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MARYLAND
Department of
Juvenile Services

Successful Youth • Strong Leaders • Safer Communities

Department of Juvenile Services Customer Service Annual Report



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FY19 Highlights

- The Department of Juvenile Services' (DJS) Office of Family Engagement created family engagement toolkits to help DJS facility staff have productive and meaningful family visitation events at its secure facilities. From January 2019 to the time of this publication, over 1,690 youth and their family members have participated in family activities at DJS facilities.
- In FY19, DJS's Family Peer Support Initiative was implemented in five Maryland jurisdictions: Anne Arundel County; Baltimore City; Baltimore County; Prince George's County; and Wicomico County. Through this customer-focused, DJS youth and families in those jurisdictions were linked to "peer supports" to help guide them through the juvenile justice process and connect them to services in the community. At the time of this publication, 167 families have been referred to the Family Peer Support Initiative throughout the five jurisdictions where the program currently operates.
- DJS administered its first Employee Satisfaction Survey in March 2019. The Survey, a validated instrument developed at the University of South Florida, was provided online to DJS employees so they could provide anonymous feedback. With almost half of all DJS employees completing the survey, the data was then compared to other employee satisfaction data collected nationally from other public service agencies.
- In March 2019, DJS implemented a Statewide pilot program to recognize and award DJS employees for going "above and beyond" in their service to DJS youth and families. Through an online nomination process and a Committee of DJS staff to conduct a peer-review of the nominations, 13 DJS employees were selected for their outstanding work. In June 2019, those 13 employees were awarded Secretary Citations by Secretary Abed before nearly 200 DJS employees at the agency's annual conference.
- DJS continued to use its website and social media platforms to promote events, job postings and recognize staff.

Recognition Given to Employees

Governor's Citation – Award presented by Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford at DJS's Annual Conference on June 06, 2019.

Recipient:

Tyra Kenly – Cecil County

Secretary's Citation – Going Above and Beyond – This award goes to DJS staff who go above and beyond expectations of their assigned job duties to improve the lives of youth and families in Maryland.

Recipients:

Monyca Hall – Thomas J.S. Waxter Children's Center

Amy Rowe – Savage Mountain Youth Center

Amber Hardesty – Backbone Mountain Youth Center

Linda Mason – Cheltenham Youth Detention Center

Rayneika Robinson - Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center

Mark Masden – Dorchester County

Justin Davis – Harford County

Rosalind Jacobs – Prince George's County

LaVonda Hawkins – Prince George's County

Nneka Willis-Gray – Headquarters

Zeno Fisher – Carroll County

Katie Murray – Greenridge Youth Center

Jessica Dickerson - Headquarters

Leadership Analysis of FY19 and Summary of FY20 Approach

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

DJS works with many stakeholders within the juvenile justice system in Maryland, but its primary customers are youth and families.

In 2015, DJS created the Office of Family Engagement for the purpose of improving the experiences of youth and families involved in the juvenile justice system in Maryland.

For youth residing in DJS's secure facilities throughout the State, the opportunity to have regular and meaningful contact with family members plays an important role in the youth's overall well-being. In FY 2018, DJS's Office of Family Engagement distributed "toolkits" to DJS facility staff to provide a practical guide for implementing engaging family events. Whether through a yoga and meditation class exercise or a class that taught youth and families how to create a family budget and savings plan, DJS staff and outside volunteers provide more opportunities for youth and their families to having meaningful visits at DJS facilities. As a result of these events, family and youth participation continue to increase. From January 2019 to the time of this publication, over 1,690 youth and their family members have participated in family activities at DJS facilities.

FAMILY PEER SUPPORT INITIATIVE

In September 2019, DJS implemented the Family Peer Support Initiative in five Maryland jurisdictions. This initiative is a customer-focused program that helps guide DJS youth and families through the juvenile justice process. All of the staff who act as "peer supports" have had previous experience with the juvenile justice system, whether it was their own child or other family member. This shared experience helps build the rapport between the peer supports and the youth and families that they serve. Peer supports play an important role in not only guiding a family through the juvenile justice process but also connecting the family to services in the community that help with other issues related to social services, school resources and treatment providers.

Additionally, peer supports work closely with DJS case managers who are supervising youth in the community. As seen in other human service agencies, family peer support programs have been shown to reduce parental stress, increase the sense of empowerment, and motivate families to increase their involvement in the process.

The Family Peer Support Initiative has been running for a year in five jurisdictions: Anne Arundel County; Baltimore City; Baltimore County; Prince George's County; and Wicomico County. Since implementation of the Family Peer Support Initiative in September 2018, 167 Maryland families involved in the juvenile justice system have been referred to the program. These referrals have lead to 388 meetings between

families and peer supports. Additionally, peer supports have connected families to 98 community resources, such as food assistance, job training and treatment.

