

Youth Justice Oversight Committee – Grants Plan

Final Report

DECEMBER 2025

COURT OF APPEALS OF INDIANA
Dana J. Kenworthy
Judge

December 17, 2025

To the Members of the Indiana General Assembly and the Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana,

On behalf of the Youth Justice Oversight Committee ("YJOC") and its Grants Process Workgroup ("GPW"), I am pleased to submit an updated report as required by LC. 2-5-36-9.3(d). This report is the product of intensive work of the YJOC and all its workgroups (Behavioral Health, Data, Diversion, Grants, Probation Standards, Screening and Assessment, and Transitional Services), and particularly the strong and steadfast leadership of the GPW's co-chairs, Boone County Superior Court I Judge Lori Schein and Indiana Criminal Justice Institute Executive Director Doug Huntsinger.

The report that follows focuses on the YJOC's updated plan for management of its three grant programs: Juvenile Diversion, Community Alternatives to Detention, and Behavioral Health. I also believe it is important to highlight a few of the YJOC's positive outcomes to date:

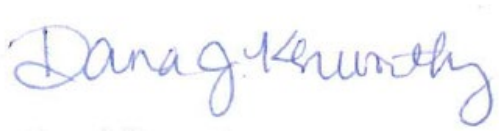
1. Focus on outcomes & youth justice data. Our Data Workgroup, including expertise of Indiana University, completed a data pilot to study availability and quality of existing justice system data. 24 Indiana counties volunteered to participate in this pilot, resulting in collection of data regarding about 35,000 youth over 5 years. *This is the most comprehensive picture of youth justice we have ever had in Indiana.* Next, the Workgroup has selected 6 of these 24 counties for a more in-depth study aimed at improving quality and availability of existing data and creating a statewide data collection infrastructure.
2. Increase access to evidence-based behavioral health services. The Behavioral Health Workgroup has studied shortages of certain services, i.e., diagnostic evaluations and telehealth options, provided training and guidance documents to system stakeholders. This Workgroup continues to problem-solve system shortages and supports the Grants Workgroup.

3. Divert youth from the youth justice system when appropriate. The Diversion Workgroup has created a Diversion Toolkit and a searchable database of available diversion programming statewide. Counties without diversion programming can use this Toolkit and draw from the experience of other counties to establish diversion programs, with the aid of YJOC grant funding if needed
4. Ensure consistent use of Indiana Youth Assessment System (IYAS). The Screening and Assessment Workgroup provided booster training for all system stakeholders regarding correct use of IYAS. The Workgroup also updated juvenile forms to ensure collection of statutorily-required data points.
5. Improve services for youth transitioning home after placement at the Department of Correction. The Transitional Services Workgroup established a collaborative Teams Channel where system partners can quickly staff particularly difficult placement issues. The Workgroup in the process of creating a Transitional Services Guide for system stakeholders.
6. Prudently manage YJOC grant funding to increase access to evidence-based youth justice programming, particularly in rural communities. Since the General Assembly allocated YJOC grant funds in 2022, counties have sought and received funding to fill service gaps and to address prevalent issues such as chronic absenteeism, youth possession of handguns, and parent-child conflict.

These are but a few examples of the system-changing work of the YJOC to date. More in-depth information is available at www.in.gov/youthjustice.

While we are proud of these accomplishments, we have a lot of work left to do. With continued collaboration and support of Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches, we are in good position to solidify Indiana's reputation as a leader in youth justice reform and realize our vision to: **"Evolve Indiana's communities and systems to embrace and provide opportunities for all youth to reach their full potential."**

Respectfully submitted,



Dana J. Kenworthy,
Judge, Court of Appeals of Indiana
YJOC Chair

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I. Introduction

In 2022, the Indiana General Assembly established grant programs under House Enrolled Act 1359 (HEA-2022 1359). The programs – juvenile diversion, juvenile community alternatives, and behavioral health – are administered by the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI). Pursuant to I. C. 2-5-36-9.3(d), the Youth Justice Oversight Committee (YJOC) is required to develop a plan for the grant programs. The initial plan was submitted in December 2022. Statutory requirements provide a foundation for interconnectivity among agencies and entities to ensure achievement of program goals. The Grants Process Workgroup (GPW) supports the YJOC by implementing the grant program plan, promoting alignment of policies, practices, services, and funding, and making recommendations for changes to the plan.

