



## JJPOC Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2022  
2:00pm-3:30pm  
Zoom Conference Call

### Attendance:

Marc Pelka	Tais Ericson	Sarah Eagan
Maurice Reaves	Christine Rapillo	Derrick Gordon
Anthony Nolan	Susan Hamilton	Vernon Beaulieu
Gary Winfield	Brian Casinghino	
Christina Quaranta	Vannessa Dorantes	<b>TYJI Staff:</b>
Erica Bromley	Ken Mysogland	William Carbone
Macklin Roman	Desi Nesmith	Erika Nowakowski
Patrick Callahan	Angel Quiros	Donna Pfrommer
Anne Dauphinais	Derrick Molden	Susan Cusano
Hector Glynn	Amy Marracino	Patrick Saley
Martha Stone	Lisa Sementilli	Shauntaye Monroe
Catherine Osten	Astread Ferron-Poole	
Judge Patrick Carroll	Chief Joshua Bernegger	
Judge Dawne Westbrook	Gwendolyn Samuel	
Greg Howard		
Gary Roberge		

### Welcome and Introductions

Undersecretary Marc Pelka welcomed everyone into the meeting.

OPM welcomed the community expertise members, AFCAMP, Full Circle, and CTJA.

### Acceptance of JJPOC Meeting Minutes

Undersecretary Marc Pelka asked for a motion to accept the February 20, 2022, JJPOC meeting minutes. The motion was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.

### Preliminary 2021 Motor Vehicle Theft Trends and CT Presentation

The preliminary 2021 motor vehicle theft data has indicated the decrease in motor vehicle thefts in 2021 when compared to 2020. Before the pandemic, Connecticut had the fewest number of auto thefts on record. The increase was significantly less than the record high of over 26,000 in 1991. The preliminary data was received from the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection; however, the data is currently incomplete. The data set that was used was a



combination of preliminary data provided by state police and CompStat data that can be publicly accessed from individual police agencies. The department was able to take the preliminary data received in 2020 and determine how much outstanding data there was for each to the time it was finalized. This gives a general range of what the data at the end of the year will be based on preliminary data, it is conservatively projected that 2021 will have ended with a decrease in motor vehicle thefts by anywhere from around 4% to 10%; however, reporting is expected to change over the coming months due to updated data. There has been a downward trend in auto thefts, including a historic low in 2019. There was a spike from 2019-20, but significantly less than the rates seen in the early 90s. According to Departmental CompStat data the increase in motor vehicle thefts began simultaneously in Connecticut and nationally in April and May of 2020, which was the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the CT auto theft rate is presently elevated, it is still less than the national average. There was question asking why the pandemic led to an increase in thefts, it was stated that April of 2020 is when there was a substantial increase in auto thefts and the only thing that changed between March and April of 2020 was COVID-19. Schools shut down, young people are no longer at school to go to or after school programming. Court's ability to process cases and offer services to individuals. Policing changed; departments were suffering from low shortage of staff as people were out due to COVID trying to reduce their contact with the general public because of COVID. From 2018-2020, the percentage of auto theft cases involving minors has remained stable, it has remained between 30% and 35% for under the age of 18, and about 60 to 70% 18 to 24. It was emphasized that COVID has changed the landscape where many children are almost raising themselves at the same time having to raise siblings. It is important to engage with these youth, their families, and their communities to help them.

## **Presentation Concerning Use of Chemical Agents**

As a result of the 2021 legislation, the Connecticut DOC is required to submit a chemical agent report to the juvenile justice and policy oversight committee every February. Beginning this year, the DOC research unit and MYI administration have worked to compile all the pertinent information and provide the JJPOC with the report from June 4th, 2021, through February 1st of 2022. The report reflected information pertaining to the youth in our care with regards to chemical agent usage, respiratory issues training, and programming at the Manson youth institution.

The information showed a total of 47 members of the population that were underage 18, 46 were MYI and one juvenile that was a resident at York CI. The racial demographic breakdown was roughly 9% white, 17% Hispanic, and 74% black. The age breakdown was five members were 15 years old, 14 of them were 16 years old, 27 were 17 years old and the population at York is 16.



