

Juvenile Diversion

Stakeholder Survey Results

Priorities for Allocation of Juvenile Diversion Funding

PREPARED FOR:

Division of Criminal Justice

PREPARED BY



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CONSULTING

BACKGROUND

Prior to the 2020-2021 fiscal year, Colorado agencies engaged in a competitive grant process to secure funding from the Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ) for diversion services and administrative operations. The passing of SB 19-108 significantly increased the total budget available for juvenile diversion and required the funding be distributed to all judicial districts through a formula allocation process. The purpose of the increased funding was to allow for the expansion of diversion to serve more eligible juveniles, to increase access to diversion for juveniles in all areas of the state, including in jurisdictions not previously offering juvenile diversion programs, and to expand services (including screening) within existing programs.

A Juvenile Diversion Workgroup was formed and charged with creating the allocation formula, which would determine how the \$3,044,000 budget would be distributed across all 22 JDs. The Workgroup sought guidance for the Formula through meetings with the various stakeholder groups members represented, and a national data expert. The Workgroup was made up of members from the Juvenile Justice Reform Committee established by SB 19-108, members of the Colorado Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Council, and representatives from diversion programs in rural and urban areas of various size. In 2020, DCJ leadership accepted the Workgroup's recommended allocation formula, which set an annual base rate of \$75,000 for each district. The formula used three primary factors to determine the funding amount: geographical area (i.e., square miles), poverty rate, and number of juveniles living in each district. Nine of the 22 JDs were determined to be eligible for the base rate of funding. Unfortunately, the formula generated funding amounts substantially lower than in the previous year for 5 judicial districts. To prevent a devastating impact of this prescribed reduction in support, the decision was made to 'Hold Harmless' these districts by providing funding at the previous year's level for the next three fiscal years (2021-2023).

SB 21-066 requires DCJ revisit the allocation formula every three years and make adjustments as needed. In 2021, IFC was contracted to evaluate the Juvenile Diversion program and guide the development of the next allocation formula as a neutral third party. The key stakeholder survey described below is the first phase of a multi-method approach, which will include focus groups and key informant interviews, to gather information for revision of the allocation formula. The evaluation will both look back at how the current (2020-2023) formula either did or did not meet the needs of the Diversion Programs and look forward to the anticipated needs of programs for the coming years. The results described below will not only provide information about the strengths and challenges of the original formula but will also guide the content of the focus group discussion questions, which will allow for a deeper investigation of the experiences and perspectives of Colorado's Juvenile Diversion stakeholders.

METHODOLOGY

The Allocation Formula Survey was developed specifically to facilitate feedback from a wide variety of Juvenile Diversion stakeholders. The survey consisted of 21 questions: 5 background/affiliation questions, 3 existing allocation formula questions, 4 base funding level questions, 2 program improvement fund questions, 6 questions addressing development of the new allocation funding formula and 1 question gauging comfort with participation in focus groups with various stakeholder groups. Since the survey utilized skip patterns, the maximum number of questions a user had to opportunity to complete was 19.

The Allocation Formula Survey included qualitative and quantitative questions. Qualitative questions were important to include to assist in the development of focus group questions and allow respondents opportunities to express their priorities and concerns with the allocation formula.

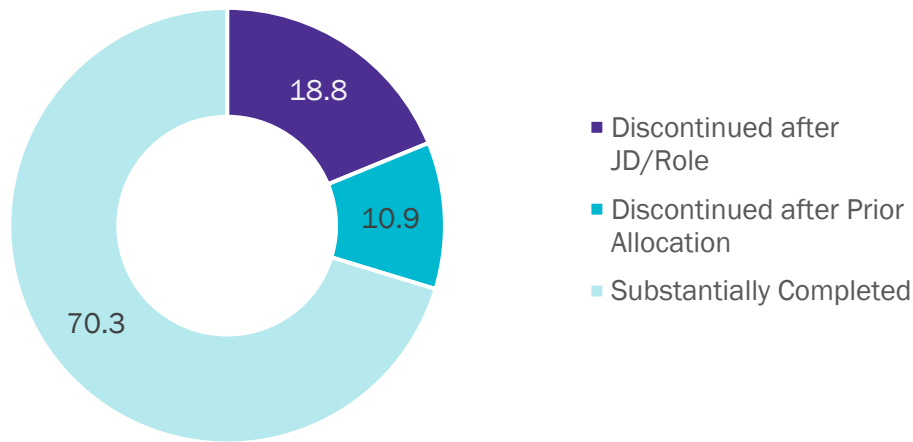
The survey was created and distributed via Survey Monkey, and additional reminders were distributed via email to encourage representation across all judicial districts and stakeholder groups. The survey opened on June 15, 2022 and closed on June 30, 2022. Before the close of the survey, all respondents who had not yet initiated the survey received an email directly from IFC staff encouraging participants to complete the survey along with a link to the survey to ensure no recipients missed the opportunity to participate in the survey.

Potential participants were stakeholders in Colorado's Juvenile Diversion programs and included Juvenile Diversion program representatives from community partners and District Attorney (DA) offices, DAs, DA representatives, and Colorado Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Council members. In total, the survey was distributed to 145 stakeholders from the Colorado JJDP Council and the 22 Judicial Districts (JDs). Of those invitations to participate, two (2) emails bounced back as undeliverable, two (2) were no longer employed with their respective organizations, and another two (2) indicated that they were not interested in receiving surveys through Survey Monkey. Upon initial distribution to stakeholders, IFC monitored participation by JD to try to ensure representation from all diversion programs.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

