

THE PARTNERSHIP

National Partnership for Juvenile Services

PARTNERS

*Council for Educators of At-Risk and
Delinquent Youth*

Juvenile Justice Trainers Association

*National Association of Juvenile Correctional
Agencies*

National Juvenile Detention Association

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

2220 Nicholasville Road, Suite 110-333
Lexington, KY 40503
t ~ 859.333.4209
f ~ 888-282-8549
www.npjs.org

LEADERSHIP

Wayne R. Bear, MSW (PA)
Chief Executive Officer / President

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Appointed Representative – Legal Services

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Court Services

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Michael A. Jones (KY)
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*Supporting the Transformation
of Youth, Families, Staff, Agencies, and the
Juvenile Justice System toward a Safer
and More Productive Future*

Supporting Continuity of Operations in Secure Settings during COVID-19

During the current state of emergency, NPJS is **not** advocating for the wholesale release of youth, because of public safety concerns. However, NPJS is advocating for the following immediate steps to be taken:

1. Incentivize the use of valid detention risk assessments to ensure that secure-detention is only mandated for youth that present a high risk to community safety.
2. Incentivize the use of non-secure detention for moderate risk youth who have high needs which make community-based or in-home alternatives inappropriate.
3. Incentive the use of in-home and community-based alternative programs for those youth that are low, moderate or high-risk where community safety can be maintained.
4. Make available funds for juvenile justice service providers to ensure that they can maintain high-quality direct care staffing, security and medical support. As the current pandemic impact evolves, we expect increasing challenges to maintain appropriate staffing and support. Additionally, we anticipate many high-risk youth will not be eligible for alternative programming (even if exposed or showing symptoms of the coronavirus). To ensure youth, staff and public safety, our programs will need additional support and resources including funds to pay staff who may be restricted for health reasons and to incentivize workforce growth to supplement a workforce diminished by COVID-19.
5. Provide a swift implementation of secure video visitation to allow families, professionals, and attorneys to contact youth without requiring in-person visits thus adhering to CDC and World Health Organization's recommendations for social distancing to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19 from the wider community.

We also believe that many of our facilities already have established protocol to ensure the safety of youth and staff to the best of their ability.