

Executive Summary

The number of youth involved in all levels of the juvenile justice system in Maryland has seen a significant long-term decline over the past decade, including a steep decline during the COVID-19 pandemic (FY 2021). Since then, numbers for complaints—and subsequently detentions and commitments—have risen, but they are generally below pre-pandemic levels.

Complaints

The number of juvenile complaints in Maryland declined significantly over the past decade, but increased over the past two years. Despite these increases, the overall number of complaints is at or below pre-pandemic levels.

↓ **10-Year Trend: Number of Complaints Down 50.4%.**

Number of Crimes of Violence: Down 44.6%

Number of Non-Violent Felonies: Down 21.0%

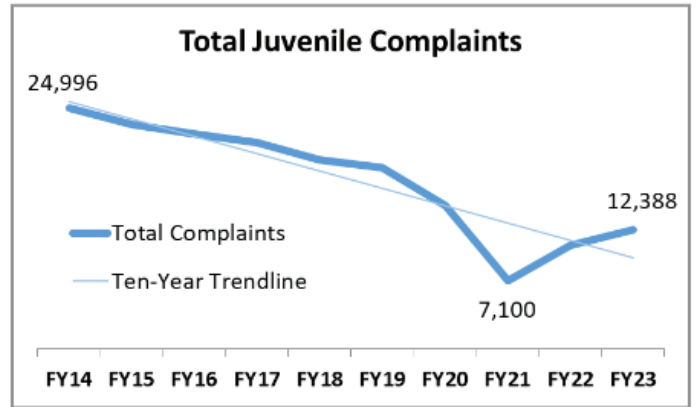
Number of Misdemeanors: Down 55.9%

↑ **1-Year Trend: Number of Complaints Up 14.8%.**

Number of Crimes of Violence: Up 17.2%

Number of Non-Violent Felonies: Up 70.6%

Number of Misdemeanors: Up 5.2%



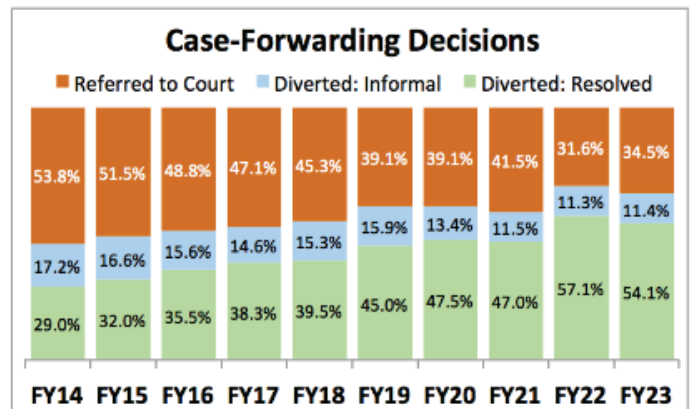
Diversions from Court

Over the past decade, DJS has steadily increased the proportion of complaints diverted from juvenile court, either by resolving complaints, or by entering into informal pre-court agreements. Diversions did decline slightly in the most recent year. Youth that have been diverted have a high rate of success, with few having new offenses within a year.

↑ **10-Year Trend: Diversion Rate is Up from 46.2% to 65.5%.**

↓ **1-Year Trend: Diversion Rate is Down from 68.4% to 65.5%.**

Outcome: 92.4 % of cases diverted in FY 2021 had no new sustained offense within a year.



Detention

The long-term and recent trends in the number of youth detained generally mirrors the overall trend in complaints. The number of youth detained under juvenile court jurisdiction declined significantly over ten years, and increased somewhat in the past two. Over the same time, the number of youth under adult court jurisdiction detained in a DJS facility has risen, and such cases now make up a majority of the DJS detained population. The number of youth in detention awaiting committed placement has also risen, but the number of youth detained pre-disposition has continued to decline.

