
    b. The educational programs and services of the Department of Juvenile Services
    c. Programs designed to divert children from the juvenile justice system
    d. The treatment and programming needs of females in the juvenile justice system
    e. The use of Child in Need of Supervision Petitions
    f. The number of Children in Need of Supervision Petitions authorized or denied by jurisdiction
    g. The wait times for placement of children in facilities
2. Research culturally competent, evidence-based, research-based, and other promising programs and practices relating to:
    a. child welfare
    b. juvenile rehabilitation
    c. mental health services for children
    d. prevention and intervention services for juveniles
3. Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of existing and promising programs and practices researched by the Commission
4. Identify means of evaluating the effectiveness of programs and practices researched by the Commission

5. Giving special attention to organizations located in or serving historically underserved communities, identify strategies to enable community–based organizations that provide services for juveniles to evaluate and validate services and programming provided by those organizations

6. Review and report on data relating to arrests, completion of programming, and recidivism from the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center

7. Identify pathways for greater coordination between the Department of Juvenile Services, the Office of Juvenile Services, the Offices of the State's Attorneys, law enforcement agencies, and local organizations that provide services to juveniles

8. Recommend policies and programs to improve juvenile services in the state

9. Participate in interpreting for the public the objectives of the juvenile services in the state

10. Participate in planning the development and use of available resources to meet the needs of juveniles

11. Coordinate with the Maryland Department of Labor to identify potential job and apprenticeship opportunities for juveniles under the supervision of the Department of Juvenile Services

12. Investigate the circumstances surrounding fatalities involving children under the supervision of the Department of Juvenile Services, and provide recommendations on policies and programs to prevent such deaths, including:

    a. A death caused by a child under the supervision of the Department of Juvenile Services, if the child is convicted or adjudicated delinquent for the death; and

    b. The death of a child under the supervision of the Department of Juvenile Services

As described within, the Commission will substantially fulfill much of its broad mandates through operational workgroups whose co-chairs and members are named by the Commission Chair. The Commission is required to submit an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before October 1, 2025, and each year thereafter to describe its work and progress

Commission Membership

List of Members

The Commission consists of twenty-eight members. Two members are members of the Maryland Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate. Two are members of the Maryland House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House. Two Commission members are the Secretary of Juvenile Services and the Secretary of Human Services. The Governor is responsible for appointing the remaining twenty-five members, consisting of representatives of schools, state agencies, law enforcement, the State's Attorney's Association, the Maryland Public Defender, community organizations, and experts in juvenile justice. Seven members are from the general public representing justice-impacted communities, victims advocates, and Department of Juvenile Services employees.

The full membership list is as follows:

1. Two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;
2. Two members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
3. The Secretary of Juvenile Services;
4. The Secretary of Human Services; and
5. The following members, appointed by the Governor:
    a. one representative of an institute for public policy that specializes in juvenile justice issues in the State;
    b. one representative of an institute operated by the University of Maryland specializing in providing evidence-based and culturally competent services for juveniles;
    c. One representative with relevant education and experience;
    d. One local school superintendent;
    e. One school principal;
    f. One representative of an organization that provides services to children involved in the juvenile justice system;
    g. One representative of the Maryland Department of Health;
    h. One representative of a private child welfare agency;
    i. One representative of a Youth Services Bureau;
    j. One representative of the State Judiciary;
    k. One representative of the Maryland State's Attorney's Association;
    l. One representative of the Maryland Office of the Public Defender;
    m. One representative of the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association;
    n. One Representative of the Maryland Sheriffs' Association;
    o. One Representative of the Maryland Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports; and
    p. Seven members of the general public. Of the seven members of the general public
        i. One shall be chosen on the basis of interest and experience with minors and juvenile problems;
        ii. Two shall:
            1. At the time of appointment to a first term, be at least 16 years old and under the

age of 30 years; and

2. Include at least one individual who has been under the jurisdiction of the Department of Juvenile Services

iii. One shall be an individual who is a parent or guardian of a youth who has been under the jurisdiction of the Department of Juvenile Services

iv. One shall be a victim advocate; and

v. Two shall be employees of the Department of Juvenile Services with different job titles, recommended by the president of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Council.