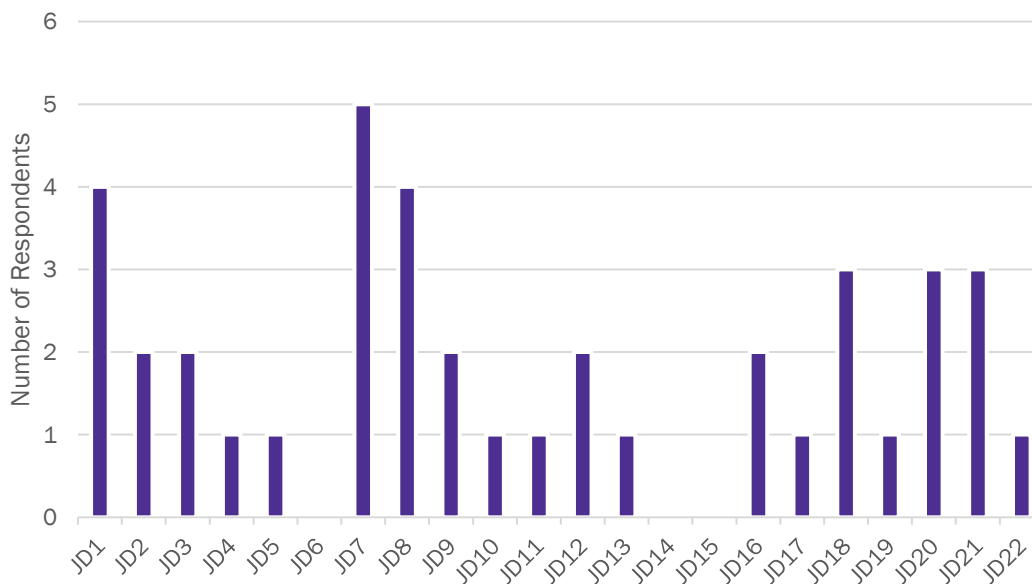
Sixty-four respondents initiated the survey (see Figure 1) (44% initiation rate). Twelve respondents (18.8%) failed to answer any questions beyond JD and role. An additional seven (7) respondents failed to answer any questions about priorities for the new allocation formula. Seven (7) of the respondents (36.8%) who exited the survey early were JJDP Council members. The remainder reported a range of roles relating to juvenile diversion including data manager, finance and HR manager, program director, juvenile diversion case manager, and financial officer. All 19 of these respondents were excluded from all analyses reducing the sample size to 45, 31.0% of individuals receiving survey.

FIGURE 1. PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS WHO COMPLETED OR DISCONTINUED SURVEY



The majority of respondents (57.7%, n = 26) reported they were affiliated with a diversion program. The remainder of respondents reported they were affiliated with a District Attorney’s office (17.2%, n = 10) or were affiliated with another organization type. Responses were unavailable for stakeholders from the 6th, 14th, or 15th JDs. The remaining 19 JDs had between one (1) and five (5) respondents, with the 1st, 7th, and 8th JDs having the most responses (see Figure 2). Each of those JDs have more than one program funded within the JD. Nine respondents (20.0%) were members of the Colorado JJDP Council, these respondents were aligned with JDs when feasible.

FIGURE 2. RESPONDENT AFFILIATION BY JD



Of the 45 respondents included in analyses, 43 completed the survey in its entirety.

SURVEY RESULTS

CURRENT ALLOCATION FORMULA

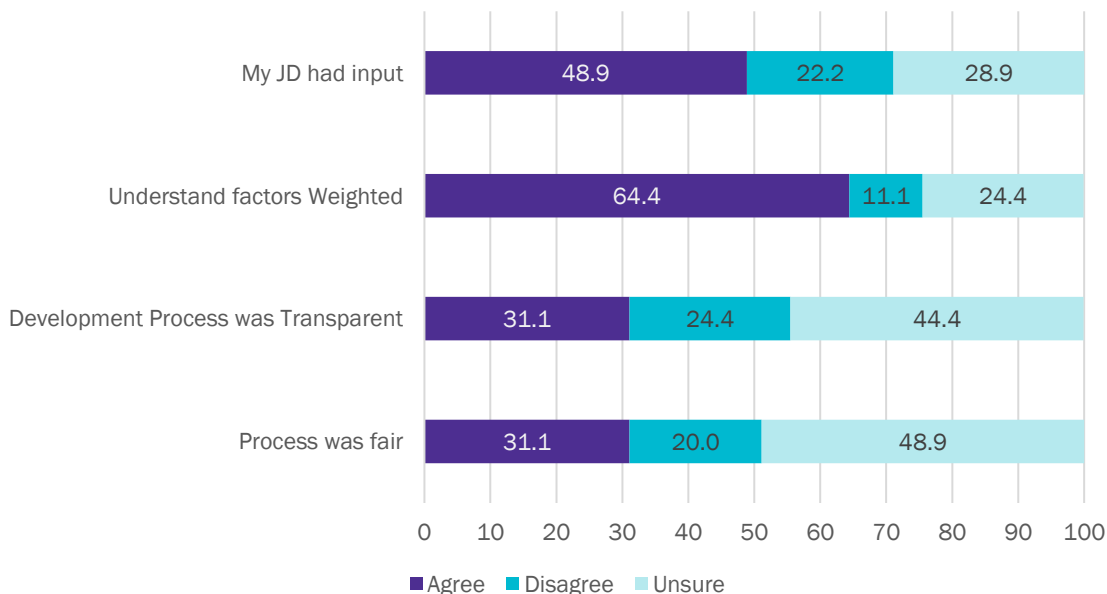
Nearly three years have passed since the prior allocation formula was implemented. In the interim, COVID-19 has impacted local practices and staffing, in many areas resulting in turnover of staff. Additionally, some individuals have transitioned on or off the JJDP Council. As a result, some individuals answering the survey may have limited knowledge of the prior allocation formula development process.