↓ **10-Year Trend: Detained Population is Down 32.1%.**

Juvenile Court Pre-Disposition: Down 74.4%

Juvenile Court Pending Placement: Down 46.8%

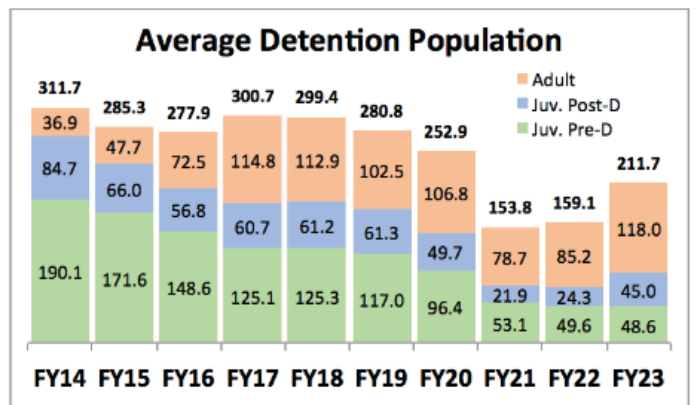
Adult Court Detained: Up 219.9%

↑ **1-Year Trend: Detained Population is Up 33.1%.**

Juvenile Court Pre-Disposition: Down 1.9%

Juvenile Court Pending Placement: Up 85.1%

Adult Court Detained: Up 38.6%



Community Supervision

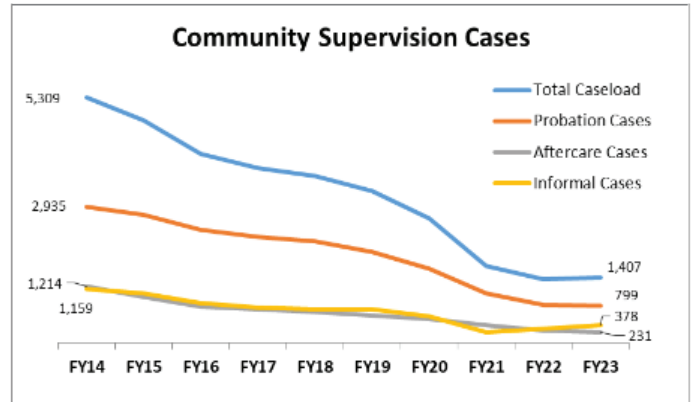
The number of youth supervised by DJS in the community has declined over ten years to an even greater extent than the decline in complaints. Pre-court cases for youth informally diverted from court have risen in the last two years, as the number of diversions from court have increased.

↓ 10-Year Trend: Overall Caseload is Down 73.5%.

Probation Caseload: Down 72.8%
Informal Pre-Court Caseload: Down 67.4%
Aftercare Caseload: Down 81.0%

↑ 1-Year Trend: Overall Caseload is Up 1.6%.

Probation Caseload: Down 2.1%
Informal Pre-Court Caseload: Up 23.8%
Aftercare Caseload: Down 12.4%



Outcome: 89.2% of FY 2021 probation cases had no new sustained juvenile or adult offense within a year of being placed on probation.

Youth Committed to Out-of-Home Treatment Programs

In the past 10 years, there has been a steady and steep decline in the number of youth committed by the juvenile court to out-of-home placement. This reflects a willingness of DJS to divert cases from court, but also the willingness of the court to order in-home supervision and services in lieu of placement.

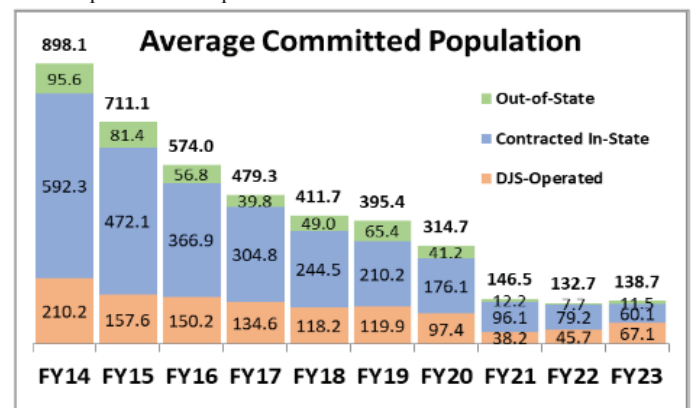
Despite these findings, as with other trends, there has been an increase in the number of commitments in the past year, largely driven by placements to DJS-operated programs. The population in contracted programs has continued to decline. There has been a slight uptick in out-of-state placements, though numbers remain small, with an average of just 11.5 youth in FY 2023. Youth committed to out-of-home placement generally have more serious offenses than youth diverted or placed on probation supervision.

