



TEXAS
JUVENILE JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT

Administrative Directive #1 FY 2023

To: TJJJ Employees and Juvenile Probation Departments
From: Shandra Carter, Interim Executive Director
Subject: Pilot Program
Date: September 1, 2022

Currently, youth who have been committed to TJJJ remain in detention facilities until there is space to admit the youth to TJJJ. The purpose of this administrative directive is to announce a pilot program that will allow TJJJ and county partners to work together to start youth in the TJJJ rehabilitative program while awaiting admission to TJJJ. The ability to start programming will apply to all youth, regardless of whether the youth is committed to TJJJ with a determinate sentence or as an indeterminate commitment. By allowing youth to start programming prior to admission, the amount of time the youth will need to remain in TJJJ to become program complete and earn release should be reduced.

As provided by law, youth with a determinate sentence receive credit toward the statutory minimum period of confinement for all the time the youth spends in a detention facility prior to admission to TJJJ. Youth without a determinate sentence (i.e., indeterminate commitments) are required to be assigned a minimum length of stay, which is the amount of time the youth is mandated by law to spend in TJJJ before being eligible for release on parole. This pilot, which will begin TJJJ programming before the youth is formally admitted, will allow TJJJ to count days the youth has spent participating in TJJJ rehabilitative programming while at a county facility toward the youth's assigned minimum length of stay. Upon the youth's admission to TJJJ, the youth's assigned minimum length of stay will be adjusted to reflect credit for all days between the date the youth begins the program and the date the youth is admitted to TJJJ.

The minimum length of stay is only one piece of what is required of a youth to earn parole. The youth must also complete the general rehabilitation requirements, complete assigned specialized treatment programs, and maintain behavioral expectations. All youth with an indeterminate commitment who do not meet all program completion requirements prior to the expiration of the minimum length of stay will be reviewed by TJJJ's Release Review Panel in accordance with existing policy.

This administrative directive remains in effect until further notice or until it is superseded by modifications to the General Administrative Policy Manual. Additional details of the pilot program are given as follows:

(a) **Purpose.**

The purpose of this administrative directive is to set out a pilot program that will allow TJJJ and county partners to work together to start youth in the TJJJ rehabilitative program while awaiting admission to TJJJ.

(b) **Applicability.**

This pilot program applies to youth who have been committed to TJJD but have not yet been transferred from a juvenile detention facility to a TJJD facility.

(c) **General Provisions.**

- (1) GAP.380.8702 allows TJJD to pilot new programs or program components for youth whose needs cannot be met by existing program components.
- (2) Youth are remaining in a detention facility for an extended period of time prior to transfer to a TJJD facility, and their treatment needs under TJJD policy cannot currently begin until they are admitted. To address this, TJJD will coordinate with each juvenile detention facility to begin TJJD rehabilitative programming at the juvenile detention facility after the youth has been committed to TJJD.
- (3) For youth committed to TJJD without a determinate sentence, the youth's minimum length of stay assigned under GAP.380.8525 will be adjusted to account for the number of days between the date of commitment to TJJD and the date of admission to a TJJD facility. TJJD intake staff are responsible for calculating this time and ensuring the adjustment is reflected in TJJD's records and case management systems. This applies to all youth admitted to a TJJD facility on or after the date of this directive, regardless of whether the TJJD commitment occurred before the date of this directive.
- (4) TJJD staff will ensure that youth are made aware that:
 - (A) the minimum lengths of stay will be adjusted as provided in this directive;
 - (B) completion of the assigned minimum length of stay is not a guarantee of release; and
 - (C) youth who have not met program completion by the expiration of the minimum length of stay will be reviewed by the Release Review Panel for possible extension, parole, or discharge.
- (5) The progress youth make in detention, as reflected on the documentation provided to TJJD, will be considered when assigning the youth to a stage in the TJJD rehabilitation program after admission to TJJD.