

JUVENILE PROBATION

Probation is the responsibility of the Colorado Judicial Department (excluding county and municipal probation). Managed by the Chief Probation Officer in each of the 22 judicial districts, probation officers provide assessments and pre-sentence investigation reports to the courts, supervise juveniles in the community, and provide appropriate service and treatment referrals. Juveniles sentenced to probation are between 10-17 years of age and may receive a sentence for up to two years.

The number of youth on probation continues to decrease as seen in data from 2009 through 2013. During the Fiscal Year (FY) of 2013, there were 3,992 juveniles sentenced to regular probation and an additional 304 juveniles sentenced to the Juvenile Intensive Supervision Probation Program (JISP). JISP is a sentencing option and is designed to deliver intensive case management with the purpose of identifying and selecting high-risk juvenile offenders. Misdemeanor offenses in FY 2013 were the most prevalent representing 58% of new cases sentenced to juvenile probation followed by felony offenses, which made up for 28% of the new cases sentenced to probation.

A juvenile's supervision level is determined by assessing their risk of reoffending. In order to determine their supervision level, probation officers administer the CO Juvenile Risk Assessment (CJRA). The assessment entails an interview with the juvenile and their families, and addresses various risk and need areas. These areas include criminal history, school and use of free time, employment, relationships, family/living arrangements, substance use, mental health, skills, behaviors, aggression and attitudes. Results of the CJRA are combined with other collateral information to determine the level of supervision, appropriate services, treatment referrals and case management strategies. On June 30, 2013, the majority of juveniles on probation were being supervised at a medium or minimum risk level (27% and 31% respectively).

Based on the risk/need/responsivity principles, supervision and service referrals are tailored individually to the juvenile.

- RISK – overall risk the juvenile poses to the community and the possible risk of reoffending
- NEED – addressing those individual areas that make up the juvenile's risk (address the dynamic needs)
- RESPONSIVITY – appropriate delivery of services and treatment

Juvenile probation services are designed to decrease recidivism and increase behavioral change for long-term success.

- WHAT: Supervision, support, structure and matching treatment to the juvenile's individual needs
- WHEN: For the first few weeks of supervision and during the length of the probation sentence
- WHO: All juveniles sentenced to probation; resources are targeted towards those assessed at the maximum and medium supervision level.
- WHY: Risk of recidivism is highest during the initial period of supervision
- HOW: Structured time, increased services, removing barriers for stabilization

NATIONAL AND COLORADO DATA

National

- Courts with juvenile jurisdiction handled over 1.5 million delinquency cases in 2009, and probation supervision was the most severe disposition in 36% of those cases. Since 1997, the number of cases with juveniles placed on probation has declined steadily yet it still remains the most likely disposition for juvenile delinquent cases (60%) as compared to residential placement (27%) or other sanctions (13%).
- Of all delinquency cases in 2009, 54% were court-ordered as opposed to voluntary probation.
- Most cases placed on probation in 2009 involved white juveniles (68%) followed by black juveniles (29%) and other races (3%), and most cases involved males (73%) though the probation caseload among females grew from 18% in 1985 to 27% in 2009.
- In 2009, juveniles ages 14-16 accounted for 65% of the probation caseload.

[Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. 2012. National Report Series: Juvenile Delinquency Probation Caseload, 2009 \(Report No. NCJ 239082\).](#)

Colorado

New Probation Cases:

- The number of new cases for Regular Probation decreased from 5,707 cases during fiscal year 2009-2010 to 3,992 cases in 2012-2013.
- New Juvenile Intensive Supervision Probation (JISP) cases decreased from 524 in 2009-2010 to 304 in 2012-2013.
- In 2013, the majority of new cases were 17 year-olds (1,001 or 25%), followed by ages 16 (841 or 21%), 15 (683 or 17%), 10-14 (956 or 24%) and 18+ (509 or 13%).
In 2013, most offenses were misdemeanors (58%), followed by felonies (28%), traffic and other violations (9%), and petty offenses (5%).
- As of June 30, 2013, 16% of new cases fell into the maximum risk level, 27% were medium risk, 31% were minimum risk, 9% were sex offenders (which include all three risk levels), and 5% fell into the "other" category.
- Most new cases had a length of involvement between birth-12 months (58%), followed by 28% involved for 13-24 months, and 14% involved more than 24 months.
- Among Regular Probation Terminations in 2013, 72% ended in successful termination, 23% were revoked, and 5% were absconded.
- Among new Juvenile Intensive Supervision Probation cases in 2013, 35% were direct sentences, 58% were transfers from regular probation, and 7% were transfers from another district.
- Among new Juvenile Intensive Supervision Probation cases in 2013, 45% ended in successful termination, 52% were revoked, and 3% were absconded.
- Revocations among Juvenile Intensive Supervision Probation cases in 2013 included new felonies (18%), new misdemeanors (17%), and technical violations (65%).

Colorado Statewide Youth Development Plan: Supplemental Material, 2014

GAPS

- Rural areas typically experience greater barriers when it comes to accessing services. There is most commonly a lack of sex offender, mental health, and substance use treatment or there is only one provider.
- Urban areas also experience difficulties because services may be difficult to access due to transportation or eligibility requirements (i.e. Medicaid).
- Transitional youth (especially those turning age 18) need assistance with housing, employment, treatment and other services for youth experiencing homelessness, there is also a need for housing, sustainability and treatment.
- Youth may face other challenges, including Judge rotation and District Attorney rotation. Family Navigators are additionally needed to assist youth and families with the court process, expectations, requirements and other areas.
- There is a lack of training and implementation of practices targeted at trauma-informed care and trauma issues experienced by juvenile's under probation supervision.

PRIORITIES

- Consistent assessment practices implemented with fidelity.
- Addressing the needs of transition age youth (age 18+).
- Expanding the capacity of treatment providers in rural areas.
- Implementing Trauma-Informed Care training and associated practices.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

- The Colorado Division of Probation Services implemented the Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment statewide and continues to improve consistent practice. Fidelity to administering and interpreting the results of the Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment is critical as well as using this information to target appropriate treatment referrals. Continuously conducting inter-rater reliability exercises with probation officers and monitoring the data with outcomes is also important.
- The Colorado Division of Probation Services is partnering with the Colorado Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) to bring substance use services and evidence-based treatment programs to youth transitioning into adulthood (18 years of age and older). Combined funding from the Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration, the OBH, and several youth-serving agencies is targeting this population by implementing specific curriculum with the Arapahoe/Douglas Mental Health Center and Crossroads Turning Point, Inc. Targeted communities with the goal of expanding are Alamosa, Pueblo, La Junta and the Denver Metro Area.
- The Division of Probation Services continues to explore ways to expand capacity of treatment providers into the rural areas of the state. Exploring and encouraging cross-district collaboration and the use of funds to bring providers to areas of need is one solution we are working on with the local probation departments and various treatment providers.
- The Division of Probation Services will be providing trauma-informed training to probation officers in the near future. We are exploring the different curriculum available, and determining which one is most appropriate for our population. In addition, this training and other practices will be integrated towards providing appropriate responses and treatment referrals to youth who have

experienced or are currently having trauma issues.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

STATE JUDICIAL JUVENILE PROBATION SERVICE

The purpose of Juvenile Probation Services is to reduce recidivism and obtain long-term behavior change in youth sentenced to probation. This can be accomplished by supervision in the community through utilizing case plans developed with the youth and applying the appropriate services and treatment referrals. The Statement of Common Ground guides probation and Colorado Probation is committed to public safety as well as victim and community reparation through offender accountability, skill, competency development, and services to the communities of Colorado.

The Division of Probation Services, which operates within the State Court Administrator's Office, works with local probation departments to employ assessments and case management strategies in accordance with policy. There are 22 local probation departments across the state. Within the limits of statute and state standards (developed and published by the Division of Probation Services), each district may develop and structure programs that best address the specific needs of the local court and community.