In developing the plan in 2022, the GPW identified core elements that continue to guide implementation:

1. Valuing the voices of those with lived experience is of paramount importance when developing new or enhancing existing programs and services. Authentically partnering with youth and families promotes efficiency and good stewardship in funding decisions, as consumers are more likely to engage if programs and providers are trusted. The GPW needs to include youth and families with lived experience at all points in the grant decision-making process, including development and review of applications, education and outreach about funding availability, and recommendations for awarding grant funds.
2. Grant funds are for the limited use of filling gaps in current funding sources and cannot be used to supplant existing sources of payment.
3. If a funding source exists for a program or service, but the program or service is not available in a particular geographic area, grant funds could be used to make it available, provided the pay structure aligns with the existing funding source. For example, if the Department of Child Services (DCS) has a service standard for a program or service but there are no contracted providers in a county, funding could be used to contract with an agency to provide that same program or service if the payment structure is aligned with what that agency would receive if they had a contract with DCS.
4. It is critical to include provision for upfront distribution of funds and not structure payments solely on a reimbursement basis. Some counties and smaller

agencies are not permitted to operate programs while awaiting reimbursement or cannot remain solvent under this model.

5. Both governmental and non-governmental agencies must be eligible to apply for all three grant programs. However, all applications must clearly identify that collaborative service planning occurred with a local group that included a judicial officer with juvenile court jurisdiction and other key youth justice stakeholders.
6. To support local needs and economies of scale, regional partnerships for implementation of programming are encouraged. For example, one agency could serve a group of geographically clustered counties or multiple agencies could join in an application for funding for service to a particular area.
7. To promote good stewardship of funds, planning activities should be encouraged as part of the timeline. The development of new or expansion of current programming should be data-informed and collaboratively undertaken. Some counties may be in more advanced states of readiness than others who require a more deliberate and intentional approach to how funds should be utilized.
8. The grant cycle will be two years with applications accepted at a frequency determined by ICJI with input from the YJOC.
9. The work of the GPW is ongoing and will continue in support of the YJOC and ICJI. It will be necessary for the work to evolve as programming outcomes become available, and priorities of other workgroups are identified.

Pursuant to I. C. 2-5-36-9.3(d), the YJOC is required to develop and submit a plan for the Juvenile Diversion and Community Alternatives Grant Programs and the Juvenile Behavioral Health Competitive Grant Program. Included in the plan shall be the YJOC's determination of 1) the amount of money dedicated to each grant; 2) the funding formula, accounting for the needs of both more rural and more populated communities; 3) the required set of performance measures that counties receiving the grants must collect and report; and 4) the process to streamline and manage the entire grant life cycle for all programs. Further, the plan shall define the parameters for use of the funds and allow a proportion to

be used for staffing, training, and administrative expenses to support the needs of rural communities with limited-service capacity.

II. The Plan

Funding Appropriation

As required, the plan was submitted in December 2022. In 2023, $5 million per year for the two-year budget cycle was appropriated to the Juvenile Diversion and Community Alternatives Grant programs and $20 million per year to the Behavioral Health Competitive Grant program for the same budget cycle. The funds are non-reverting and were made available for calendar years 2024 and 2025. The below represents the status of the funding appropriation as of November 30, 2025, and includes administrative costs incurred by ICJI.

Grant Fund	# of Grants Awarded	Amount Awarded	Amount Remaining
Diversion	34	$2,825,668.36	$7,174,331.64
Community Alternatives	18	$1,818,239.71	$8,181,760.29
Behavioral Health	26	$11,970,758.88	$28,029,241.12
Total	78	$16,614,666.95	$43,385,333.05

Funding Formula

2022-2025

The funding formula for the Juvenile Diversion and Community Alternatives Grant programs adopted by the YJOC in 2022 provided a base of $37,500 per year for each grant with additional amounts relative to county population.

County Population	Maximum Funding (two-year grant period, per grant category)
< 25,000	$90,000
25,000-50,000	$85,000
> 50,000	$80,000

2026

At its October 2025 meeting, a revised funding formula was adopted by the YJOC. The revision was in response to feedback both from grantees and stakeholders in counties who did not apply, indicating less populous, rural counties did not have capacity to manage grants, including the application itself, and fiscal and performance measures reporting requirements.

County Population	NEW Maximum Funding (two-year grant period, per grant category)
< 25,000	$150,000
25,000-50,000	$85,000
> 50,000	$80,000

The revised funding formula will be applicable with the first solicitation for applications in 2026 and allows for counties that have received some of the available amount to apply for what is remaining.

