



Baltimore City Strategic Partnership

December 2022

In the Report on the Fiscal 2023 State Operating Budget (SB 290) and the State Capital Budget (SB 291) and Related Recommendations - Joint Chairmen's Report, 2022 Session, page 224, the budget committees requested the Department Juvenile Services (DJS) submit a report detailing the operations of the Baltimore Strategic Partnership.

Governor Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr. and the Department of Juvenile Services announced the new Baltimore City Strategic Partnership in December 2019 with the goal of improving juvenile justice system interventions and supports for young people and their families. The Baltimore City Strategic Partnership engaged Baltimore City juvenile justice system stakeholders including DJS, the Baltimore City Mayor's Office, the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office, and the Baltimore Police Department (BPD).

The partners began meeting in January 2020 to develop a plan to identify new policies, practices and

programs designed to improve collaboration between justice system stakeholders and achieve positive youth outcomes.

Unfortunately, early in March 2020, the COVID pandemic and health crisis required the partners to focus on supporting a continuity of operations in their respective agencies. However, even with the extreme difficulties facing each agency, a commitment remained to continue to move forward in implementing strategies aimed at improving juvenile justice system interventions.

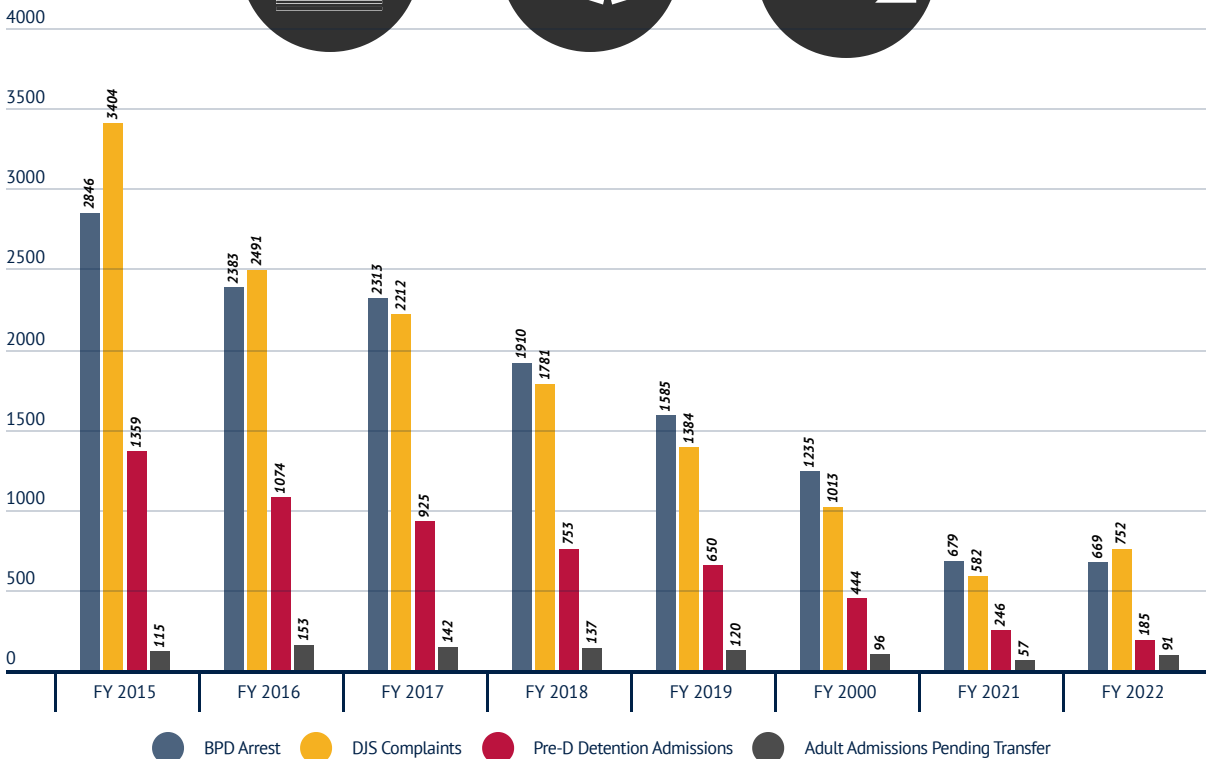
As the State and agency operations evolved through the pandemic, collaborative efforts have continued, although not directly through the "Strategic Partnership."



