



# MAINE JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY GROUP

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## WHO WE ARE

The Maine Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG) is the State Advisory Group (SAG) established under the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (JJDPA), which was most recently reauthorized in 2018 and has been codified in Maine law (Title 34-A M.R.S. §1209). The JJDPA sets out national standards for the custody and care of youth in the juvenile justice system and provides direction and support for state juvenile justice system reforms to improve youth outcomes and community safety. SAGs are comprised of volunteer members appointed by the Governor/Chief Executive in each U.S. jurisdiction and membership is determined by the federal statute and must include certain identified stakeholders who have training, experience, or special knowledge concerning the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency, the administration of juvenile justice, or the reduction of juvenile delinquency, including persons with lived experience in the justice system. The Act, administered through the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), also provides for staff support to assist the JJAG in carrying out its functions. Maine's JJAG currently has two staff housed at the Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC). The JJAG member list can be found at: <https://www.jjagmaine.com/members/>

## WHAT WE DO

The JJAG provides policy direction and participates in the preparation and administration of the state's federal funds available through the JJDPA. The JJAG is also responsible for supporting compliance with the core protections of the law and providing information about the Act's requirements to state and local policymakers. The JJAG's main functions are described below:

### **Ensure compliance with the JJDPA's four core protections.**

To receive federal funding, a state must maintain compliance with the four core protections of the law as follows:

- Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders – Ensure that youth whose actions would not be considered offenses if they were adults are not held in secure confinement. The most common examples of status offenses are skipping school, running away, breaking curfew, and possession or use of alcohol.
- Jail Removal – Ensure that youth are not held in adult jails or holding facilities, with very limited exceptions including before or after a court hearing (6 hours), in rural areas (24 hours plus weekends and holidays), or in unsafe travel conditions.
- Sight and Sound Separation – Under the limited exceptions above, ensure that youth do not have contact with adults who are under arrest or incarcerated. Youth cannot be housed next to adult cells, share dining halls, recreations areas, or other common spaces with adults, or be placed in any circumstances that could expose them to threats or abuse from adult offenders.
- Racial and Ethnic Disparities (formerly Disproportionate Minority Contact) – States are required to assess and address the racial and ethnic disparities of youth at all points in the justice system - from arrest to detention to confinement.

**Develop a comprehensive 3-year plan that provides a strategy for utilizing federal funds in Maine.**

The JJAG is required to develop the *State of Maine Three Year Comprehensive Plan* for how it will use its allocation to improve juvenile justice in Maine.

- The state plan must reflect the allowable activities outlined in statute, which include investment in community-based alternatives to incarceration, training for system stakeholders, and a range of programming to meet the needs of system-involved youth or those at risk of system involvement.
- State allocations are calculated according to the number of people under age 18 in the state, with a guaranteed minimum allocation of \$600,000 annually. Funding is withheld for non-compliance with the core protections and related statutory requirements.
- In Maine, funds are distributed in accordance with the state's three-year plan and related annual updates. Allocations over \$5,000 must be issued following requests for proposals (RFAs) or upon approved sole source contract. Small grants of under \$5,000 may be approved by the JJAG.
- The JJAG also provides financial and performance measures reports to OJJDP and the Governor annually.

**Serve as a resource on issues that affect youth and families involved with Maine's juvenile justice system.**

- Educate citizens, legislators and others on policy and practice in the juvenile justice system.
- Support research and programs that enhance efforts to prevent and reduce delinquency, divert youth from court when appropriate and ensure fair and effective treatment and rehabilitation of all youth involved in Maine's juvenile justice system.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

Maine JJAG webpage: <https://www.jjagmaine.com/>

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention: <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/about/legislation>

Coalition for Juvenile Justice (national association of state SAGs): <http://juvjustice.org/about-us>

