

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND RETENTION OF JUVENILE DETENTION PROFESSIONALS

STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:

The most valuable resource in the juvenile detention field is a highly qualified, committed, and professional workforce who will implement programs and provide meaningful services for detained youth. Juvenile detention facility administrators identify critical problems or challenges in the ability to effectively recruit, select, and retain a stable, professional workforce in detention facilities. Failure to recruit and retain quality individuals into the juvenile detention profession will result in the diminishing of helpful services provided to detained youth.

NATURE OF THE ISSUE:

The juvenile detention field experiences a high degree of staff turnover that inhibits the development of a consistent team and often negatively impacts the delivery of effective detention services and the ability to provide a safe, secure environment for youth.

Frequent staff turnover in the juvenile detention field presents a significant fiscal challenge to facilities due to increased overtime during the periods of staff vacancies, additional training expenditures, administrative time spent conducting the recruiting and selection process.

The juvenile detention field needs to identify the selection strategies of hiring practices that contributes to the development of a productive, effective, and stable professional workforce.

POSITION STATEMENT:

The National Juvenile Detention Association (NJDA) recognizes that, in order to meet the professional expectations set forth in the "Definition of Juvenile Detention", facilities should develop and implement effective staff recruitment, selection, and retention strategies to ensure a stable, professional workforce.

NJDA strongly advocates for increasing the professional standards of juvenile detention practitioners by providing a myriad of staff development opportunities, technical assistance, professional journals and publications, conferences/workshops, certification programs, etc. devoted to the wide range of facility personnel.

NJDA encourages the development of sound management practices in juvenile detention facilities that create a positive, productive work environment, provides meaningful incentives for positive performance, and ensures adequate compensation for juvenile detention professionals.