Data Trends

Baltimore City Data

Baltimore City has experienced sustained declines in youth arrests, complaints, and detention utilization between FY2015 and FY2022.



The number of complaints referred to DJS between FY 2015 and FY 2022 declined significantly from 3404 complaints in FY 2015 to 752 complaints in FY 2022. Along with the decline there have been changes in the proportion of where complaints are generated, the percentage of complaints diverted, and the classification of offenses.

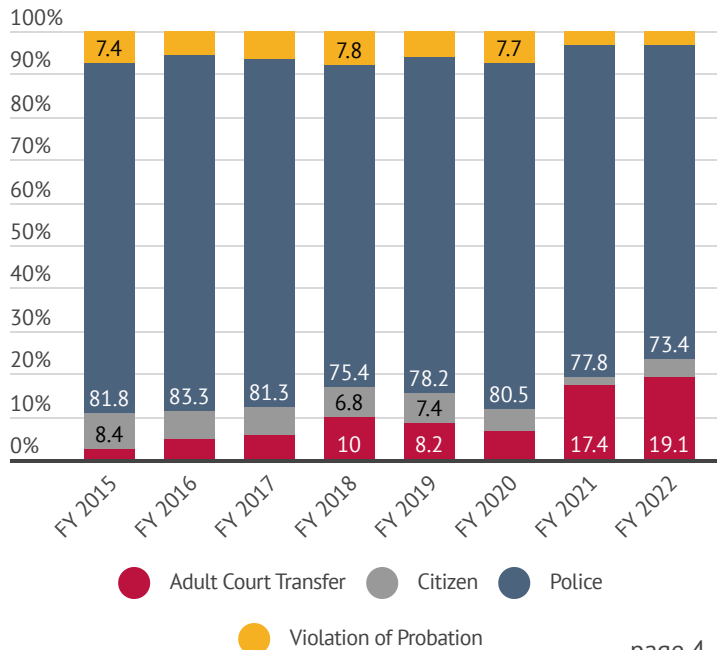
Even with the number of complaints declining between FY 2015 and FY 2022, the proportion of complaints referred to DJS as a result of a youth charged as adult case being transferred from the adult court to the juvenile court is increasing.



Youth Charged as Adults

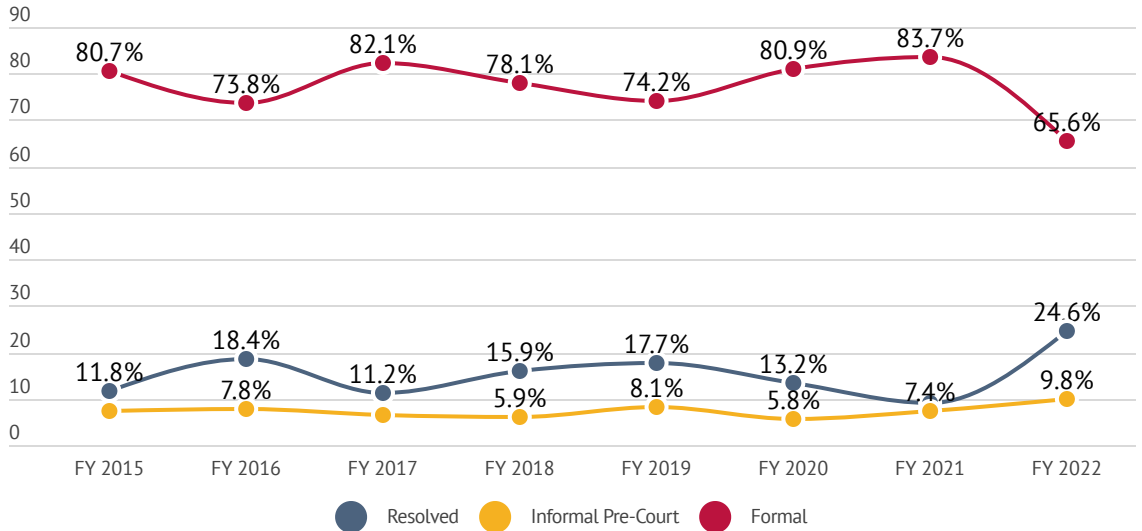
Youth as young as 14 are charged as an adult, if charged with first degree murder or rape. Youth 16 and older are charged as adults when alleged to have committed a crime of violence, misdemeanor handgun possession, and other felony offenses. Eligible youth charged as adults may request a Judge to transfer their case from the adult court to juvenile court. Md. Code, Courts and Judicial Proceedings, 3-8A-03.