Most recently, Family Peer Support in Wicomico County was featured in an online feature story for DelmarvaNow:

<https://www.delmarvanow.com/story/news/local/maryland/2019/09/09/how-maryland-helping-parents-navigate-juvenile-justice-system-wicomico/2143686001/>

As a result of the initial success of the program in the five jurisdictions, the Office of Family Engagement is developing plans to expand the Family Peer Support Initiative statewide in FY21.

DJS EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION SURVEY

In 2019, the DJS Office of Research and Evaluation administered the first Employee Satisfaction Survey to all DJS employees from March 19 to April 5. The survey was administered online, with all DJS employees receiving an email invitation to complete the survey. The survey was anonymous and available via Survey Monkey, an online survey platform. To ensure anonymity, the survey requested no identifying information other than the office or facility in which the employee works.

DJS utilized the 36-item Job Satisfaction Survey, developed and validated by Dr. Paul E. Spector, a University of South Florida psychologist. The benefit of using the Survey was that it was provided at no cost except that DJS agreed to share the anonymous data results with the national database. In return, DJS was able to gain access to national job satisfaction survey data. Thus, DJS was able to compare its results with those of other public sector agencies across the country.

The response to the first Employee Satisfaction Survey was solid with nearly half of all DJS employees returning completed surveys. Out of 1,933 employees, 884 employees completed the survey, for a response rate of 45.7%.

The Survey asked questions related to 9 specific areas: Pay, Promotion, Supervision, Benefits, Contingent Rewards, Operating Conditions, Coworkers, Nature of Work, and Communication. The Survey scored individual items on a 6-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongest disagreement) to 6 (strongest agreement). Individual scores to individual items were then added together to get an overall score for the corresponding area, such as Pay, Promotion, etc. Through the statistical analysis of the national survey results, the Survey groups the scores into three categories: Dissatisfied, Ambivalent and Satisfied.

DJS employees' results provided insight into their work experience. Most DJS employees enjoy the work they do and like their supervisors as evidenced by scores in the Satisfied range. Some scores were in the ambivalent range on four subscales: benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, and communication. Pay had the lowest level of satisfaction.

DJS results were then compared to employee satisfaction data from other U.S. public sector agencies. In most cases, DJS responses compare favorably. While satisfaction levels regarding Pay and Contingent rewards were lower than other public sector agencies across the U.S., DJS staff showed higher satisfaction levels than other agencies on Supervision, Benefits, Operating Conditions, Nature of the Work, and Communication.

The results of the Employee Satisfaction Survey were shared with DJS staff at DJS's Annual Conference in June 2019. Additionally, DJS's executive leadership is using the Survey results to guide their efforts in enacting reforms to improve employee morale and overall satisfaction.

The Employee Satisfaction Survey will be administered on an annual basis going forward.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AND AWARDS PROCESS

In March 2019, DJS implemented a Statewide pilot program to recognize and award DJS employees for going "above and beyond" in their service to DJS youth and families. First, an Employee Recognition Committee was formed that consisted of DJS staff from DJS facilities, community offices and other units. The Committee was chaired by the DJS Chief of Staff. The eight member Committee was tasked with conducting a review of employee nominations and determining award winners. The review and final award decisions were made exclusively by the Committee members to maintain the integrity of the peer-review process.

Employee Nomination forms were posted online and DJS staff received multiple emails reminding them to nominate their co-workers to receive recognition for going "above and beyond" in their work. At the close of the nomination process, over 180 nominations were received. From April to May, the Committee reviewed all of the nominations and, ultimately, selected 13 DJS employees to receive a Secretary's Citation for their work "going above and beyond."

