



# LENGTH OF STAY TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Application Packet

For more information, please contact Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators at [info@cjja.net](mailto:info@cjja.net)

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## I. Introduction

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition that youth involved in the juvenile justice system thrive best when they are in their own homes and communities, supported by those who love them and who have an interest in seeing them grow and develop into responsible adults. While time-limited residential placement may help maximize public safety and, in some cases, provide other positive outcomes for certain youth, system staff and partners must always be mindful of the impact that residential placement can have on youth's development and their ability to maintain positive connections to their families and communities.

Systems interested in producing the best outcomes for youth and communities need to pay particular attention to how youth experience residential treatment—including both the length of time they are away from their homes and social supports, as well as the nature and quality of the services and approaches in the programs themselves. During this time, adults caring for young people have the opportunity to help youth disrupt undesired behaviors, establish new pathways of thinking and seeing the world, and develop the types of skills and pro-social support networks that ultimately will help them succeed. Significant consequences can occur if there is a failure to make the most of this time away.

In February 2019, a robust discussion among participants in a Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators (CJJA) message group developed about how different states were studying or modifying length of stay, with many planning to revisit their approaches to these decisions. CJJA reached out to the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy (CJJR) and The Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew), and the three organizations consequently asked juvenile justice administrators if they were interested in exploring length of stay with a series of multi-state convenings, data analysis coaching, and other technical assistance. There was a great deal of interest, and to that end, we convened five state and local jurisdictions during 2020 and 2021 to participate in the Length of Stay Policy Academy in order to examine LOS and address the factors that contribute to it.

Following that successful engagement, we now offer the Length of Stay Training and Technical Assistance (LOS TTA) Program. The goal of the LOS TTA is to guide and support teams from state and/or local jurisdictions to examine and address policies, practices, and other factors contributing to length of stay in post-adjudication placements and to develop and implement strategic plans to improve outcomes for young people in those placements. The LOS TTA will expose participants to key research findings, case studies, and lessons learned from systems across the U.S., and will challenge participants to commit to strengthening their system practices and policies to ensure that every youth receives what is needed to position them for long-term success in an appropriate time frame.

For this program, length of stay refers to the entire time a youth spends out of home in a custodial status after adjudication, residing in detention pending placement, or in a youth correctional facility, residential treatment facility, residential aftercare program, or group home prior to returning home or being released from custody.

The LOS TTA builds on Pew's commitment to helping states use data-driven and research-informed approaches to solve challenges in juvenile and criminal justice. The program also rests on the decades of experience of CJJR and the CJJA in delivering high-quality training and technical assistance to juvenile justice systems across the country on research-based and data-driven policies and practices to improve outcomes for youth. Through support from The Pew Charitable Trusts, this opportunity is offered free of charge for two selected jurisdictions.

## II. Training and Technical Assistance Description

The LOS TTA will occur between July 2022 and June 2023, and will be comprised of virtual training (pre-recorded and live presentations), monthly jurisdictional technical assistance calls, support for action plan development, feedback on written products, and site visits. Selected jurisdictions will participate in a joint live-kick-off session (virtually) in July 2022. The session will provide an overview of the LOS Training and Technical Assistance Program, goals of the program and team's objectives, guidance on data collection, and action plan overview. Separately, TA providers will also meet with each team coordinator early in July.

After the kickoff, jurisdictions will receive intensive virtual training and technical assistance from their assigned TA providers. In addition, through pre-recorded presentations and live virtual sessions, participants will examine how to address factors contributing to length of stay in post-adjudication placement and then will develop and implement plans to strengthen policies and practices affecting length of stay.

The tentative schedule of virtual training and activities is outlined below:

### July 2022

- LOS Team Lead Orientation
- LOS TTA Kick-off (live session)
- Positioning Youth for Success: Addressing Length of Stay (live session)

### August 2022

- Overview of Research-based Guiding Principles (live session)
- Addressing Disparities in LOS (live session)
- Aligning Developmentally Appropriate Programming and Treatment Services, Effective Dosage, and Length of Stay (pre-recorded presentation): In this session presenters will discuss the various components of effective programming and treatment services and provide opportunities for teams to analyze and discuss their current service array and identify opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of those programs.
- Disparities in the Assessment of Treatment Success (pre-recorded presentation): In this pre-recorded presentation, presenter discusses ways to measure treatment progress of youth in custody, while avoiding disparate treatment of and outcomes for youth of color.