The Behavioral Health Grant program is a competitive model; therefore, there is no funding formula.

Performance Measures

Performance measures were adopted by the YJOC as part of the initial plan. However, some of these were not incorporated into the reporting requirements by ICJI and ICJI

included some that were not adopted by the YJOC. Additionally, feedback was solicited from grantees who reported difficulties in understanding what was being requested and access to some of the required information. The GPW convened a subcommittee to review and make recommended revisions to the performance measures. The table below describes the changes to the performance measures.

Reporting Requirement	2022-2025 Definition	2026 Definition	Responsible Entity
Participant Number	not included	unique identifier for youth assigned by grantee	grantee – required for all grants
County	not included	youth's county of residence	grantee – required for all grants
First Referral	not included	identification of youth as first or repeat referral to the program	grantee – required for all grants
Age	youth's age on date of referral to the program	same	grantee – required for all grants
Ethnicity	youth's self-identified ethnicity (Hispanic or Non-Hispanic)	same	grantee – required for all grants
Race	youth's self-identified race (categories consistent with most recent U. S. Census)	same	grantee – required for all grants
Gender	youth's self-identified gender	removed as requirement	N/A
Sex	not included	youth's self-identified sex	grantee – required for all grants
Referral Source	entity/Agency referring youth to program	same	grantee – required for all grants

Reporting Requirement	2022-2025 Definition	2026 Definition	Responsible Entity
Referral Process Point	decision point at which referral was made (pre-arrest, pre-referral to legal system, etc.)	same	grantee – required for all grants
IYAS Tool – Decision Point	Which IYAS Tool was used to determine risk level?	identification of IYAS Tool used to determine risk level	grantee – required for Diversion and Community Alternatives grants
IYAS Tool – Result	What was the risk level at the time of referral?	identification of risk level at time of referral	grantee – required for Diversion and Community Alternatives grants
Screening Tool	not included	identification of additional screening or assessment tool used to determine eligibility or appropriateness for the program	grantee – required for Behavioral Health grants
Screening Tool Result	not included	result of screening or assessment tool	grantee – required for Behavioral Health grants
Screening Tools Completed	# of screenings completed	same	ICJI – required for Behavioral Health grants
Youth Screened	# of youth who received a screening tool	same	ICJI – required for Behavioral Health grants
Formal Behavioral Health Assessment	# of formal evaluations completed	identification of whether an assessment was completed	grantee – required for Behavioral Health grants
Youth Assessed	# of youth who received a formal evaluation	same	ICJI – required for Behavioral Health grants

Reporting Requirement	2022-2025 Definition	2026 Definition	Responsible Entity
Referrals to Other Programs	Of the referrals received, # that resulted in a referral to another program or service	removed as requirement	N/A
Allegation/Offense Referred	offense, classification (misdemeanor, felony), and level	offense, classification (status, misdemeanor, felony), and level (1-6, A-C)	grantee – required for all grants
Delinquency History	Of the youth referred to the program, how many had previously been referred to the youth legal system?	prior to the current, alleged offense that resulted in the assignment to the program, any referral to the youth legal system	grantee – required for all grants
Referral Date	not included	date the youth was referred to the program	grantee – required for all grants
Enrollment Status	not included	at the time of report, identification of the youth's enrollment status (yes, no, in process)	grantee – required for all grants
Program Enrollment Date	not included	date of enrollment in the program	grantee – required for all grants
Referrals Received	# of referrals to the program	same	ICJI – required for all grants
Youth Referred	# of youth referred to the program	same	ICJI – required for all grants
Program Completion – Referrals	# of program completions	same	ICJI – required for all grants
Program Completion – Youth	# of youth completing the program	same	ICJI – required for all grants

Reporting Requirement	2022-2025 Definition	2026 Definition	Responsible Entity
Program Completion – Time	Of the completed referrals, how long (days) did it take from the date the referral was received to the date the program was completed? Report the average and median.	same	ICJI – required for all grants
Program Termination – Referrals	# of referrals that were terminated before program completion	same	ICJI – required for all grants
Program Termination – Youth	# of youth who were terminated from the program without completing it	same	ICJI – required for all grants
Alleged New Offense – Status	not included	referral to legal system for new allegation of delinquency from time of assignment to the program through six (6) months after program completion or termination	grantee – required for all grants
Alleged New Offense Date	not included	date of alleged new offense	grantee – required for all grants
Alleged New Offense	not included	offense, classification (status, misdemeanor, felony), and level (1-6, A-C)	grantee – required for all grants
Re-Offense – Referral	of the youth referred, # who were alleged to have committed a new offense within six (6) months of referral	same	ICJI – required for all grants