Terms

- Commission members are appointed to staggered three-year terms effective as of June 1, 2024.
- At the end of a term, a member continues to serve until a successor is appointed and qualifies.
- A member who is appointed after a term has begun serves only for the rest of the term and until a successor is appointed and qualifies.
- An appointed member who serves two consecutive full 3-year terms may not be reappointed for 3 years after completion of those terms.

Appointment and Duties

Chairperson

- Shall be appointed from among the members of the Commission by the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House.
- Presides over all Commission meetings.
- Reports the outcome of matters brought before the Workgroup Chairs to the full Commission at Commission meetings.
- Coordinates with workgroup Chairs to oversee long-range Commission planning and implementation activities and strategies.
- Works cooperatively with GOCPP staff on policy matters involving full Commission activities, roles and responsibilities.
- Assigns appropriate members with tasks necessary to facilitate the full Commission's decision-making and long-term strategic planning.
- Serves as the spokesperson for the Commission.

Vice-Chairperson

- Shall be appointed by the Chairperson from among the members of the Commission.
- Presides over all meetings of the Commission in the absence of the Chairperson.
- Assumes all other responsibilities of the Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence, where appropriate.

Secretary

- Shall be appointed by the Chairperson from among the members of the Commission.
- Works with GOCPP staff to keep full and accurate minutes of each Commission meeting.

Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy Staff

- Works collaboratively with Commission and workgroup members to assist members in fulfilling their required roles and responsibilities.
- Maintains and creates meeting documents such as meeting notices, agendas, minutes, and recordings.
- Ensures compliance with the Open Meetings Act.
- Coordinates between state and federal agencies, local governments, and organizations.
- Serves as point-of-contact for logistical matters.
- Attends all Commission and workgroup meetings.

Procedures

Meeting Structure

- Robert's Rules of Order is the agreed-upon meeting format.
- The Commission must meet at least **6 times a year** for regular Commission meetings.
- The Commission requires that **meeting minutes** be sent to members for review at least 48 hours before the next Commission meeting.
- The Commission requires a **meeting agenda** at least 48 hours before the meeting.
- GOCPP staff will send out meeting documents at least 48 hours in advance of meetings. All meeting documents and resources will also be accessible through a Commission Dropbox managed by GOCPP staff.

Quorum

- A quorum consists of a majority of the appointed membership.
    - As of November 6, 2024, twenty-seven members have been appointed. Fourteen members must be present for a quorum.
    - Formal action can be taken upon the assent of **a majority of the members present** when a quorum is present.

Attendance Policy

- Attendance requirements outlined in State Government Article § 8-501 of the Annotated Code of Maryland **require members appointed by the Governor to attend at least 50% of the meetings** during any consecutive 12-month period.
    - Commission members may send a designee in their place up to **two times** a year in case of the regular member's unavailability.
    - Each member **must** notify GOCPP staff **in writing and at least 24 hours before** the meeting of a designee's attendance.
    - A proxy may not vote on a Commission member's behalf.

Open Meetings Requirements

The Commission must adhere to the Maryland Open Meetings Act as a public body. Any time the Commission convenes with a quorum, the Maryland Open Meetings Act applies.

The Open Meetings Act requires meetings to:

1. Give the public reasonable advance notice of the time and place a meeting will occur.
2. Hold meetings in a publicly accessible place. Members of the public must be able to view virtual meetings.
3. Make the meeting agenda public at least 24 hours before the meeting.
4. Prepare and post the meeting minutes or a recording of the meeting as soon as practicable.

GOCPP staff are responsible for ensuring compliance with the Open Meetings Act.

Inclement Weather Policy

The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy will follow the Department of Budget Management's emergency closing procedures. Meetings during inclement weather will be conducted virtually at the discretion of GOCPP staff and the Commission Chair.

For the most up-to-date information, go to: https://dbm.maryland.gov/employees/Pages/WeatherRel.aspx.

Commission Workgroups

The Commission on Juvenile Justice & Emerging & Best Practices will utilize workgroups to address all areas of its legislative mandate. The Commission workgroups are as follows:

1. **Fatality Review**

   Objective: Review and offer recommendations to prevent fatalities involving children under DJS supervision.