Respondents answered five questions regarding the existing allocation formula:

- ∞ Representatives from my JD provided input into the existing allocation model as it was developed.
- ∞ I understand the factors that were weighted to determine the allocation that each JD would receive.
- ∞ The process of developing the allocation model was transparent.
- ∞ The process of developing the allocation model was fair.
- ∞ In your opinion, is the existing allocation model fair for all JDs?

Figure 3 displays responses to the first four questions. Nearly half of respondents indicated their JD had input into the existing allocation formula development, while the remainder either disagreed (22.2%) or were unsure (28.9%) about local input. The majority of respondents indicated they understood the factors weighted in the current allocation formula. Information on the formula can be found on the DCJ website.

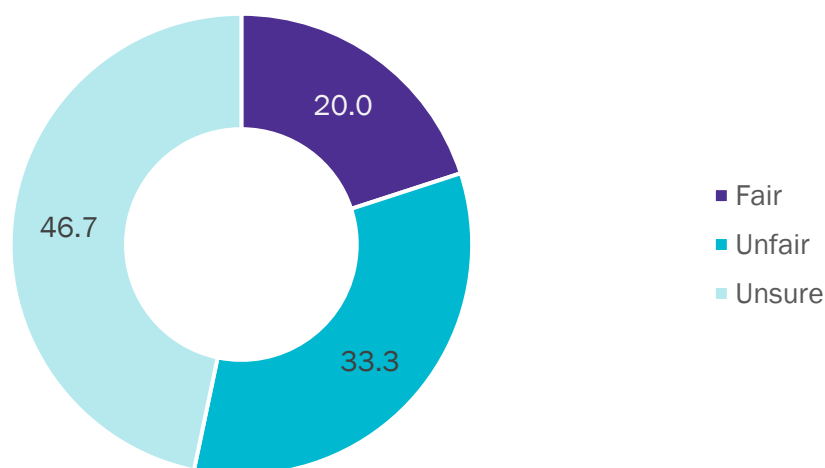
FIGURE 3. RATING OF PRIOR ALLOCATION FORMULA DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



Nearly half of respondents were uncertain whether the allocation formula development process was transparent. Likewise, nearly half of respondents were unsure whether the current allocation formula is fair (see Figure 4),

suggesting that opinions are not set. Responses across the five questions were not significantly different between Council Members and non-Council members.

FIGURE 4. PERCEPTIONS OF WHETHER CURRENT ALLOCATION FORMULA IS FAIR



Those who rated the current allocation formula as unfair were given the opportunity to elaborate on their perceptions. Their answers highlight the challenges faced in both rural and urban JDs and the difficulty balancing the priorities of each. While rural JDs report struggling to meet the demands of an expansive geography with minimal resources, some urban JDs hold a perception that those less populated districts receive disproportionately more dollars per youth.

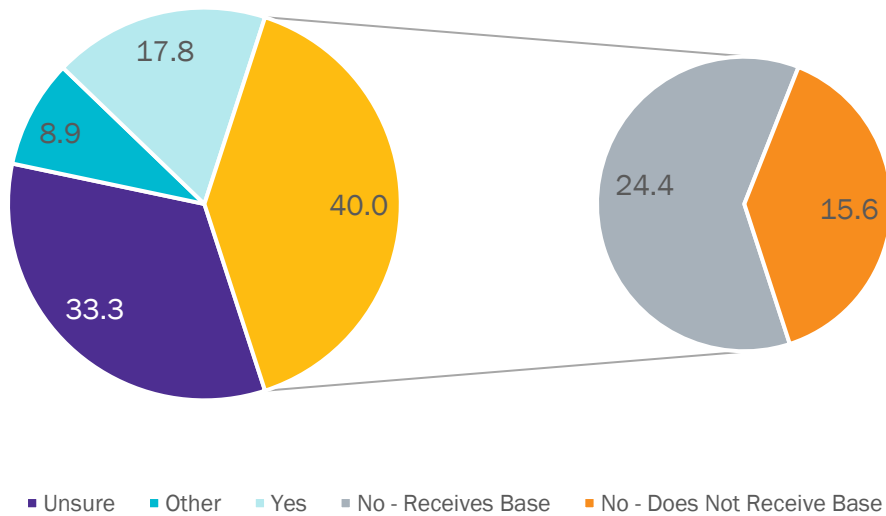
“Rural districts have to pay twice as much for any services for each kid and so this model takes none of that into account and puts us at a huge disadvantage. Further, our district has [XX] counties, and we are very spread out which also adds an extreme additional cost that is NEVER accounted for.”

“The current formula had to address too many competing issues. I think it is impossible to balance the competing needs of the diverse JD's in Colorado. Do you prioritize funds to pay for gas for people to drive all over huge JD's to meet a few kids? Or should the funds be prioritized for the services kids need?”

BASE FUNDING LEVEL

Respondents were asked to reflect on the current base level of funding for Juvenile Diversion within JDs (\$75,000). Among all respondents, only eight (17.8%) indicated that the base level is sufficient (see Figure 5). Many respondents were unsure whether the base funding level was sufficient. A few others were hesitant to label the amount as insufficient or even important, suggesting that the answer is contingent on how many youth are served.

FIGURE 5. PERCENT OF RESPONSES TO “IS THE BASE FUNDING LEVEL SUFFICIENT?”