### September 2022

- Discussion about current approaches to length of stay and their data findings (individual call with lead TA provider)
- Critical Data Collection: Understanding What Drives Length of Stay and Targeted Solutions (pre-recorded presentation): In this recording, presenters will introduce how jurisdictions can use data to examine potential drivers of length of stay, identify targets for change, and fashion adjustments to policy and practice to address these targets.

### October 2022

- LOS Reform and Culture Change (2 live sessions): Two jurisdictions will share their stories pertaining to LOS reform and the importance of culture change (staff buy-in, communicating with youth and their families, including external stakeholders, policy and training development)

**November 2022**

- Draft Action Plan due to TA provider
- Using Behavior Motivation Systems to Support Appropriate Lengths of Stay (pre-recorded presentation): Traditionally, a youth's length of stay in a facility was determined based on the severity of the crime they committed. However, a more progressive and developmental approach would calibrate the youth's length of stay according to the development of critical skills (e.g., managing anger and conflict, decision-making, emotional regulation) along with the use of these skills to refrain from violent institutional misconduct. This module will discuss how behavior motivation systems can be deployed to support a length of stay that reflects the youth's skill acquisition and ability to manage their own behavior.

**December 2022**

- Site visit to jurisdiction by assigned TA providers
- Communications and Messaging (live session)

**January 2023**

- Finalized Action Plan
- Discussion of Action Plan (individual call with lead TA provider)

**February 2023**

- Implementation check-in (individual call with lead TA provider)
- Additional presentations (pre-recorded or live session), in response to participant interests

**March 2023**

- Implementation check-in (individual call with lead TA provider)
- Additional presentations (pre-recorded or live session), in response to participant interests

**April 2023**

- Site visit to jurisdiction by assigned TA providers

**May 2023**

- Implementation check-in (individual call with lead TA provider)
- Additional pre-recorded presentations, as identified

**June 2023**

- LOS TTA closing session (live session)

As identified above, participants will receive distance technical assistance (TA) from CJJR, CJJA, and relevant subject matter experts to help them implement their plans and projects. Additionally, TA providers will participate in up to three site visits in the participating team's jurisdictions. The focus of the site visits will depend on the team's action plan and needs. TA will provide help the teams develop and implement plans that establish new policies and practices; identify and advance best practice strategies for adopting them; train staff and stakeholders to promote their buy-in and collaboration; and assess, evaluate, and sustain progress.

The Length of Stay Training and Technical Assistance Program seeks to promote a juvenile justice system that is:

- equitable and fair,
- comprehensive, collaborative, and strength-based,
- therapeutic,
- trauma-informed,
- the least-restrictive necessary for the safety of the youth and the community,
- community-based,
- individualized and developmentally appropriate, and responsive to individuals' disabilities,
- engaged with families and communities and encourages positive youth and family experiences and outcomes,
- research-based, and predicated on validated assessments,
- data-informed and outcome-driven.

Each of these principles will be woven throughout the curriculum and technical assistance.

### **III. Data Collection**

At the inception of the program, participating jurisdictions will provide data relevant to length of stay that will inform their Action Plan development. Additionally, the jurisdictions will provide information regarding their statutes governing release authority, areas of needed technical assistance and support. These activities will allow teams to begin to assess their current policies and practices and enable TA providers to align their assistance with the needs of participating jurisdictions.

### **III. Action Plan and Later Activities**

As a critical part of the LOS Training and Technical Assistance Program, teams will develop an Action Plan laying out the concrete strategies they plan to implement in their jurisdiction to address length of stay and improve outcomes for youth, families, and communities. Each team should dedicate ample time to develop a detailed and thoughtful Action Plan that positions the jurisdiction to achieve its identified goals. systems they seek to tackle. The Action Plan should be a detailed, concrete proposal that each team will have dedicated planning time to develop and refine during the initial phases of the program.

