

Project Details

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- Click **SAVE** before navigating away from this page. Applicants must **SAVE** before proceeding or data will be lost.
- **Provide detailed and informative descriptions for each prompt. Follow the content instructions provided within the notice of funding opportunity closely.**
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to paste content into the text fields from a word processing document.

Project Overview

Project Title	<i>Establishing Intervention Prior to Juvenile Court Adjudication with a Youth Intervention Specialist</i>		
Project Abstract	<i>Based upon Kentucky's Juvenile Justice System Structure, the purpose of this funding request is to establish a collaborative partnership between the Department of Juvenile Justice and the courts to ensure innovative systemic improvements continue to encourage equitable outcomes for all system-involved youth. This will be accomplished through enhancements in data collection, case management, racial and ethnic disparity efforts, prevention services and training.</i>		
Grant Period Begin	10/01/2025	Grant Period End	09/30/2026

Proposal Narrative

Describe the proposed project to be funded through this grant opportunity. Follow the content instructions provided within the notice of funding opportunity.

A. Statement of the Problem

In 2014, Kentucky fundamentally transformed its juvenile justice system with the goal of improving outcomes for youth and families, protecting public safety, and controlling youth corrections costs (Thomas et al., 2025). Comprehensive reform legislation (Senate Bill [SB] 200) expanded and enhanced the state's pre-court diversion process administered by AOC. The new law limited county attorneys' authority to override diversion. It also directed AOC to implement evidence-based supervision practices and establish FAIR teams to provide enhanced case management for youth with behavioral health or unmet service needs. SB200 had an enormous impact on the CDW program and to examine how diversion reforms impacted case decision-making and outcomes for youth referred to intake on less serious offenses, FJS contracted with the Urban Institute to evaluate. Findings from the Urban report (Lawrence et al., 2020) indicated that not only more youth were diverted from formal court involvement compared with before the reform, but also that the state maintained its high diversion success rates (nearly 9 out of 10 youth completed diversion) and had no statistically significant change in recidivism in any eligible complaint category.

Some key findings from the Urban report, Assessing Juvenile Justice Reforms in Kentucky, include:

The rate of diversion increased for all youth after SB 200. Between 2014 and 2018, the proportion of all complaints not dismissed at intake that entered into diversion agreements increased from 45 to 58 percent. Increases were observed across all complaint types (including felonies), for boys and girls, and for youth living in every region of the state.

Youth referred to intake on first-time misdemeanor complaints—who had to be offered diversion after Senate Bill 200—were more likely to be diverted after reform and equally successful. Compared with a matched group pre-reform, youth referred to intake on first-time misdemeanor complaints after reform were:

- o Roughly twice as likely to be diverted,*
- o Significantly less likely to be detained or referred to court,*

- o Equally likely to complete diversion, and
- o Returned on a new complaint within a year at comparable rates.

Youth eligible for discretionary diversion were also more likely to be diverted and equally likely to complete diversion, with no statistically significant change in recidivism.

To lay additional foundation of FJS's work in juvenile justice prevention and to provide a current snapshot of programming, in CY 2024, the Court Designated Worker Program received 16,743 complaints, of which 3,636 were status and 13,097 were public offenses. Among complaints that closed during CY 2024, diversion was offered to 9,247 youth and the success rate was 90%. Two thousand five hundred ninety-eight (2,598) complaints were referred to the FAIR Team. Of those complaints referred to FAIR, 52% were successfully diverted. In total for CY 2024, 9,841 youth were either diverted from formal court or had their complaint dismissed.

B. Project Design and Implementation

See attached Kentucky Juvenile Justice Continuum: Intake to Disposition for project design and implementation.

FJS oversees the Court Designated Worker (CDW) Program which aids youth in avoiding the formal court system. In Kentucky, CDWs process complaints filed against a person younger than 18 prior to any formal court action. CDWs assist law enforcement with the custody process, conduct preliminary intake interviews, and investigate complaints. They offer youth who meet certain statewide criteria an opportunity to avoid formal court involvement by entering into a diversion agreement with specific requirements (e.g., requirements to participate in counseling or treatment, attend school, complete community service activities, abide by curfew, or pay restitution). CDWs provide case management and monitor youth throughout the diversion process. Additionally, FJS supports programs that address persistent problems in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems, including racial and ethnic disparities. The current structure of the CDW program does not allow for case management or intervention services for youth pre-disposition. With Title II funding, AOC would be afforded the opportunity to employ a youth intervention specialist (YIS) in a select project pilot site to offer direct services to youth pre-disposition through data collection, case management, racial and ethnic disparity efforts, prevention services and training.

C. Capabilities and Competencies

The project will be overseen by the department executive officer, with the youth intervention specialist (YIS) managing daily operations, including implementation, youth monitoring, case management, and stakeholder engagement. The YIS will be supported by the statewide operations supervisor, who reports to the juvenile services manager. A data supervisor will provide essential reports through the case management system, utilizing Tableau for analysis and visualization. A compliance supervisor may offer additional oversight, monitor progress and accountability. Defined roles, communication protocols, and regular team meetings will ensure effective execution and transparent decision-making.

D. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for Performance Measures

A data supervisor will utilize existing tools to build a database to house data for the pilot. This will include tracking data on the youth, family, case, and interventions by the youth intervention specialist. The database, partnered with the usage of Tableau, will allow the data supervisor to create data visualizations and provide analysis on the pilot's work and effectiveness.

A data supervisor will provide essential reports through the case management system, utilizing Tableau for analysis and visualization.

Proposal Citations			
Title/Description	Attachment		
Proposal Citations	Final 2022 Title II Proposal Citations 5.1.25.pdf		
Intake to Disposition	Final KY_JJ_Continuum.pdf		
Has applicant received funding through this grant program for this project in the past?	☐	Yes	☒ No
If yes, how many years has your organization received funding for this project?	0		