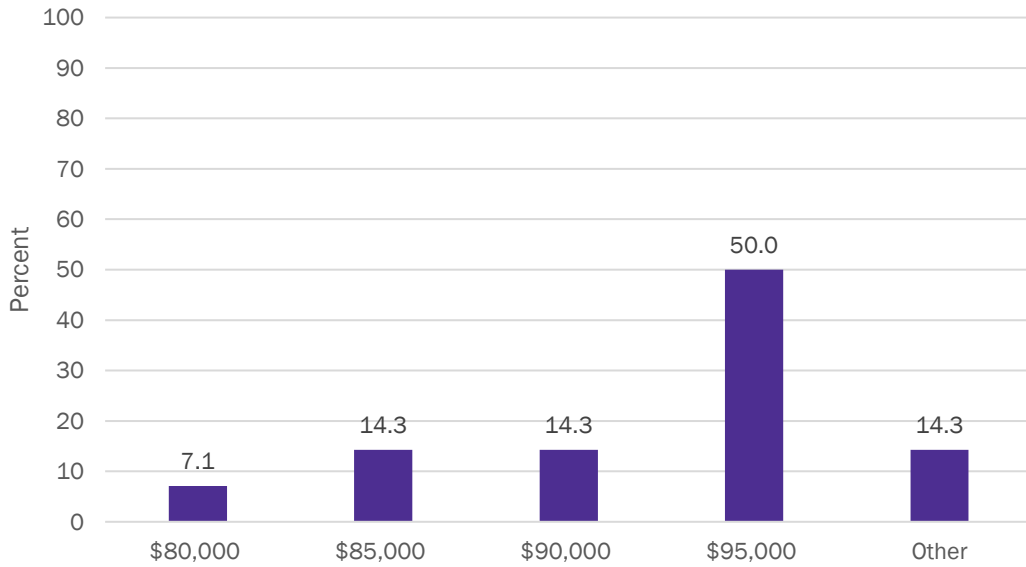


Those contingencies aside, 40.0% of respondents indicated that the \$75,000 base level is insufficient to operate an effective Juvenile Diversion program. Those who rated the amount as insufficient were asked to endorse an amount that would be sufficient, ranging from \$80,00 to \$95,000 per year. Fifty percent of these stakeholders selected \$95,000 as an adequate amount (see Figure 6). When asked to elaborate on why the \$75k amount seemed insufficient, respondents pointed to several factors: transportation costs, square mileage, and basic staffing costs. The cost to provide services to a rural youth is, in many cases, greater due to the travel involved. Likewise, smaller (i.e., rural) JDs sometimes serve multiple counties that span thousands of square miles, so they require staffing in multiple locations. Salary, benefits, and programming costs require more than \$75,000 for a fully operational program.

“ The ability to hire qualified individuals requires funding of at least the base amount. A competitive salary together with benefits consumes virtually the entire amount of funding [. . . leaving] no resources to assist in therapy, training, or supplies.”

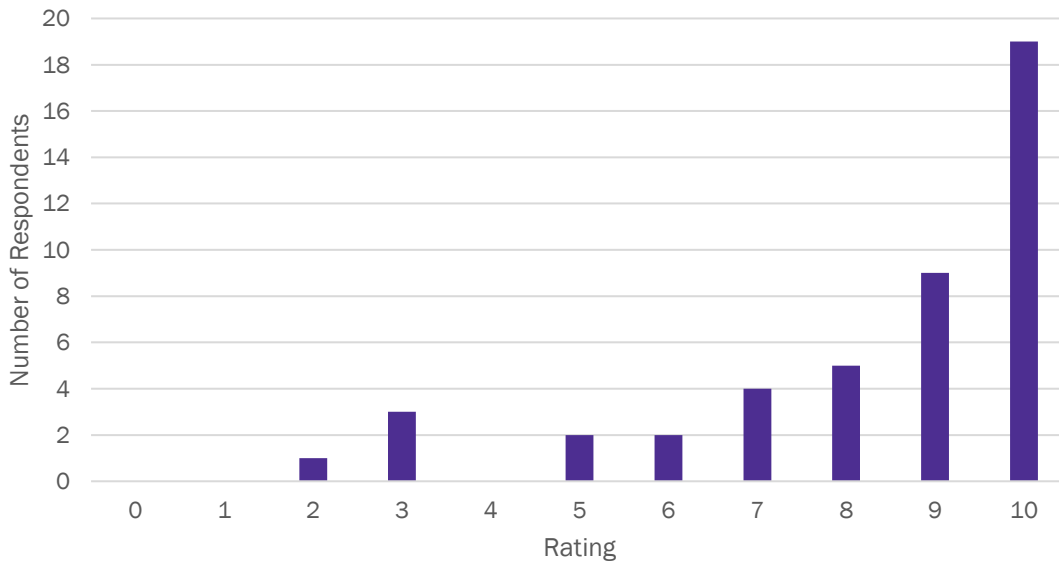
“ The barriers that we face when serving youth in the rural counties of Colorado are very real and are [exacerbated] by the current economy with soaring transportation costs. [...] Since the origins of the location for Juvenile Diversion referrals throughout the year are impossible to predict, it is also impossible for us to predict what our transportation budget needs will be.”

FIGURE 6. RESPONSES TO “WHAT WOULD BE A SUFFICIENT BASE FUNDING LEVEL?”



Respondents rated the importance of having a base funding level on a scale of 0 to 10, with higher numbers reflecting greater importance. Despite the lack of consensus on the specific amount that is adequate, respondents overwhelmingly recognized the importance of base level funding. The mean rating was 8.3 and the median was 9.0, with nearly half of the respondents assigning an importance of 10 to the base funding level (see Figure 7).