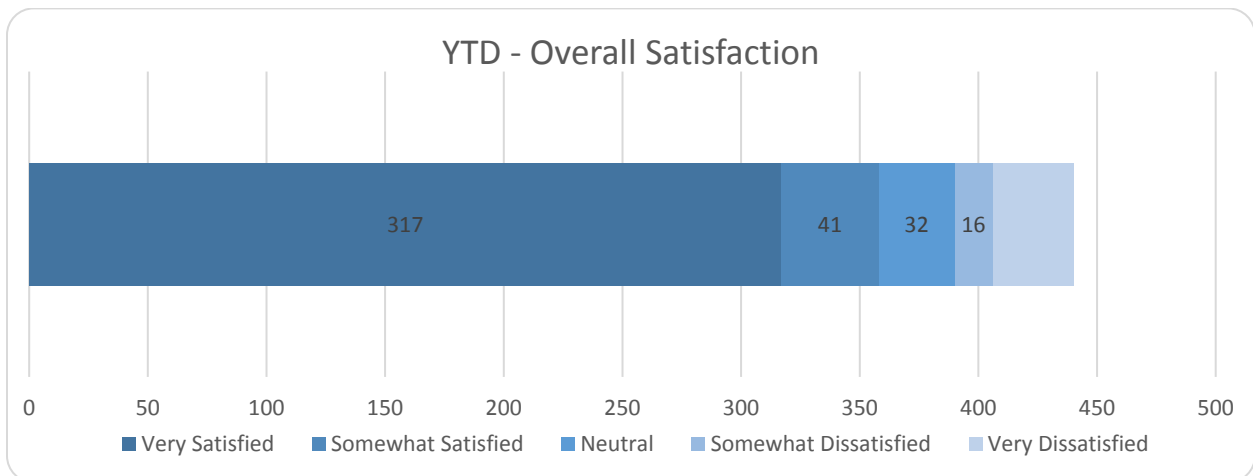
On June 5, 2019, the 13 awardees were recognized at DJS's Annual Conference in front of nearly 200 of their DJS co-workers at the Turf Valley Resort in Ellicott City. Each awardee was called to the stage where Secretary Sam Abed gave them their Secretary's Citation.

Although not related to the DJS “Above and Beyond” awards, Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford attended the second day of the DJS Conference and presented a Governor’s Citation to DJS case manager Tyra Kenly. Ms. Kenly earned her distinction through her quick thinking when she coordinated with a DJS youth who was severely opiate-addicted and her mother to receive Narcan training and a Narcan kit, which was used later that evening when the youth overdosed and, ultimately, saved her life.

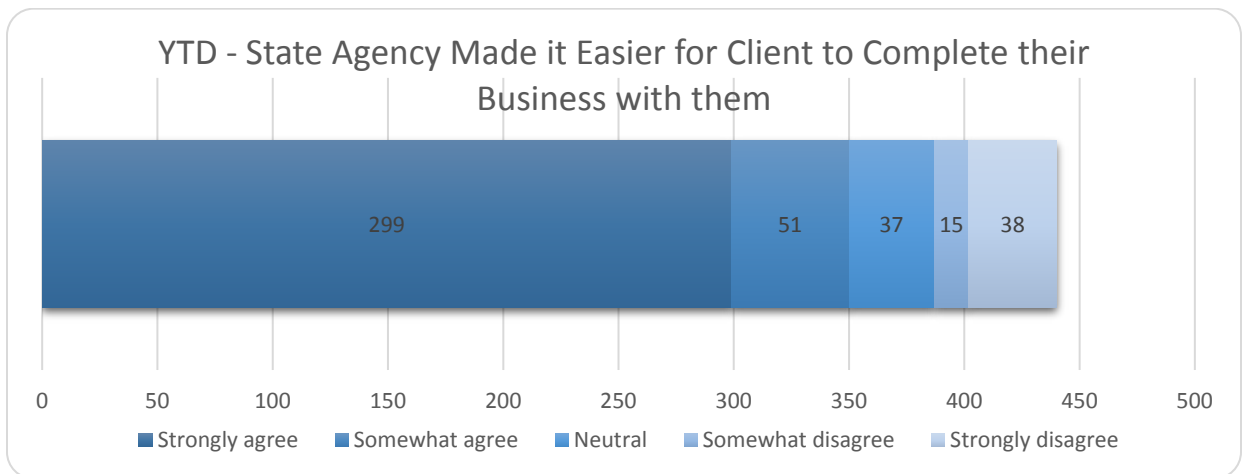
Due to the success of the pilot employee recognition, the Committee has now shifted its focus to drafting a new DJS employee recognition policy that will create a formal system to recognize DJS employees for their good work in FY20. One award being considered is an “on the spot” award that can be given in real-time by supervisors. The other award will be a Statewide “employee of the month” award, the process for which will mirror the process utilized for the pilot program described above. The policy and procedures are expected to be completed by the end of 2019 with implementation to follow.

Detailed FY19 Results and FY20 Plans

Customer Service Survey Results



- From January 1, 2019 to September 9, 2019, 440 responses were provided to the overall satisfaction question. Of the 440 total responses, 358 or 81% indicated that the customer was satisfied.



- From January 1, 2019 to September 9, 2019, 440 responses were provided to the statement that DJS made it easier for the customer to complete their business with the agency. Of the 440 total responses, 299 or 79.5% indicated that the customer agreed with that statement.