Baltimore City Complaint Source, FY 2015 - FY 2022

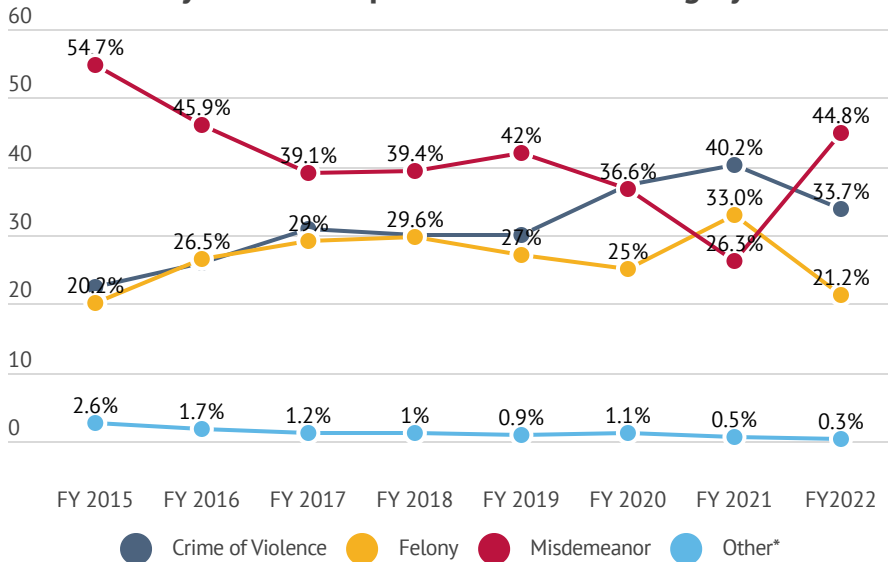


The graph below illustrates that along with the overall declines in complaints between FY2015 and FY 2022, a greater percentage of complaints were diverted in recent years. DJS diverts complaints from formal court processing after conducting a youth risk and needs assessment, consulting with the youth's family, and advising the victim. DJS diversion is achieved either by resolving a complaint, either with or without services, or placing the youth on a period of pre-court supervision to receive identified services and interventions.

Baltimore City Case Forwarding Decisions FY 2015 - FY 2022



Baltimore City Intake Complaints - Offense Category FY 2015 - FY 2022



Complaints for crimes of violence and other felony offenses in FY 22 make up less of all complaints than in the previous 2 years.

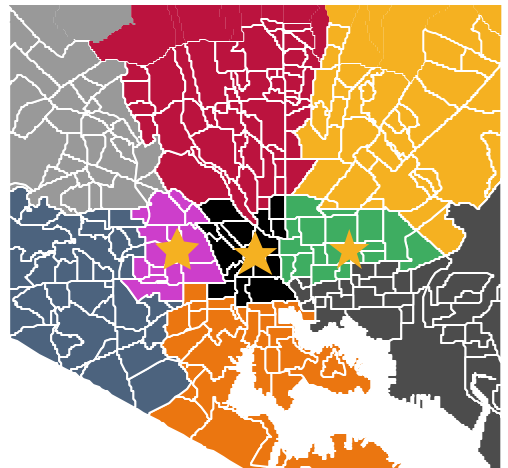
Baltimore City Collaborative Strategies

The Baltimore City Strategic Partnership has not operated as a formal collaborative since the Covid pandemic required agencies to focus on essential functions to maintain a continuity of operations. However, even though the partnership has not operated as intended, Baltimore City juvenile justice stakeholders continue to work together implementing shared strategies directed toward:

- developing pathways for cross-agency information sharing and coordination;
- partnering with City led violence prevention strategies;
- maintaining and improving warrant apprehension efforts.
- increasing diversion opportunities; and,
- improving case management operations.