FIGURE 7. RESPONDENT RATING OF IMPORTANCE OF A BASE FUNDING LEVEL



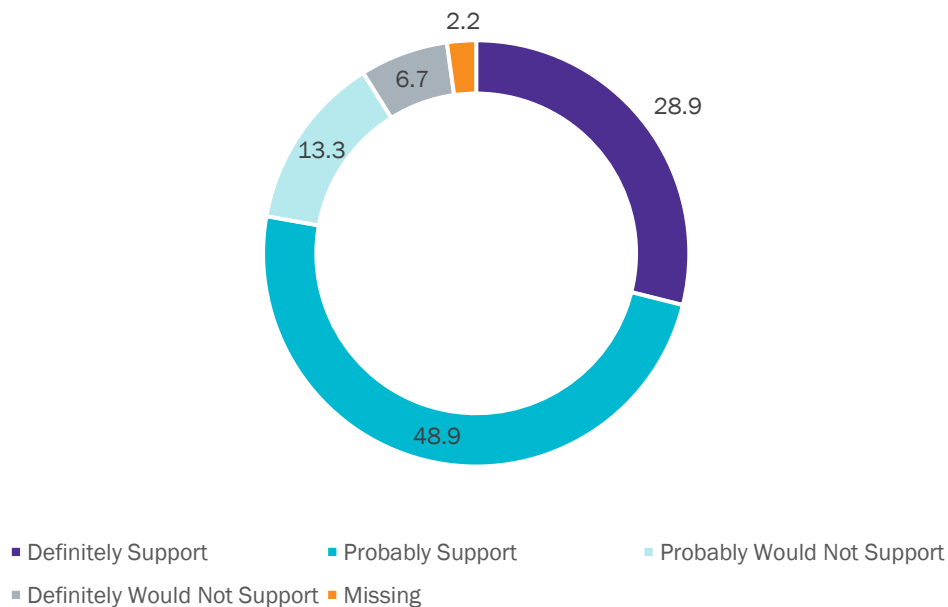
Only a handful of respondents rated the importance of base level funding below a 5 on the 10-point scale, and they were vocal about wanting to hold smaller JDs accountable for those dollars. A few were concerned that allotting the base funding level programs which serve very few youth might not be the best use of tax dollars.

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT FUNDING

Respondents were asked to weigh in on the possibility of an improvement fund for Juvenile Diversion programs. The practice is not currently implemented and would need to be further explored by stakeholders. If allowed by statute, it would provide a mechanism for programs to apply for extra funds to establish new practices, access training for staff or otherwise innovate and improve their Diversion programming to align with best practices in the field.

The majority of respondents (77.8%) indicated they would probably or definitely support holding back a portion of the Juvenile Diversion budget for program improvement or innovation if this is allowed by statute (see Figure 8).

FIGURE 8. SUPPORT FOR SETTING ASIDE A PORTION OF DIVERSION FUNDING FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT/INNOVATION



While setting aside a pool of funding for program improvement is broadly supported, there was no consensus on an appropriate amount to set aside for programs to request for improvement/innovation funding (see Table 1). Overall, stakeholders want more information about the program before they assess how much should be set aside. A handful of respondents suggested that an improvement fund would be unnecessary and perhaps even unsustainable in the long run.

“ I don't believe there is enough information [provided] to appropriately answer either question.”

“ One-time funding opportunities do not necessarily allow for sustainability [. . .] If there was more money available for Diversion overall, I would support this, as that would allow for more sustainable models.”

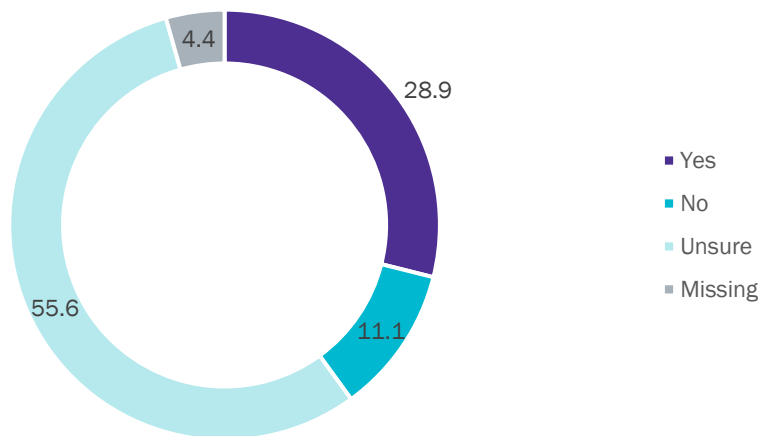
TABLE 1. PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS ENDORSING HYPOTHETICAL MAXIMUM FUNDING LEVELS FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT FUND

Maximum	N	Percent
\$0	6	13.3
\$10,000	5	11.1
\$15,000	3	6.7
\$20,000	9	20.0
\$25,000	12	26.7
Other	9	20.0
Missing	1	2.2

ISSUES SPECIFIC TO JDs WITH MULTIPLE FUNDED PROGRAMS

Within several JDs, Juvenile Diversion dollars are split across multiple programs. In most cases, this occurs in JDs where Juvenile Diversion was previously operating under the competitive process. More than half of respondents (55.6%) were unsure whether there were any specific issues that needed to be considered during the funding allocation process for JDs where Juvenile Diversion dollars were split (see Figure 9).

FIGURE 9. RESPONSES TO “SPLIT JD ISSUES TO CONSIDER?”



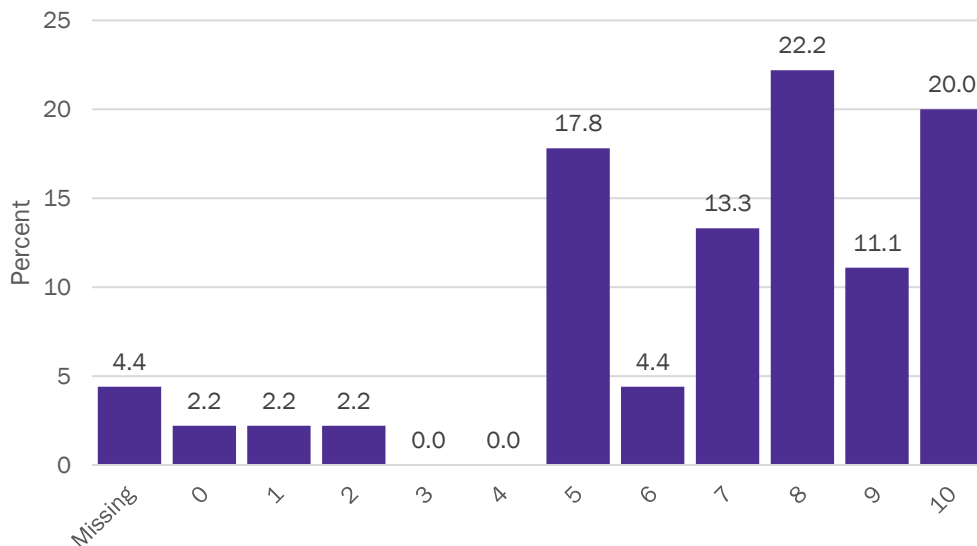
Those who answered in the affirmative were asked to elaborate on those considerations. The open ended responses were almost entirely focused on DAs who waive their funding to community agencies rather than on multiple programs within a JD. Thus, no substantial recommendations were made regarding any special considerations to JDs who split dollars. Opinions about both split funding and waived funding will be addressed further in the focus groups to avoid any confusion about the two concepts.