Reporting Requirement	2022-2025 Definition	2026 Definition	Responsible Entity
Re-Offense – During Program	of the youth who were referred, # who were alleged to have committed a new offense while in the program	of the youth who were enrolled, # who were alleged to have committed a new offense while in the program	ICJI – required for all grants
Re-Offense – Program Completion	of the youth who completed the program, # who were alleged to have committed a new offense within six (6) months of the date of completion	same	ICJI – required for all grants
Program Completion	not included	at the time of report, identification of the youth's completion status (yes, no, in progress)	grantee – required for all grants
Program Completion Date	not included	date of program completion	grantee – required for all grants

Process and Management

The plan developed in 2022 to streamline and manage the grant programs outlined a collaborative approach between ICJI and the YJOC, specifically the GPW. Guided by statute, the GPW convened members of the Department of Child Services (DCS), Department of Correction (DOC), Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA),Indiana Office of Court Services (IOCS), Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council (IPAC), Public Defender Council (PDC), and mental health practitioners to review grant applications and make funding recommendations to ICJI's Board of Trustees, as this is the process established when ICJI is identified as the grant administrator. The GPW began meeting quarterly to align with the solicitation cycle. This accelerated rotation allowed for robust feedback from grantees and potential applicants but prevented the GPW from working to improve processes or accomplish tasks to increase efficiency. In July 2025, the Application Review Committee was established to work adjacent to ICJI in making funding

recommendations. This allows the GPW to focus on process improvements to promote awarding funds that align with statutory purposes.

ICJI has worked independently and collaboratively with the GPW to identify barriers and solutions to fund distribution. Positive changes have occurred and continue to be explored to encourage potential applicants to apply. It is expected that funds will be fully encumbered by the end of 2026. Changes to the plan that support this goal include:

1. Revising the funding formula to increase the allocation to less populous/rural counties that struggle with grant management requirements. The original funding request was based on preparation for every county to apply for maximum eligibility. This has not occurred, and the revised funding formula re-distributes remaining funds to rural counties in alignment with statutory requirements.
2. ICJI is transitioning to a new grant management system. It is anticipated that the new system will be easier for users, which will address concerns about the complicated process raised as reasons some potential grantees have not applied. Additionally, the new system is more flexible, allowing for the removal of elements that are unnecessary for administering State funds. In the meantime, ICJI is significantly simplifying the application and reporting process.
3. ICJI is evolving their disbursement structure to align payments with documentation of services provided, rather than requiring proof of time worked or other oversight measures that do not demonstrate use of funds to support desired outcomes. This will encourage counties and agencies to apply that perceive or have experience with past arduous reimbursement processes.
4. As aforementioned, the GPW is recommending changes to the performance measures. The revisions allow for better quality in the data being reported so that outcomes can be analyzed and monitored.
5. As part of an expanded and intentional outreach effort, the revised application will be available to potential grantees before the solicitation opens. This will promote optimal preparation for completion of the application, as applicants will be able to ask specific questions during information sessions and in direct contact with ICJI and members of the GPW.

The GPW intends to continue its work to support the YJOC in implementation of the plan for the grant programs. The work will likely evolve as needs for process and efficiency improvements are identified.

III. Conclusion

The YJOC appreciates the opportunity to provide information about the plan for the grant programs. This has and will continue to require close collaboration with State agencies, particularly the ICJI. This collaborative effort will result in good stewardship of public funds that promote good outcomes for youth who encounter the justice system.

IV. Grants Process Workgroup Members

Doug Huntsinger, Co-Chair
INDIANA CRIMINAL JUSTICE INSTITUTE

Judge Lori Schein, Co-Chair
BOONE CIRCUIT COURT

Nancy Wever, Support Staff
INDIANA OFFICE OF COURT SERVICES

Amber Becker
FAMILY AND SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION/DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION

Aleanya Moore
INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION/DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES

Shelby Price
INDIANA OFFICE OF COURT SERVICES

Dr. Tami Silverman
INDIANA YOUTH INSTITUTE

David Westenberger
INDIANA YOUTH SERVICES ASSOCIATION