   Tasks

   1. Examine and review fatalities involving children under the supervision of the Department of Juvenile Services to provide recommendations on policies and programs to prevent fatalities, including:
      a. A death caused by a child under the supervision of the Department of Juvenile Services, if the child is convicted or adjudicated delinquent for the death; and
      b. The death of a child under the supervision of the Department of Juvenile Services.

2. **Prevention**

   Objective: Review and offer recommendations to improve services to youth before involvement in the justice system.

   Tasks

   2. Research culturally competent, evidence-based, research-based, and promising programs and practices relating to juveniles not involved in the juvenile justice system, including

      a. child welfare;

      b. mental health services for children; and

      c. prevention services for juveniles.

   2. Recommend policies and programs to improve juvenile services in the state;

   3. Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of existing and promising programs and practices researched by the Commission;

   4. Identify means of evaluating the effectiveness of programs and practices researched by the Commission; and

5. Giving special attention to organizations located in or serving historically underserved communities, identify strategies to enable community–based organizations that provide services for juveniles to evaluate and validate services and programming provided by those organizations.

3. Juvenile Justice Processes and System Coordination

Objective: Review and offer recommendations to improve the processes by which juveniles move throughout the juvenile justice system and facilitate inter-agency coordination.

Tasks:

1. Report and Review on

    i. All Juvenile Services, Facilities, and Programs in the State

    ii. The Educational Programs and Services of the Department of Juvenile Services

    iii. The use of Child in Need of Supervision Petitions; and

    iv. The number of Children in Need of Supervision Petitions authorized or denied by jurisdiction; and

    v. The wait times for placement of children in facilities

b. Review data relating to arrests, completion of programming, and recidivism from the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center;

c. Identify for greater coordination between the Department of Juvenile Services, the Office of Juvenile Services, the Office of the State's Attorney, Law Enforcement, and Local Organizations that provide services to juveniles;

d. Participate in planning the development and use of available resources to meet the needs of juveniles.

e. Examine and review annual and semiannual reports from the Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit.

4. Youth Rehabilitation

Objective: Review and offer recommendations to improve rehabilitative treatment and re-entry services for youth in the juvenile justice system.

Tasks:

a. Report and Review on

i. All Juvenile Services, Facilities, and Programs in the State

ii. The Educational Programs and Services of the Department of Juvenile Services

iii. Programs designed to divert children from the juvenile justice system

iv. The treatment and programming needs of females and LGBTQIA+ youth in the juvenile justice system

v. The wait times for placement of children in facilities

b. Research culturally competent, evidence-based, research-based, and promising programs and practices relating to services for juveniles in the juvenile justice system, including intervention services for juveniles.

c. Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of existing and promising programs and practices researched by the Commission.

d. Identify means of evaluating the effectiveness of programs and practices researched by the Commission.

e. Giving special attention to organizations located in or serving historically underserved communities, identify strategies to enable community–based organizations that provide services for juveniles to evaluate and validate services and programming provided by those organizations.

f. Review data relating to arrests, completion of programming, and recidivism from the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center.

g. Coordinate with the Maryland Department of Labor to identify potential job and apprenticeship opportunities for Juveniles under the supervision of the Department of Juvenile Services.

h. Examine and review treatment plan certifications provided by the Department of Juvenile Services.

5. Public Education and Narrative Change

Objective: Educate the public about the challenges and the promise of Maryland's children and explain the relevant data in an informative and accessible way to inform policymaking. A key task for this group will be developing understandable and accurate language to talk about Maryland's children and youth.

Tasks:

1. Participate in interpreting for the public the objectives of the juvenile services in the state.
2. Identify and review data relevant to all workgroups.

Workgroup Membership

- Commission members will express interest in assignments to workgroups.
- The Commission Chair will make final selections.
- Commission workgroup membership will stand for one year.

Workgroup Chair Duties

- Shall be appointed from among the members of the Commission by the Commission Chair.
- Presides over all workgroup meetings.
- Identifies workgroup goals.
- Coordinates with GOCPP staff and workgroup members to schedule meetings as needed to perform workgroup duties.
- Reports to the Commission Chair on workgroup activities.
- Assigns workgroup members with tasks.

Contact

This manual is managed by GOCCP staff. If you have any questions, please contact:

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