**SUPPORTED PROJECTS/GRANTEES (2016-2022):**

- [2020 Maine Juvenile Justice System Assessment](#) - Report by the Center for Children's Law and Policy (CCLP).
- **COVID-19 Immediate Response Fund/Regional Care Teams** – Initiative administered by MDOC in cooperation with USM's Cutler Institute and the Center for Youth Policy & Law at Maine Law, The Opportunity Alliance, and WINGS) - Dedicated resources to support youth in community and reduce use of confinement. <https://placemattersmaine.org/regional-care-teams/>
- **Aroostook Band of Mi'kmaq** - Cultural Recovery program. (Ongoing 2025 Contract)
- **Stop Trafficking US** - Keeping Maine Kids Safe Conference to prevent child sexual abuse.
- **Restorative Justice Institute of Maine** - Direct service restorative justice programming. (Ongoing 2025 Contract)
- **Learning Works** - Restorative justice training.
- **Maine Youth Court** - Expansion of programming to Lewiston/Auburn.
- **Westbrook Police Department** - Anti-bias training for law enforcement.
- **Town of Paris Fire Department** - Juvenile Fire Safety Program.

- **Town of Oxford Fire Department** - Oxford County Juvenile Fire Safety Program.
- **Urban Institute** - Assessment of Maine's juvenile justice related data capacity.
- **Long Creek Youth Development Center Conditions Assessment** - Audit by the CCLP.
- **An Initiative to Develop a Sustainable Restorative Juvenile Justice System** - Report by Community Justice Network of Vermont and continued support for a state wide Juvenile Restorative Justice Council.
- **Maine Juvenile Restorative Justice Council** - Contract with BUILD to establish the Council and provide on- going support.
- **Maine Sheriff's Association** - Support for School Resource Officer Summit.
- **Learning Works** - Purchase of transportation van for youth programs in Cumberland and York Counties
- **Maine Inside Out** – Performing arts and support group for formerly confined youth. (Contract ended 2024)
- **My Life My Choice** – Sexual exploitation prevention program in Lewiston.
- **Aroostook County Action Program** - Support for education on ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences).
- **(Ongoing 2025 Contract)**
- **Passamaquoddy Tribe** - Language and heritage programs.
- **Maliseet Tribe** - Cultural support for youth. **(Ongoing 2025 Contract)**
- **Restorative Justice Institute of Maine** - Restorative Justice services in 13 Maine communities.
- **Tree Street Youth** - Longley Pilot School Program in Lewiston.
- **Old Orchard Beach Police Department** - Juvenile Community Review Board **(Ongoing OOB 2025 Contract)**
- **Maine Coalition for the Advancement of Child and Adolescent Mental Health** - Assessment of child and adolescent psychiatric services in Maine.
- **Collaborative for Perpetual Innovation** - Creating Positive Climate for Youth annual Maine conference.
- **Understanding Adolescent Brain Development and the Impact of Trauma** - Karen Williams, MSSW, presentation for juvenile justice professionals.
- **Mindbridge** - Maine Human Rights Summit. **(Ongoing 2024 Contract)**
- **G.E.A.R. Parenting Network** - Maine delegation presented work being done in Maine at Florida conference.
- **Strategies for Youth** - “Policing the Teen Brain” Training for law enforcement throughout Maine. **(Ongoing 2025 Contract)**
- **Aroostook County Community Action** - Restorative justice programming. **(Ongoing 2025 Contract)**
- **New England Council on Crime and Delinquency** - Support for Maine conference.
- **Youth Justice in Maine: Imagine a New Future** - Support for Maine conference.
- **Center for Perpetual Innovation** - Support for Maine conference.
- **School Crisis Response** – Program administered by Maine Inside Out to work with Lewiston Middle School and other community partners to reduce suspensions and expulsions. **(Contract ended 2024)**
- **Youth Led Justice** – Support to build capacity and serve more youth in their diversion program.
- **Tree Street Youth** – Support for a cultural engagement mentor to reach families in the community before encountering the juvenile justice system as part of collaboration with MDOC. **(Ongoing 2025 Contract)**
- **Strategies for Youth** – Presentation at 2021 School Safety Summit on best practice MOUs for police and school systems. **(Contract Ended 2024).**
- **Carter Development Group** - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Bias training for the JJAG Board. **(Contract ended 2024).**
- **Mindbridge** – Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Bias training to all MDOC employees working with youth at Long Creek Youth Development Center, JCCOs and contractors working in LCYDC. **(Contract ended 2024).**
- **SMART MOVES (Skills, Mastery, and Resilience Training); SMART GIRLS; Passport to Manhood, Healthy Habits, Positive Action, Triple Play; Be There, Healthy Relationships Workshop** – Evidenced Based Program taught by the Boys and Girls Clubs of Border Towns to the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet and Spiyak tribes in Maine.
- **Youth Network/Young People's Caucus at USM** - Programming to support youth engagement and youth-adult partnerships within systems and on issues that impact youth and young adults and the development of youth leadership skills to foster participation in agency and organizational boards, including the JJAG.
- **National Indian Youth Summit (2022)** – Provided funds for 5 adult tribal council members and 6 youth tribal council members to attend a national summit and learn from other tribes about strategies and interventions that they can bring back to help their own tribes. Mi'kmaq, Maliseet and Spiyak tribes were represented.