Each team should also identify a point of contact and assign a coordinator (this may be the same person) to help organize the work and keep the team on track. We expect that this role may constitute 25% or more of a FTE for a mid-level manager. Jurisdictions are encouraged to select a coordinator who has broad knowledge about juvenile justice system organization and sufficient authority within the juvenile justice system to be able to guide a reform effort effectively.

### **IV. Cost for Participation**

The Length of Stay Training and Technical Assistance will be conducted virtually. There is no fee for participating in the program. However, we encourage jurisdictions to consider compensating the youth

and/or family member of the team and anyone else who is not paid through their employer for their time working on the project.

## V. Selection Criteria

A total of 2 multi-disciplinary teams composed of up to 15 members will be selected for participation in the LOS TTA. Each team must include representatives from the following constituencies:

### **Required Team Members** *(please contact us if you have questions or concerns about these categories):*

- Juvenile justice agency director or most senior juvenile justice leader in the jurisdiction
- Juvenile justice agency facility director (e.g., deputy director over facilities; facility superintendent)
- Clinical/treatment director
- Data manager/analyst (a senior-level individual with an understanding of the jurisdiction's juvenile justice system activities and current data collection capacity, as well as operational knowledge of data, performance measurement, and quality assurance)
- A youth currently or formerly involved in the juvenile justice system and/or a family member
- Leader from an entity with release authority (e.g., representative from the courts, parole board, juvenile justice agency)

In addition to the required team members, participating jurisdictions may wish to include the representatives listed below.

### **Other Potential Team Members:**

- Child welfare agency representative
- Communications leaders (e.g., Public Information Officer)
- Defense attorney
- Facility operations manager
- Facility principal/education leader
- Judge
- Juvenile justice and/or disability rights advocate
- Leaders from community-based organizations
- Legislative and/or executive representative (e.g., legislator/legislative staff, representative from Governor's office/County Executive's office)
- Prosecutor
- Reentry Manager/Transition Planner
- Service/program providers
- Training director/coordinator

The LOS TTA will be open to all jurisdictions, but preference will be given to teams that have the ability to impact length of stay, including those who most directly control decisions regarding release. Note that we welcome both state and local applicants, or some combination thereof. While the recommendations detailed above should guide team composition, the exact composition of the teams, including differences in state and local job titles, will depend on the jurisdiction applying. Further, any significant differences from the guidance provided should be explained clearly within the application. The strength of team composition will also be considered within the context of the team's goals.

Successful applicants will propose teams composed of individuals who hold decision-making authority within their agencies and the ability to influence the successful implementation of the Action Plan.

**VI. Application Guidelines**

Applications will be accepted until 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, June 1, 2022 (in the applicant’s local time zone). Applications must be completed and submitted to CJA via [info@cja.net](mailto:info@cja.net).

Once you have submitted your application, you should receive an email confirmation within 24 hours. If you do not, please contact us at [info@cja.net](mailto:info@cja.net).

**VII. Application**

*Please submit your responses to the following in a Word document. Attach the document to your application submission via email to [info@cja.net](mailto:info@cja.net).*

**KEY DATES**

**Application deadline:**  
Friday, June 10, 2022  
at 11:59 p.m.  
(Eastern time zone)

**Notification of acceptance:**  
  
End of June 2022



## **PART I: Contact Information, Professional Biography, and Personal Statement**

*All applicants are asked to provide a short professional biography suitable for sharing with other participants. In addition, each applicant is asked to provide a statement of one paragraph describing the reason that the individual wishes to participate in the program, and the role that the individual expects to have in the jurisdiction's efforts to address length of stay.*

## **PART II: Essay Questions**

*Teams should prepare one joint submission of the essay questions and designate one team member to submit the completed document. Responses to the essay questions (Part II) must be submitted as a Word document. While the length of responses to each question may vary, the total length of all essay question responses combined should be no longer than 5 single-spaced pages.*