PHASED OR IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW BUDGET FORMULA

DCJ is required to reevaluate the Juvenile Diversion allocation formula every three years. The initial allocation formula was adjusted to ensure that prior grant funded programs would not receive fewer dollars than they received historically. While that adjustment is not anticipated to persist when the new formula is implemented, there is an awareness that large changes in funding, either increases or decreases, could have adverse effects on programs.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of gradually implementing the new allocation formula, particularly if it results in large funding changes for any JD. The rating scale ranged from 0, indicating a gradual implementation is not important at all, to 10, meaning a gradual implementation is critically important. The average rating was 7.4, but the distribution was negatively skewed, indicating responses tended to cluster on the higher side. JJDP Council members tended to rate a gradual implementation as more important than non-council members (8.3 vs. 7.2), but the difference was not significant. Figure 10 shows the percent of respondents who selected each importance value for a gradual implementation.

FIGURE 10. IMPORTANCE OF GRADUAL IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW BUDGET FORMULA RATED ON A 0 TO 10 SCALE

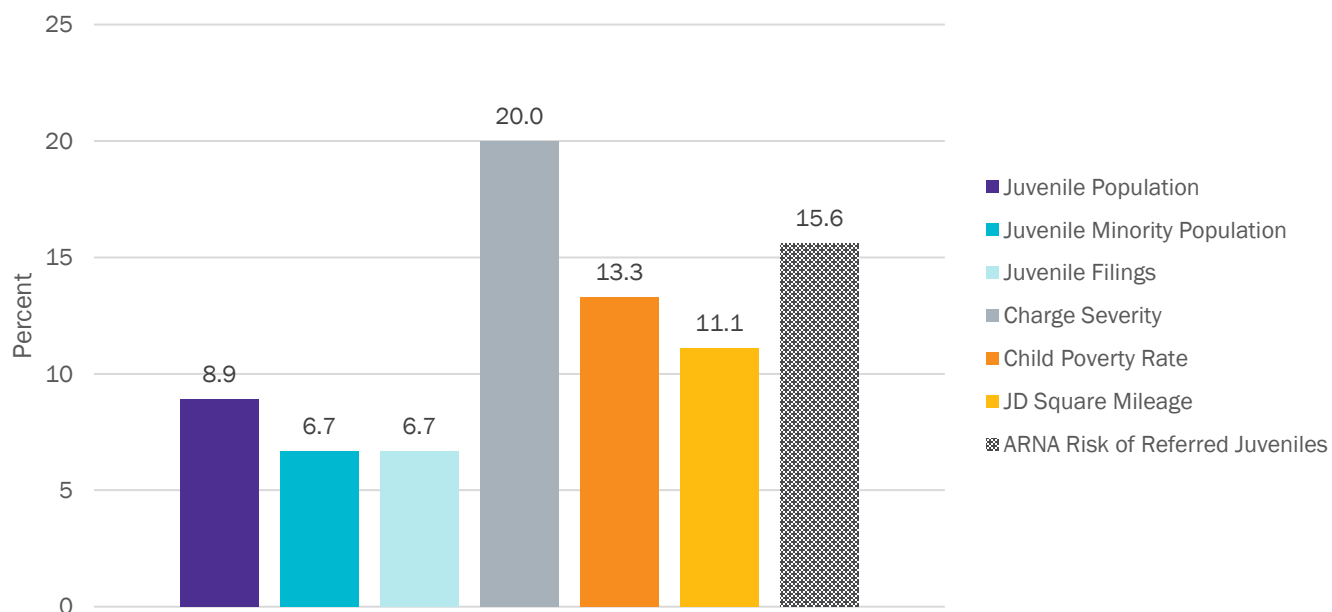


SELECTION OF FACTORS TO INCLUDE IN ALLOCATION FORMULA

All stakeholders were asked to rank order factors that they consider important to include in the allocation formula. Respondents ranked the most important factor as a 1, and then continued ranking factors in order of importance. They also had the option of indicating that a factor should not be included in the formula by selecting “N/A”.

Figure 11 displays the percent of respondents that ranked each factor as non-applicable to the allocation formula. Filing Charge Severity and ARNA risk level of juveniles referred to the District Attorney’s Office were most opposed. Nine (9) respondents opposed inclusion of filing charge severity (20.0% and seven (7) respondents (15.6%) opposed inclusion of ARNA risk level of referred youth in the JD. Both factors received only 2 rankings of one (1).

FIGURE 11. PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS INDICATING A FACTOR SHOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM FORMULA



Juvenile population and juvenile filings had the most consistent support for inclusion in the allocation formula (see Table 2). Few respondents opposed including these factors. Sixteen respondents ranked juvenile population as the most important factor to include and 10 respondents ranked juvenile filings as most important to include. Non-council members ranked juvenile filings more important than JJDP Council members (2.9 vs 4.3). In some of the open-ended responses, stakeholders expressed a need to focus on the number of youth *diverted* rather than number of filings, suggesting that a focus on filings may actually discourage JDs from diverting youth. Issues of how to measure the construct (e.g., filings, diversions, arrests, summons) can be explored further in focus groups.

