

# Legislative Fact Sheet—2006

The Mission of the Division of Juvenile Justice is to:

- Hold juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior
- Promote the safety and restoration of victims and communities
- Assist offenders and their families in developing skills to prevent crime

*The Division follows a restorative justice model that supports public safety by holding juveniles accountable for their behavior.*

*The Division uses a variety of graduated incentives and sanctions with the expectation that juveniles must personally take part in restoring and repairing the harm caused to victims and communities as a result of their behavior.*

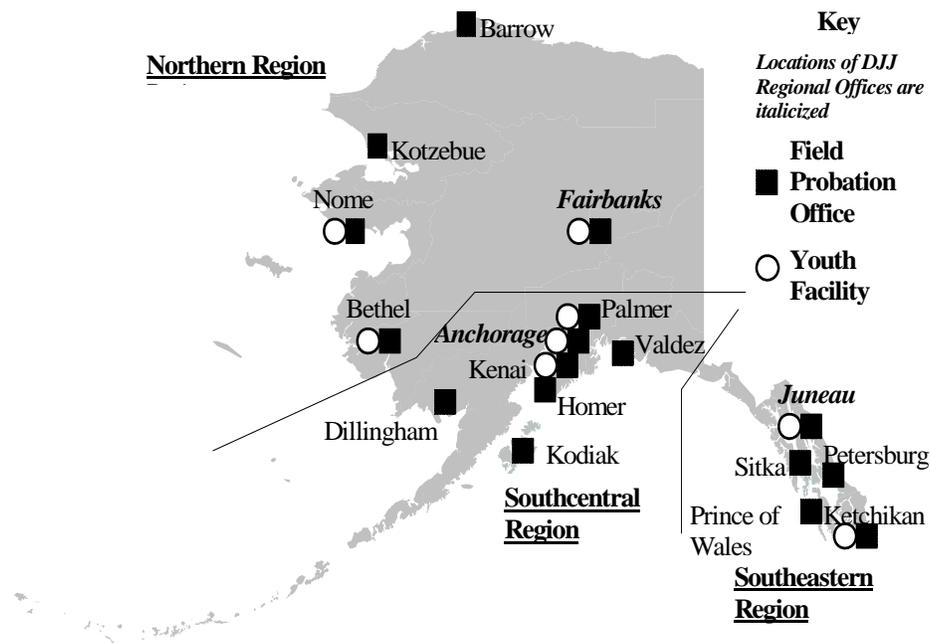
*The Division also works to prevent crime by supporting competency and skill development for juveniles so that they will have alternatives to law-breaking behavior.*



ALASKA DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

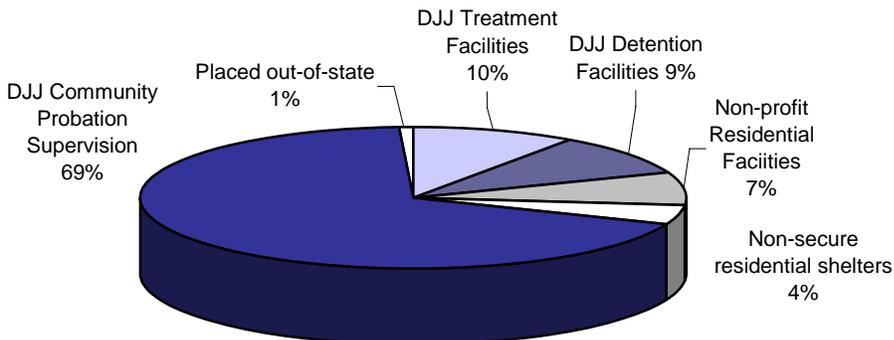
Phone: 907-465-2212  
www.state.ak.us/hss/djj

## Alaska's Juvenile Justice Facilities and Offices



The Division of Juvenile Justice administers eight youth facilities and 17 juvenile probation offices around Alaska. The probation officers working in the Division's field offices provide the initial, front-line response to reports of juvenile delinquency from law enforcement. Youth facilities provide secure detention for youths who have been charged with an offense and are awaiting a judgment on its outcome. Youth facilities in Bethel, Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau also provide treatment services for youth who have been committed to longer-term confinement.