1. What does your team hope to achieve by participating in this program? This response should reflect the entire team's goals rather than individual members. When describing your goals, please provide any relevant data regarding the issues your team seeks to address.
2. Please share:
  - a. Which organization/agency has legal release authority in your jurisdiction?
  - b. Which organizations/agencies have influence over release authority, and how do they influence release?
  - c. What types of post-adjudication facilities are used to serve youth in your jurisdiction (e.g., agency-operated vs. contracted, level of security)?
3. Do you have the ability to collect data on youth commitment for the past 5 years including the following figures?
  - a. Total number of commitments to post-adjudication facilities
  - b. Total number of post-adjudication facilities (detention center, group home, residential treatment center, long-term secure facility, etc.)
  - c. Total number of recommitments
  - d. Total number of commitments for violation of probation
  - e. Total number of commitments by risk level
  - f. Average number of prior adjudications at time of commitment
4. Does your jurisdiction have the ability to break down the data in question 3 by committing offense or violation, demographics (sex/gender, race/ethnicity, age, mental health diagnosis, special education status, child welfare status), geography, and/or risk level?
5. Do you have the ability to collect data on length of stay for the past 5 years, including:
  - a. Average commitment LOS
  - b. LOS by risk level
  - c. Average LOS by sex/gender
  - d. Average LOS by race/ethnicity
  - e. Average LOS by race/ethnicity and sex/gender
  - f. Average LOS by age
  - g. Average LOS by special education status
  - h. Average LOS by mental health diagnosis
  - i. Average LOS by child welfare status
  - j. Average LOS by most serious charge level
  - k. Average LOS by most serious charge type
6. Please describe one juvenile justice system reform effort that members of your team have undertaken in the past two years that required partnerships with other agencies, systems,

community groups, youth and/or families. Describe how the team worked together on the effort and outcomes realized as a result of the effort.

7. Please identify any anticipated challenges to addressing LOS reform in your jurisdiction (e.g., staff resistance, staff shortages/position vacancies, stakeholder opposition, pandemic/crisis management).
8. Please describe any efforts/reforms that have been made in the past two years to promote racial equity in your juvenile justice system, including efforts within your facilities. Describe successes and challenges and how you intend to prioritize the advancement of race equity in your efforts to address LOS.
9. Please describe any efforts/reforms that have been made in the past two years to improve conditions for youth with disabilities involved in your juvenile justice system, including efforts within your facilities. Describe successes and challenges and how you intend to prioritize improvements for youth with disabilities in your efforts to address LOS.
10. Please describe your team composition, specifically detailing the role and importance of each team member in terms of your team's overall goals. Does your team composition include youth and/or their families and community resources? If yes, please outline their anticipated role in the team, whether you intend to compensate them for their time, and how you expect to orient and support their active participation in the team. Please also share if there are other key leaders who are not included on the team but will need to buy into or support your team's efforts to impact length of stay in your jurisdiction.

## **VII. About the Partners**

### **Center for Juvenile Justice Reform**

CJJR supports leadership development and advances a balanced, multi-system approach to reducing juvenile delinquency that promotes positive child and youth development, while also holding youth accountable. A central component of CJJR's work is the provision of dynamic training and technical assistance programs designed to support system officials, partners, and stakeholders at the state, tribal, and local government levels to advance balanced, multi-system approaches to service delivery and system improvement. Housed in one of the most prestigious universities in the country at the Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy, the Center is in a unique position to provide strong and sustained national leadership in identifying and highlighting the research on policies and practices that work best to reduce delinquency and achieve better outcomes for this nation's children. To learn more about CJJR's work, visit <http://cjjr.georgetown.edu/>.

### **Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators**

The Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators (CJJA) is a national non-profit organization, formed in 1994 to improve local juvenile correctional services, programs and practices so the youths within the systems succeed when they return to the community and to provide national leadership and leadership development for the individuals responsible for the systems. CJJA represents the youth correctional CEOs in 50 states, Puerto Rico and major metropolitan counties. CJJA fulfills its mission through educational activities and programs as well as research and technical assistance projects. To learn more about CJJA, visit <http://CJJA.net/>.