Status of Customer Service Training

DJS offers both in-person and online customer service training. As of September 9, 2019, 1,016 DJS employees have completed customer service training in 2019, which is over 53% of the agency's workforce. This training includes both online and classroom training. The department will continue its efforts to ensure that customer service training is ongoing for both new and seasoned staff.

Customer Inquiry Response Times and Overall Time-to-Resolution

Timeliness of Responding to Customer Inquiries

DJS strives to accurately and timely respond to inquiries directed toward the agency. Most written inquiries directed to the agency's headquarters, whether they are public information act requests or general inquiries, are resolved within 2 to 4 weeks.

Best Practices

The majority of customer inquiries received by DJS headquarters are public information act requests. The process of reviewing and responding to those requests is centralized

under the agency's Director of Communication. Other customer inquiries are directed to the Chief of Staff, who is the agency's customer service lead. By centralizing the process of handling customer inquiries to headquarters between two individuals, the agency can be more efficient and consistent in the manner it works with its customers.

Plans for Improvement

As a result of the initial success of the program in the five jurisdictions, the Office of Family Engagement is in the process of developing plans to expand the Family Peer Support Initiative statewide in FY21.

Through its Employee Recognition Committee, policies and procedures will be developed to implement a formal system of Statewide employee recognition and awards.

Improving the Customer Experience from Multiple Perspectives

Making Agency Services Available Online

DJS's website is continually undergoing improvements to enhance the user experience and ease of accessibility. Currently, DJS has online forms for customers to make a public information request. DJS has enhanced its website to help youth and families locate each of DJS's 34 community offices and 13 facilities around the State. Additionally, the DJS website has a page that provides the menus and the food of the month for each of its 13 secure facilities. DJS also has a page that displays facility capacity through visual indicators to assist judges and magistrates in making court decisions.

Additionally, there is a family tab to for DJS families to obtain information about the juvenile justice system, the department's resources and community resources.

Processing Times for Customer Transactions

Intake is the first point of contact between the department and youth, who are most often brought to the department's attention through a juvenile complaint filed by law enforcement. At this critical junction, DJS intake staff must review the complaint and meet with the youth, family and other caretakers and the victim if possible to determine how the youth's case will proceed. A youth's case could be formally sent to the State's

Attorney to potentially begin the court process or could be informally handled outside of the court through DJS or resolved at intake entirely.

In FY19, The rate of DJS intake workers finalizing juvenile intake decisions within 30 days and meeting the intake decision deadline was 91.5%. That figure increased to a 97% rate of intake resolution within 60 days. DJS is pleased with this result because timely case forwarding decisions at intake are critical to ensure justice, fairness and public safety for the community, victims and youth involved in juvenile offenses.

Adjusting Hours to Meet Customer Demands

DJS's primary contact with youth and families in the community are in the department's community offices throughout the State. These community offices are divided among six operating regions. In most regions, community offices will remain open beyond traditional office hours as needed to meet with youth and families. In Baltimore City in particular, community offices have extended hours on Wednesdays to accommodate the work and home lives of Baltimore City youth and families.

Social Media Usage to Improve the Customer Experience

DJS was pleased to see an increase in Facebook likes of approximately 42% from September 2018 to September 2019. For any messages or posts on Facebook, DJS' Communications Office responds within 24 hours. DJS utilizes Facebook to announce events such as its Annual Leadership and Opioid Overdose Awareness Conference, employee awards, entry-level graduations, job recruitment listings, family engagement, and youth activities. Typically, DJS' Facebook posts reach an average of 600 people.

Similarly, DJS utilizes its Twitter account to promote various events that highlight the department's work with youth and employee recognition. DJS currently has 1561 Twitter followers, which is a 29% increase from last year.

In FY 2020, DJS will continue to promote important events, employee recognitions and providing more information about the agency's reform efforts, initiatives, and explanations about the juvenile justice system generally. The department believes that social media can be a valuable tool to provide helpful information to its customers and better insight into how the juvenile justice process works in Maryland. In addition, social media is another resource for families, youth, employees, and the general public to engage with the department.

Conclusion

As the department strives to fulfill its mission of successful youth, strong leaders and safer communities, DJS continues to work towards providing a more supportive and customer-oriented approach to its primary customers: youth and families. From the creation of the Office of Family Engagement to annual awards for outstanding DJS employees, the department is continually trying to improve its approach to customer service. DJS is proud of the recent advancements in its efforts to create a more customer-friendly experience but also understands that there is always room for improvement. Ultimately, DJS seeks to engrain a focus on customer service in all of its functions in order to promote better outcomes for the youth and families the agency serves.