DJS/BPD Liaisons

Beginning in January 2021, DJS embedded community case managers in three Baltimore City police districts with the greatest need for cross-agency information sharing and coordination. In addition to the DJS staff at BPD Headquarter, Liaisons are placed in the Western, Central and Eastern District Intelligence Centers. Each position strengthens agency collaboration and supports effective public safety and youth engagement initiatives. To date, DJS is able to utilize current staff and no additional resources are required. DJS plans to place an additional Liaison in a BPD District in FY 2023.



Baltimore City Police Districts

★ DJS/BPD Liaisons

- northern
- southwestern
- northeastern
- northwestern
- southeastern
- central
- southern
- eastern
- western

Western District Side Step Pre-Arrest Diversion Program

SideStep was developed by the residents and community organizations of West Baltimore, in collaboration with justice system partners, to respond to the needs of youth and families in their own community. Instead of arrest and formal referral to the justice system, SideStep offers young people suspected of certain unlawful behaviors a meaningful opportunity to avoid the harms of the justice system. SideStep provides young people with transformative assistance from trusted community-based organizations to improve their lives and help them reach their full potential. Currently in its' pilot phase, SideStep aims to demonstrate an effective model for community-based pre-arrest diversion that can be replicated throughout Baltimore City.

With the leadership of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (MONSE), DJS and the BPD developed policies and protocols to launch the pilot in January 2021. DJS provided the city with \$100,000 to support the program.

Case Management Improvements

ROCA, an anti-violence program, provided training/technical assistance to a team of frontline case managers, supervisors, and leadership, to develop an emerging adult unit within the DJS community supervision team in Baltimore City. This unit provides supervision and support services to older youth that are considered at high risk and who are not currently engaged or compliant with their treatment service plan. This project recognizes that young people at the greatest risk often move between systems and that cross-training, collaboration, and a commitment to serving older youth are critical factors in improving outcomes and safeguarding public safety. ROCA received grant funds from the Annie E. Casey Foundation to support this training and program development. Since the 2020 update, ROCA has trained all DJS community staff in ReWire, a Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT) approach to supporting youth while on community supervision. Moreover, DJS received a \$1million federal grant to support ongoing coaching and training Statewide. The training and community supervision reforms will take place over the next three years. The FY 2023 budget allowance includes a \$2 million grant to support ROCA operations in Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

Partnering with Violence

Prevention Initiatives

- **After Shooting Protocol**

The after shooting protocol is a strategy led by Roca Baltimore and in partnership with with DJS, BPD and DPSCS. The team works with local hospitals to connect young people to community-based supports and interventions after a non-fatal shooting event. The process leverages each agency's current outreach protocols, and ensures that victims are supported to mitigate the risk of future victimization and/or retaliation.

- **Group Violence Reduction Strategy**

DJS is an active participant in the Mayor's Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS). GVRS is an approach that facilitates direct, sustained engagement with the small number of group-involved individuals through a partnership of community leaders, social service providers, employers, law enforcement, and other system stakeholders. DJS is currently working with partners in the Western District to review incidents of violence and develop community based plans to disrupt violence and improve community safety. DJS is committed to supporting additional GVRS sites.

- **Warrant Apprehension Strategies**

DJS and the BPD's Warrant Apprehension Task Force (WATF) jointly implement protocols aimed at intervening with non-

compliant youth with GPS/Electronic Monitoring conditions, youth who have AWOL'd from placement, and those who have an active warrant.

- **Curfew Visits**

DJS and BPD jointly visit youth on DJS intensive supervision and youth challenged with complying with the conditions of their electronic monitoring court orders. The curfew visits take place in selected districts four times a month, and DJS and BPD officers aim to engage with youth in the community and support positive change to achieve supervision compliance.



Commitment to Continuing Baltimore City Collaborative Strategies

The Baltimore City Strategic Partnership, announced in 2019, initiated a renewed multi-agency commitment to identify pathways to achieve meaningful collaboration and information sharing. As the Partnership evolved over the past three years to a more informal structure, the continued engagement is evident through the sustained operational initiatives aimed at reducing violence and supporting the needs of young people and their families.

DJS is committed to continuing to work together with public safety partners, stakeholders, and community voices in supporting the current strategies and developing shared responses to the dynamic and changing needs of Baltimore City Community.

References:

Data included in the report and DJS case processing information can be found in the Department of Juvenile Services "Data Resource Guides." <https://djs.maryland.gov/Pages/Data-Resource-Guides.aspx>