### How Are Youth Who Are Involved in Alaska's Juvenile Justice System Supervised?\*



\*Based on a one-day count of the 1,351 juveniles in the Division's custody or supervision on 2/4/05. In FY 05, a total of 3,972 juveniles were referred to the Division.

# System Improvements Underway at the Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice

*In 2006, the Division of Juvenile Justice is targeting its efforts on the following needs:*

- ⇒ **Developing a Quality Assurance System.** The initiatives underway since 2003 will be meaningless without a process to analyze the data they generate and improve our effectiveness. The Division needs a quality assurance system to ensure that its practice improvements are sound and that the data they generate are accurate and properly inform our decisions.
- ⇒ **Maintaining Public Safety through Offender Accountability.** As the Division continues efforts to identify early those individuals who pose a risk to public safety, adequate resources at the “front end” of the juvenile justice system are crucial. Adequate probation staffing is needed to provide intake and assessment functions and enable cost-effective management of juvenile offenders in the community.
- ⇒ **Infrastructure Needs.** All of the accomplishments described in this update were implemented with existing resources. To incorporate these programmatic improvements into standard practice, the Division needs to ensure that its facilities, field offices, and MIS system are adequate and appropriate. Infrastructure problems identified include:
  - ◇ **JOMIS (Juvenile Offender Management Information System):** Inadequate capacity to ensure quality data and allow exchanges of information with law enforcement.
  - ◇ **McLaughlin Youth Center:** Inadequate space for juvenile probation services and medical facilities, major deterioration in some treatment cottages.
  - ◇ **Bethel Youth Facility:** Detention overcrowding and inadequate space for intake and assessment of juveniles.
  - ◇ **Fairbanks Youth Facility:** Lack of probation office space, meeting rooms for families and community service providers.
  - ◇ **Safety and Security:** Insufficient or inadequate gear (body armor, radios, handcuffs, metal detectors) to ensure safety of staff and youths.
  - ◇ **Mat-Su, Kenai, Bethel Youth Facilities:** Lack of outdoor recreational space for resident recreation during inclement weather.
  - ◇ **Miscellaneous Maintenance Needs** for DJJ youth facilities, such as plumbing and ventilation systems.

## **WHAT IS THE “SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PLAN?”**

*In 2003, the Division of Juvenile Justice launched an effort to ensure that Alaska has a juvenile justice system that uses resources effectively and efficiently to achieve desirable outcomes. The intended result is a balanced, information-based juvenile justice agency where decisions are based on data collection and review. Some accomplishments:*

- ✓ **Adoption of the Detention Assessment Instrument (DAI),** a risk-based, structured decision-making tool to assist professional staff in determining whether to place youths in secure detention beds statewide.
- ✓ **Improved use of Treatment Units as a Statewide Resource.** Consolidation of two treatment cottages at Anchorage’s McLaughlin Youth Center and procedural changes around the state have allowed treatment beds to be managed as a statewide rather than regional resource.
- ✓ **Development of Non-Secure Detention Resources,** such as non-secure shelters, foster care, and electronic monitoring for youth who do not pose a risk to the community that requires secure detention.
- ✓ **Enhancement of Transitional Services** for youths making the difficult transition between long-term confinement and return to their home communities.
- ✓ **Participation in Performance-based Standards (PbS),** a national, ongoing quality-assurance process to ensure the delivery of safe and effective services in juvenile facilities.
- ✓ **Adoption of the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI),** an internationally recognized and validated instrument for identifying those youth at high risk of re-offending and the case management they need to end their criminal behavior.
- ✓ **Implementation of Aggression Replacement Training (ART),** a highly regarded curriculum proven to change behavior of youth demonstrating chronic aggressive behavior.