

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE**  
**Department of Health and Human Services**  
**INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION**

**DATE:** February 20, 2012

**TO:** Supervisor Lee Holloway, Chairman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Héctor Colón, Director, Department of Health and Human Services  
*Prepared by Eric Meaux, Administrator/ Chief Intake Officer – DCSD*

**SUBJECT: INFORMATIONAL REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, REGARDING AN UPDATE RELATED TO LOCAL SECURE PLACEMENT OPTIONS FOR ADJUDICATED YOUTH IN MILWAUKEE COUNTY**

**Background**

In response to a request from the County Board, the Division submitted an informational report related to the status of regional or local considerations for short-term secure placement options (See attachment A). The Director, Department of Health and Human Services, is now returning to the Board with a status update on this issue.

The 2011 – 2013 State Budget (Act 32) contained statutory language changes recommended and advanced by Chairman Lee Holloway that would allow a juvenile court the ability to place a youth in a local secure detention facility for a period of up to 180 days if authorized by a county board of supervisors. Prior to Act 32, the juvenile court was limited to a period of up to 30 days if authorized by a county board of supervisors. In addition to county board approval, placement of a youth adjudicated delinquent in a detention facility beyond 30 days “...the county department shall offer the juvenile alcohol or other drug abuse treatment, counseling, and education services...” as required by the newly created statutory language.

**Discussion**

As indicated in the October 2011 informational report, some counties were exploring options within their own facilities and Racine continues to operate their short-term secure option known as Alternatives to Corrections through Education (ACE). In addition, the Division highlighted a number of efforts considered to be “capacity building” that would both work toward more evidence based practices and in part support efforts to conduct a more detailed analysis of the option of using other regionally located secure detention centers versus our own facility.

The most notable of these efforts was the training and beginning provision of cognitive intervention practices and the use of a new risk and needs assessment instrument. In collaboration with Waukesha County and with funding provided by the Office of Justice

Assistance, the Division completed training in Cognitive Programming and Intervention practices (EBP) for a number of public and private agencies at the end of 2011. In anticipation of ensuring, to the extent possible, that placement programming services could begin and transition with a youth, Racine County participated in this training as well.

In addition, the Division has collaborated with Rock County to replicate the EBP, which also involves the training and implementation of a new risk and needs assessment instrument. The Division feels strongly that a new risk tool, that is more discerning in terms of criminogenic needs and identification of protective factors, needs to be implemented to ensure that youth identified for a local short-term secure placement option is based on sound decision making practices and does not result in “net-widening” which would be contradictory if the option is intended to be an alternative to corrections. This training is scheduled to begin in March 2012.

The Division has considered the merits of using the Racine County secure detention center versus developing capacity within our own facility, and at this time, we believe the best course is to pursue both options.

It is important to note that any short term local secure option is really just one of three important phases – Secure Placement, Transition, and Reentry. A key best practice to any removal from the community is that reentry planning begins at the time of initial placement. The primary reasons driving this decision are:

- All youth, like State corrections, will return to our community necessitating our continued and uninterrupted involvement and support.
- Maintaining local control and proximity to community and family members.
- Improved reentry service capacity by using local providers and reach-in services.
- Maintaining local school systems for educational programming continuity and decrease risk of credit loss.
- Leveraging of existing services and access to other revenue streams.
- Reduction of risk potential associated with trial visits.
- Improved oversight of entire service provision, that is, placement through reentry.

The following items were considered as necessary in the October 2011 information report to move toward a more local option. An update to the status of those items is provided below.

- Replacing recently vacant probation officer positions and supervisor already funded to apply appropriate risk reduction strategies.

**STATUS:** The Division is moving forward with the filling of a number of probation officer positions and a supervisory position to assist with the delivery of the contemplated placement option.

- Continue efforts to train both staff and community providers in Cognitive Programming and Intervention practices (EBP).

STATUS: The Division now has a number of staff and agency providers trained and currently using the EBP.

- Continue efforts to implement new risk and needs assessment instrument (EBDM) to ensure proper assessment/ target population control.

STATUS: The Division, as mentioned above, is on track to begin this training March 2012.

- Consider expansion of Targeted Monitoring Program and or explore electronic monitoring as needed to ensure proper reentry supervision.

STATUS: No update.

#### *Potential Youth to be Served*

In 2010, the Division experienced 138 youth that were placed in State Corrections. This does not include another 13 youth that were deemed Serious Juvenile Offenders (SJO). As originally conceived in 2009, this alternative option would target non-SJO youth that are at risk for State Corrections and did not have a reoffense. In 2010, this subpopulation represented 28% (n=39) of the placements. This would result in an average of three youth per month if all youth we deemed appropriate for this placement option. This average number of youth is maintained when applying 2011 data.

#### *Potential Services to be Delivered and Anticipated Implementation Date*

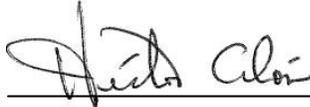
Attached is a draft flow chart of the service options that would be considered utilizing the Racine County secure detention center as well as developing existing local capacity (See attachment B). The Division still needs to coordinate and ensure support from the Presiding Judge regarding the general plan however informal discussions do not indicate any barriers.

In summary, youth that continue to present problematic behaviors resulting in a return to court and have already been found to be in need of more restrictive care would be targeted for the pilot. As an alternative to placement with State Corrections, youth would be placed in the secure detention facility for a period not to exceed 5 months with judicial progress review every 60 days. During this period, the listed anticipated services would be delivered based on an individualized case plan integrating areas identified through the youth's assessment. To the extent possible, services will be provided that will also continue during transition and reentry to the community. In the event that a youth is need of a more graduated transition, an existing alternative placement may be utilized. The Division is also recommending that electronic monitoring be available as part of the transition process to ensure adequate monitoring is provided as a means of mitigating risk and ensure public safety. Lastly, the Division, through new emerging information sharing collaborations with law enforcement would work in partnership to ensure all reasonable measures are taken to ensure public safety and success.

The Division believes it should be able to accomplish the necessary planning and tasks to provide this alternative in to the courts by July 1, 2012. The Division will return to the Board requesting any necessary approvals in the May 2012 cycle to take the necessary steps to plan and implement a local secure placement option.

**Recommendation**

This is an informational report. No action is necessary.



---

Héctor Colón, Director  
Department of Health and Human Services

cc: County Executive Chris Abele  
Tia Torhorst, County Executive's Office  
Terry Cooley, County Board  
Patrick Farley, Administrator - DAS  
CJ Pahl, Interim Assistant Fiscal and Budget Administrator  
Antoinette Thomas-Bailey, Fiscal & Management Analyst, DAS  
Jennifer Collins, Analyst, County Board Staff  
Jodi Mapp, Committee Clerk, County Board Staff  
Judge Marshall Murray, Presiding Children's Court