TABLE 2. POTENTIAL FORMULA FACTORS: EXCLUSIONS, RANK OF 1 AND MEAN RANK ORDER

Factor	Exclude Factor (N)	Rank of 1 (N)	Overall	Mean	
				Council Members	Non-Council Members
Juvenile Population	4	16	2.4	2.1	2.5
Juvenile Filings	3	10	3.1	4.3	2.9
Juvenile Filing Charge Severity	9	2	3.6	3.7	3.6
Child Poverty Rate	6	2	4.0	3.2	4.1
JD Square Mileage	5	10	4.1	5.0	4.0
Juvenile Minority Population	3	1	4.3	3.3	4.5
ARNA Risk of Juveniles Referred to DA Office	7	2	4.4	3.4	4.7

JD square mileage received mixed responses in both the rankings and the qualitative comments, with respondents from less populated JDs ranking JD square mileage as more important for the formula. While 10 respondents gave JD square mileage a rank of 1 (most important), 10 respondents gave JD square mileage a rank of 7 (least important). We split respondents into two categories: Front Range/urban¹ and non-urban. None of the respondents associated with non-urban JDs indicated JD square mileage should be excluded from the formula. Among respondents who provided a ranking between 1 and 7, respondents affiliated with Front Range/Urban JDs had a significantly higher mean rank (less important) for JD square mileage (5.0 vs. 2.8) than respondents affiliated with non-urban JDs ($F(1, 34) = 8.8, p < .01$).

TABLE 3: IMPORTANCE OF FACTORS BASED ON QUANTITATIVE FEEDBACK

More Important	Somewhat Important	Less Important
∞ Juvenile Population	∞ Child Poverty Rate	∞ ARNA Risk of Juveniles Referred to the DA's Office
∞ Juvenile Filings	∞ Juvenile Minority Population	∞ Square Mileage of the JD
∞ Square Mileage of the JD ²	∞ Measure of Juvenile Filing Charge Severity	

Respondents had the opportunity to provide open-ended responses to identify any other important factors they feel should be considered in the new allocation formula:

- ∞ Number of youth served in Diversion (especially if juvenile filings are low)

¹ JDs classified as Front Range or Urban centers were 1, 2, 4, 8, 10, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21.

² Square mileage of JD listed under both most and less important because of the split in responses with most respondents either indicating it was critical to include in formula or giving it the least important rating.

- ∞ Incentivizing best practices (ex: JDs that use EBP for behavioral change receive more money)
- ∞ Penalizing one-size-fits-all models
- ∞ Availability of community resources (or lack thereof) – initiating a program/service is likely more costly than maintaining an already-established program
- ∞ Community risk factors beyond poverty (no specific examples given)
- ∞ Assessment of how much a county’s DHS system can absorb from Diversion
- ∞ Mental health, substance abuse, and behavioral health concerns across juvenile populations
- ∞ Additional funding for programs that absorb sex offenders and domestic violence cases

While most respondents have the needs of their respective JDs at the forefront, a few acknowledge the complexity involved in trying to balance the competing needs of all JDs across the state.

“ I don't believe there are specific factors that will apply to ALL JD's outside of [those] listed. I also don't think rural JDs are adequately funded or that a group of factors exists that can accurately identify this need.”

“ [The number] of youth served by Diversion [should be a factor]. We have low filings because we have high Diversion numbers.”

“ I don't think you can consider any Diversion model without simultaneously considering the impact on the county DHS system, and whether (or how much) that system can absorb and/or work with Diversion.”

CLOSING THOUGHTS ON THE NEXT ALLOCATION FORMULA

As stakeholders completed the survey, they were given one last chance to share any comments or concerns about the development of the next allocation formula. Respondents seized the opportunity to highlight how deeply personal and emotional the funding formula is for them. They are suspicious of outside entities and governing bodies who don’t engage in the day-to-day work of Juvenile Diversion, and they fear that their needs will, ultimately, be cast aside in the process of developing and redeveloping the allocation formula.

“ I do not feel comfortable with this decision being made by an outside facilitator. Having an outside facilitator lead the dialogue and decision-making process can be critical and useful. But having that outside entity coming up with the suggested model does not feel appropriate or useful from my perspective.”

““ Diversion voice is my biggest concern. Absent significant representation on JJDP, or verification of their authority over this process at all, the allocation process will always be incredibly unfair and cause a lot of emotions.”

Stakeholders understand the need for Colorado’s 22 Judicial Districts to endorse universal goals of Juvenile Diversion. Likewise, respondents would like to see increased understanding between JDs around the unique challenges each experience. With a more “united” understanding of the goals and challenges of Juvenile Diversion, respondents feel that some of the disparities between JDs and zip codes could be reduced or eliminated.

““ A final note here is that I think it'll be pretty critical for a cross-section of Diversion program stakeholders to get together to be able to most fully flesh out this allocation model/formula. It felt critical in our initial allocation model discussions to be in a room together to be able to best understand the competing needs of different locations to best be able to arrive at an outcome that meets diverse needs as best as possible.”

““ [It] would be helpful to have a statewide united understanding of the goals that diversion programs should be pursuing (i.e., reducing risk of recidivism, providing MH/SA treatment, improving health of youth and families - as a few possible suggestions). Without a united understanding, youth will continue to receive different Diversion experiences depending on their area code. And with a united understanding we could improve the allocation model to focus more on program's efforts and success in pursuing statewide goals, rather than basing allocation on static data that provides no measurement of whether Diversion programs are improving the health and safety of youth, victims, families, and communities.”

