



Juvenile Justice Task Force

March 2014

Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice

Juvenile Justice Task Force

CO-CHAIRS

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Commission members in red

Juvenile Justice Task Force

Topic Areas

1. Pre-filing Options: Definitions and statutes
2. Petty Ticket
3. Professionalism
4. Age of Delinquency: Detention
5. Re-ordering & Revising the Children's Code

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Topic #1 / Pre-filing Options: Definitions and Statutes

Statement of the Problem

- Diversion should be used to keep juveniles out of the juvenile justice system.
- Diversion is not clearly defined in the Children's Code.
- Diversion is used inconsistently across jurisdictions.
- Diversion funds are sometimes used on non-diversion cases.

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Topic #1 / Pre-filing Options: Definitions and Statutes

Pros/Cons/Feasibility

- Encourages diversion and treatment for minor offenses prior to the filing of a petition. Keeps juveniles out of the system to reduce criminogenic exposure. Research shows that juveniles who enter the system are more likely to reoffend.
- Increases difficulty of prosecution for juveniles that do not complete diversion programs.

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Topic #1 / Pre-filing Options: Definitions and Statutes

Plan to address topic / Timeline

- Work is underway to redefine diversion in the Children's Code.
- Possible recommendation presented to the CCJJ in the summer of 2014.

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Topic #2 / Petty Ticket

Statement of the Problem

- Juveniles acquire delinquency records for minor offenses when formal petitions are filed. This can be avoided by establishing a process which clearly reflects a record of a petty offense rather than a juvenile petition.

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Topic #2 / Petty Ticket

Pros/Cons/Feasibility

- Avoids the filing of a petition and formal proceedings. Does not create a delinquency record and avoids detrimental effects of a record later in life.
- Tracking of cases may be difficult, it is unclear what the consequence is for failure to comply with the petty ticket requirement.
- Details of the ticket process are under development.

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Topic #2 / Petty Ticket

Plan to address topic / Timeline

- Currently being studied by the Task Force.
- The Task Force is expected to vote on a recommendation at the April, 2014 meeting.
- Possible recommendation presented to the CCJJ in summer 2014.

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Topic #3 / Professionalism

Statement of the Problem

- Professionals often lack expertise in the juvenile system because they use it as a stepping stone for adult criminal work.
- There are no core competency standards of practice for juvenile justice professionals.

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Topic #3 / Professionalism

Pros/Cons/Feasibility

- There should be baseline training requirements for all professionals in the juvenile justice system to ensure juveniles receive excellent services.
- Creates a bureaucratic layer. Not enforceable.

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Topic #3 / Professionalism

Plan to address topic / Timeline

- Currently being studied by the Task Force.
- Possible recommendation presentation to CCJJ in the summer of 2014.

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Topic #4 / Age of Delinquency: Detention

Statement of the Problem

- Juveniles under twelve should be treated differently because placing them in detention has the potential to expose them to older and more serious delinquents.

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Topic #4 / Age of Delinquency: Detention

Pros/Cons/Feasibility

- Keeping younger juveniles out of detention keeps them away from older offenders, decreasing criminogenic effect.
- Alternative placements must be found, sometimes on short notice.
- It is difficult to differentiate juvenile development characteristics based solely on chronological age.

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Topic #4 / Age of Delinquency: Detention

Plan to address topic / Timeline

- Currently being studied by the task force.
- Possible recommendation presentation to CCJJ in the summer of 2014.

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Topic #5 / Re-ordering & Revising the Children's Code

Statement of the Problem

- Article Two of the Children's Code is not in chronological order resulting in confusion and some contradictions.
- Some language in the Code needs updating and correcting.

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Topic #5 / Re-ordering & Revising the Children's Code

Pros/Cons/Feasibility

- The lack of chronological order often results in confusion to practitioners. Such confusion can result in missed opportunities for juveniles.
- This is a large and time consuming undertaking which would require a very specific work plan.
- The Task Force will need some legislative drafting assistance.
- Members want to complete some existing work before proceeding.

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Topic #5 / Re-ordering & Revising the Children's Code

Plan to address topic / Timeline

- The Juvenile Justice Task Force would assign the work to a working group in June.
- Requires detailed work plan.

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Discussion

Priorities

Next Steps

Topics Reminder

1. Pre-filing Options: Definitions and statutes
2. Petty Ticket
3. Professionalism
4. Age of Delinquency: Detention
5. Re-ordering & Revising the Children's Code