
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Senator Nancy Skinner, Chair

2017 - 2018 Regular

Bill No: AB 1488 **Hearing Date:** August 14, 2018
Author: Thurmond
Version: June 26, 2018
Urgency: Yes **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: SJ

Subject: *County Juvenile Transition Centers*

HISTORY

Source: Author

Prior Legislation: None

Support: Unknown

Opposition: None known

Assembly Floor Vote: Not relevant

PURPOSE

The purpose of this bill is to require every county, contingent upon funding, to convene a working group with stakeholders to discuss and assess what resources are needed for the creation or support of a juvenile transition center in the county that would provide housing and services to youth upon release from juvenile correctional facilities, and to provide temporary transitional housing and other specified services at the transitional center.

Existing law provides that any person who is under 18 years of age when he or she violates any law of this state or of the United States or any ordinance of any city or county of this state defining crime other than an ordinance establishing a curfew based solely on age, is within the jurisdiction of the juvenile court, which may adjudge such person to be a ward of the court, except as provided in Section 707. (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 602.)

Existing law establishes the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Division of Juvenile Facilities (DJJ). (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 1000.)

Existing law requires that the board of supervisors in every county provide and maintain, at the expense of the county, in a location approved by the judge of the juvenile court or in counties having more than one judge of the juvenile court, by the presiding judge of the juvenile court, a suitable house or place for the detention of wards and dependent children of the juvenile court and of persons alleged to come within the jurisdiction of the juvenile court. Provides that such house or place be known as the “juvenile hall” of the county. (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 850.)

Existing law generally prohibits the juvenile hall from being in, or connected with, any jail or prison, and provides that it not be deemed to be, nor be treated as, a penal institution. Provides that juvenile hall be a safe and supportive homelike environment. (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 851.)

Existing law requires that the juvenile hall be under the management and control of the probation officer. (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 852.)

Existing law provides that juvenile ranches or camps may be established in order to provide appropriate facilities for the housing of wards of the juvenile court in the counties of their residence or in adjacent counties so that those wards may be kept under direct supervision of the court, and in order to more advantageously apply the salutary effect of a safe and supportive home and family environment upon them, and also in order to secure a better classification and segregation of those wards according to their capacities, interests, and responsiveness to control and responsibility, and to give better opportunity for reform and encouragement of self-discipline in those wards. (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 880.)

Existing law provides that the county of commitment shall supervise the reentry of any ward still subject to the court's jurisdiction and discharged from the jurisdiction of DJJ. (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 1766, subd. (b)(1).)

This bill requires each county to convene a workgroup with stakeholders, including, but not limited to, community organizations, law enforcement, health officials, and juveniles who have been released from juvenile correctional facilities and their families, to discuss and assess the resources that are needed for the creation or support of a juvenile transition center in the county.

This bill requires the transition center to provide housing and services to youth upon release from juvenile correctional facilities.

This bill requires county juvenile transition centers to provide temporary transitional housing to participants, and to also provide participants with services, including, but not limited to, assisting with education, work training, health and mental health services, family and social services, and legal services.

This bill requires counties to work with other county, local, and state programs, as well as nonprofit organizations, to provide services and to coordinate services to the maximum extent possible.

This bill requires that residential and other services be made available to all eligible juveniles, but release, parole, or probation shall not be made conditional upon residing at, or receiving services from, a center.

This bill provides that counties are only required to implement this chapter to the extent that funds are available from the state or from other sources.

This bill includes an urgency clause.

COMMENTS

1. Need for This Bill

According to the author:

Since 1980, California has built 22 new state prisons and just 1 new university. Furthermore, California spends \$10,291 per K-12 student and a staggering \$62,300 per prison inmate. This begs the question, what are we doing to invest in education, rather than incarceration?

According to a report by the state Division of Juvenile Facilities (DJF), 70% of youth paroled from its institutions were re-arrested within 2 years, many for serious crimes. DJF also documented extremely high rates of mental health disorders (approximately 70%) and substance abuse histories (exceeding 80%) for its release populations.

This bill is necessary in order for juveniles in the community to receive services related to education, work training, health and mental health services, family and social services and legal services. Most importantly the services provided will help reduce recidivism. By allowing each county to convene a workgroup with stakeholders, this bill takes a localized approach so that counties are able to assess the resources that they have for the creation or support of a juvenile transition center and discuss best practices.

2. Juvenile Reentry

Juvenile reentry is a term commonly used to describe the reintegrative services provided before and after the release of youths in out-of-home placements, such as DJJ and juvenile hall, to facilitate their return to their home and community. Research on the area of juvenile reentry emphasizes the importance of a smooth transition from an institutional to community setting. (<https://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/litreviews/Aftercare.pdf>.) Several entities may be involved in juvenile reentry, including probation, mental and behavioral health service providers, the juvenile's school, and the juvenile's family members, as well as other community-based service providers. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's literature review on juvenile reentry notes four areas which can significantly impact reentry and which should be considered in reentry planning: mental health and substance use treatment, family engagement, targeted educational and employment programs, and housing. (*Id.* at p. 3.)

The federal Second Chance Act of 2007 provides grants to government agencies and non-profit organizations with the goal of facilitating reintegration of adult and juvenile offenders into the community. Over 840 grants have been awarded since 2009, and the U.S. Department of Justice estimates that over 164,000 have been served by programs funded by the Second Chance Act. (https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/July-2018_SCA_factsheet.pdf.) Grants have been used to provide employment services, substance abuse treatment, housing, and mentoring, among other things.

Several agencies and organizations in California have received Second Chance Act grants. For example, the Juvenile Collaborative Reentry Unit (JCRU) was established in 2009 as a Second Chance Act National Demonstration Project Site and aimed at addressing the historically high

recidivism rate of youth exiting out-of-home placements in San Francisco, (<http://www.cjcj.org/Direct-services/Juvenile-Collaborative-Reentry-Unit.html>.) The program provides comprehensive reentry case planning and reentry services. Due to its success in reducing recidivism among program participants, JCRU was formalized and made permanent in 2012. Now known as the Juvenile Reentry Court, the Reentry Court team is comprised of the Superior Court, Juvenile Probation Department, Office of the Public Defender, Private Bar Panel, Office of the District Attorney, and the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice. (<https://www.sfsuperiorcourt.org/sites/default/files/images/Juvenile%20Reentry%20Court%20fact%20sheet%20MARCH%202014%20FINALFINAL.pdf?1529020800035>.) Each entity also works closely with youths and their families.

This bill seeks to build upon existing collaborative models for juvenile reentry such as the one discussed above by mandating that each county convene a workgroup with appropriate stakeholders to discuss and assess the resources that are needed for the creation or support of a juvenile transition center within the county. This bill specifies that a transition center must provide temporary transitional housing and various services, including assisting with education, work training, health and mental health services, family and social services, and legal services. However, implementation of the requirements in this bill is only required to the extent that funding is available from the state or from other sources.

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