There were a total of eight incidents that required a chemical agent to be utilized, of those eight incidents there were 19 individuals exposed to the chemical agent. The racial breakdown of the chemical agent utilization was high, and it leans heavily towards the members of the population that are black, but most of the youthful offender population are black, so the numbers represent the breakdown of the demographic. Through the period of June 4th, 2021, to February 1st, 2022, there were 34 violent incidents in the facilities. Out of those 34 incidents, staff responds through verbal intervention to stop the actions of the individual. 76% of the time staff were successful, however during 8 of the incidents, verbal intervention was not successful and to prevent further injury chemical agents were used and those who were exposed were decontaminated.

When chemical agents are utilized, the staff are going into it and observing and assessing the situation for the safety of all participants., At the time of this review period there were 47 youthful offenders on the compound, 75% of all offenders under the age of 18 were classified as having a mental health need score of a three or higher. The Connecticut Department of Correction utilizes an objective classification system, a scoring system based upon mental health service needs. It ranges from one to five; where one being there is no mental health interventions utilized at this time and five meaning that there is a crisis level of care. Mental health three is the highest percentage at 58%. The definition is mild mental health disorder which may or may not be on psychoactive medication, meaning that these young adults or anybody within the Connecticut Department of Correction would be considered a general population inmate. There were three mental health scores, 12 with the mental health score of a three, 3 individuals with a mental health needs score of two, and one individual of a mental health needs score of one. It was emphasized that at the highest level of mental health care, crisis level, there were no incidences of chemical agents being utilized. Regarding residents that have had an active respiratory diagnosis, five of the 19 had a current respiratory diagnosis out of all the residents but, none of them required follow-up medical attention due to respiratory distress. There is always medical attention on site within minutes to ensure the youth are taken care of immediately and safely. The DOC is collaborating with many state and local stakeholders, such as holding meetings and trainings with the Office of Early Childhood Education, DCF, and CCA. One of the newest opportunities is partnering with SAMHSA Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation Program. Staff also get sent to the TRUE Unit three days a week to bring in new culture. The DOC participates in restorative justice circles which were able to have resumed in person, where the clinical team and treatment staff meet with the young adults on a weekly basis to talk about anything that's going on in their lives. There were some young adults participating in addiction services. there is also SMART Recovery and tier one which addresses all needs and brings their families in so that there was a dual approach of combining clinical services and the families to help these young adults beat any addiction.



The DOC tried to create a council that mirrors on what they participate in the JJPOC committee so, the population provided on proposals for changes, provided on ideas on things that could be done better, and things that they think that is being done well. There was also the creation of a men's group that runs weekly, it which gives them the opportunity to express their thoughts and concerns with the management, their relationships, goals, anything they wish to talk about. Most of the youth in the facility know each other and have prior issues but now, since they are confined to the same space tensions arise much quicker so, most of the fights start from disagreements and trash talking but, they do their best to separate the youth that have problems. Every instance of chemical agent usage was spontaneous and the DOC's definition that means that they did not have an opportunity to plan or look for an alternative measure to diffuse the incident. There was a question about medical attention when there is an evening incident, there is a 24-hour medical unit that's available fully equipped to address any issue that comes up and if there is an incident that requires more medical assistance, there is an assisted facility which is across the street. It was requested to continue this conversation next month to let everyone in the meeting ask their questions. There were multiple concerns regarding the DOC and their chemical agent usage as well as mental health help, poor education, and the exclusion of partners being allowed into the DOC whether it was in person or virtually. The DOC stated that COVID caused some roadblocks but, are willing to virtually meet with these agencies again.

## **Update on JJPOC Raised Bill No. 387**

The bill received a public hearing on Monday containing several of the JJPOC recommendations from last year including the DCF requested language about the education unit, adding additional members to the committee from the community expertise workgroup, the pedestrian stop report from the racial ethnic disparities work group, as well as the diversion for juveniles with certain infractions in low level charges from the IOYouth process.

**Next Meeting: April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022. 2:00PM-3:30PM**