While respondents’ opinions on fairness and transparency appear open, they have a lot of ideas about how to revise the allocation formula. Some suggest factors that are more merit-based than statistical. Namely, these respondents want increased accountability for how programs spend money or use evidence-based practices. They also want a formula that rewards positive outcomes, for example, by considering youth diverted rather than the number of youth filings. Others suggest a more individualized approach in which JDs are consulted on their budgetary needs based on prior fiscal years, and DA offices are advised on ways to strengthen relationships with their community partners or expand prosecution-led diversion, as needed.

““ I do not think juvenile filings should be included as it excludes consideration of JDs with robust pre-filing programs. It rewards JD also who file on lower risk charges that could be handled through diversion. Last, filings for more serious offenses are likely to be captured in the CYDC funding provided to the JD and are more appropriate within that allocation formula/fund distribution.”

““ I want more support for prosecution led diversion (PLD) that looks like empowering DAs to use diversion and expand on what’s there already. There are multiple nation-wide efforts to build out a framework for PLD including the Zuckerberg Foundation, the Urban League, and groups out of several universities. DCJ should look at these models and then offer technical support to offices on how to pick a community partner, if that is what they want, how to write an MOU and how to manage the funds.”

Overall, respondents stress that Diversion programs face a lot of uncertainty and obstacles—whether they are trying to initiate programs from scratch or gauging the very real impact of COVID-19 on filings, service providers, and subsequent inflation. Diversion stakeholders are deeply invested in the work they do and finding an allocation formula that is perceived as fair and equitable to all JDs is no small task.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

A total of 45 respondents were included in the analysis to gauge perceptions and gather feedback in the process of developing the next allocation formula for Juvenile Diversion funding. The results of the survey indicate a deep divide between rural and urban JDs with regard to program challenges, funding needs, and general views of fairness. Rural JDs face financial and logistical barriers due to geography, staffing, and lack of resources/services. More heavily populated JDs take issue with the perception that rural JDs receive significantly more money per youth. That said, respondents recognize the need for all JDs to connect and “get on the same page” with regard to funding, their conflicting needs, and the overarching goals of their Juvenile Diversion programs.

Thinking about the current allocation formula, many respondents were unsure whether the current base level funding of \$75,000 is sufficient to operate a Juvenile Diversion program. However, most stakeholders recognize the importance of having a base level in place to fund Juvenile Diversion across all 22 JDs, and half of those who reported the current base was too low suggested \$95,000 as an appropriate amount for the base level of funding. Respondents were also asked to identify any issues unique to the JDs that split Diversion dollars across more than one program. Rural JDs again pointed to their unique barriers. DA offices also shared concerns around community partners. Those concerns ranged from perceptions of inappropriate funds going to partners, to the possibility that community partners don’t always provide services that align with Juvenile Diversion. All in all, there is a need for greater collaboration within and across JDs to ensure that resources are available, and programs are empowered to make budgetary decisions in the best interests of the youth they serve.

Looking ahead to the next allocation formula, respondents were asked about the importance of gradual implementation of any significant increases or decreases to a JD’s Juvenile Diversion funding across multiple years. On a scale from 0 to 10, the mean rating was 7.4, indicating that stakeholders recognized the need for a gradual shift in funding rather than an immediate implementation.

When prioritizing factors to weight in the next allocation formula, respondents identified juvenile population and juvenile filings as the more important factors. Although some respondents pointed out that juveniles diverted might be a more appropriate factor so that filing on more juveniles is not unintentionally incentivized. Square mileage of the JD was a polarizing factor, with respondents split on whether it was critical to include or exclude. ARNA risk was the least important factor among respondents, while child poverty rate, juvenile minority population, and filing charge severity were not ranked as highly important.

Overall, respondents recognize that each JD faces unique challenges in serving youth participating in Juvenile Diversion and that there likely is no formula that will address the unique needs of the 22 diverse Judicial Districts. Stakeholders view the process as deeply personal and emotional. Stakeholders are skeptical of outsiders and advisory councils, and they aren’t sure how a fair formula can be developed by people who don’t do the day-to-day work of Juvenile Diversion. Respondents worry that their needs will go unmet and their voices unheard. Moving

forward, transparency will be critical. It will also be important for JDs across the state to come together to discuss their competing needs and find common ground under a universal vision for Colorado's Juvenile Diversion programs.

APPENDIX

Respondents brought up some issues and concerns within their open-ended responses that were not applicable to the questions within the survey. Those sentiments are summarized here, in no particular order, and are considered to be anecdotal rather than reflective of a trend among stakeholders:

- ∞ Concerns regarding the “Hold Harmless” clause; specifically, the adjustments that will have to be made within JDs that continued receiving “more money than they” should for 3 years
- ∞ Perceptions that allocation has been treated more like a competitive grant
- ∞ Lack of fairness in the perceived ways that individual JDs decide to distribute their funds (ex: which community partners receive funds from the DA’s office); they feel as though the formula encourages JDs to bring services “in-house” versus supporting community partners who have been providing services for a significant amount of time.
- ∞ Perceptions of funds being spent on youth who are not at-risk of entering the juvenile justice system
- ∞ Perceived lack of transparency in how much of the Diversion budget is being used versus “held back” by DCJ and what that money is being used for.
- ∞ Belief that all dollars should be controlled by the DA’s office and subcontracted from the DA’s offices to community providers as appropriate so DAs can ensure the quality and appropriateness of services offered.
- ∞ Concerns regarding the cost to DA offices for implementing the ARNA risk screening tool
- ∞ Suggestion to form a Diversion Directors committee that would work to “create a state-wide diversion model including definitions, best practices, approved uses of the funds, a process for local plan requirements and approval similar to CYDC, selection and shared funding for screens and assessments, plan an annual conference or training calendar, and work with program evaluation.”