- **Regional Care Teams Regions 1,2,&3, \$20,000**-Ongoing contract supported by JJAG and matched in funds by MDOC 2020- 2025.
- **Maine Immigrant & Refugee Services awarded by RFA 2023 each year \$25,000**- This grant was to assist MEIRS in their Circle of Care programs. This program will remain ongoing through 2026 if they continue to show capacity growth.
- **New England Arab American Organization awarded by RFA 2023 \$25,000**– This grant was to create and expand a girls afterschool program. This program remains ongoing through 2026.
- **Boys & Girls Town of Border Towns awarded by RFA 2023**- to support a mentor for the Cultural Engagement Mentors who interact with the youth on all three Wabanaki Citizens Clubs on tribal land. This program remains ongoing through 2026.
- **Micmac Cultural Engagement Mentor \$64,000** – this 2-year program provided a cultural engagement mentor for this tribal Boys & Girls Club to bring in culture, history, storytelling, language and arts to this tribes children.
- **Maliseet Cultural Engagement Mentor \$64,000** - this 2-year program provided a cultural engagement mentor for this tribal Boys & Girls Club to bring in culture, history, storytelling, language and arts to this tribes children.
- **Learning Works \$5,000** – this grant was to train 4 new restorative justice facilitators.
- **Maine Immigrant & Refugee Services \$5,000** – To pay for youth’s summer internship jobs within their own communities.
- **New England Arab American Organization awarded by RFA \$5,000** To pay for a 4-week Arts class to help family and youth cope with the mass shootings in the Lewiston area.
- **Youth Led Justice \$5,000**- To pay for expansion of youth led restorative justice program.
- **Downeast Restorative Justice \$35,000** – to pay for money that Hancock County cancelled out of the towns budget.
- **Midcoast Community Collaborative RFA 2023 \$50,000** – funding to help them set up a referral system within their counties to be able to better serve youth at risk and families in crises. Funding will continue through 2026.
- **OutMaine RFA 2024 \$24596.00**- To support licensed mental health worker to facilitate a support group for LGBTQ+ youth in the Bath area.
- **Smooth Feather \$5,000** – To pay for youth created movie, regarding Social Anxiety. This project use youth as the screen writers, directors, actors, editors and final production of music on these movies.
- **Smooth Feather awarded by RFA \$25, 000** – To pay ½ of the Director’s salary so he can continue his projects with the community’s youth, as well as the work he does in school and in the community that he resides in.
- **MidCoast Youth Center and Skatepark \$24000** – to facilitate a LGBTQ+ support group at their building. While this support group will build skills, they will also expose youth to every other month outings of their interests and some that may occur in LGBTQ+ Community spaces.