↓ 10-Year Trend: Committed Population is Down 84.6%.

DJS-Operated Programs: Down 68.1%
Contracted In-State: Down 89.9%
Out-of-State: Down 88.0%

↑ 1-Year Trend: Committed Population is Up 4.6%.

DJS-Operated Programs: Up 46.9%
Contracted In-State: Down 24.2%
Out-of-State: Up 49.1%



Offense Category for Committed Youth (FY 2022-2023):

The share of commitments for Crimes of Violence increased from 40.0% to 59.5%.
The share of commitments for Felonies decreased from 15.0% to 13.5%.
The share of commitments for Misdemeanors decreased from 44.6% to 27.0%.

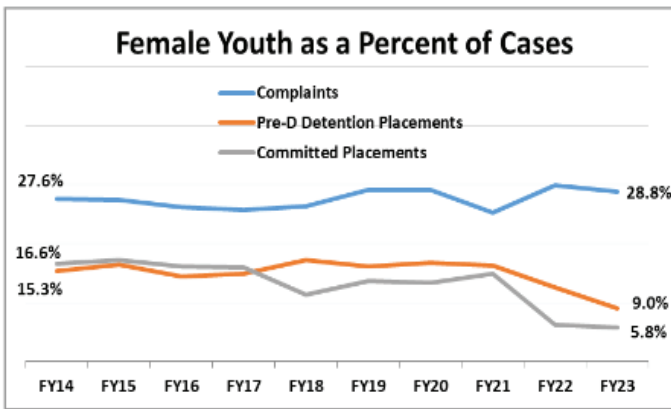
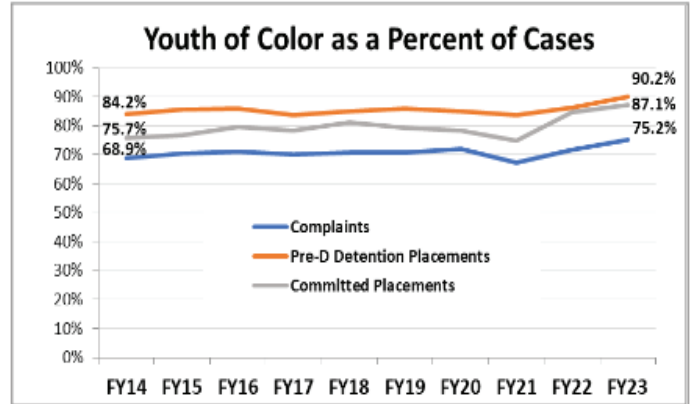
Outcome: 84.8% of youth released from committed programs in FY 2021 had no new sustained juvenile offense or adult conviction within a year.

Executive Summary (cont.)

Gender and Race Equity

Youth of color are overrepresented in facilities relative to intakes, and that trend has worsened in recent years.

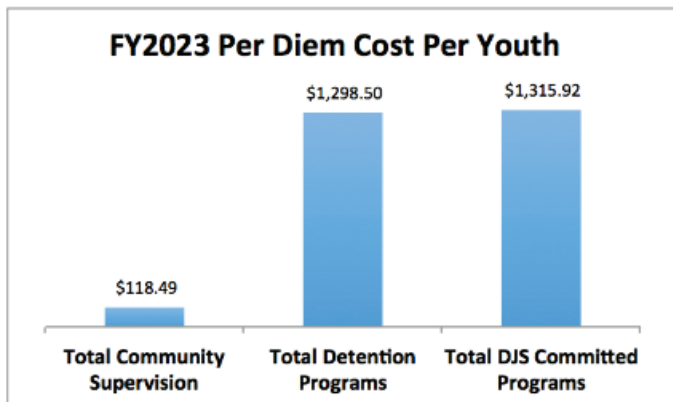
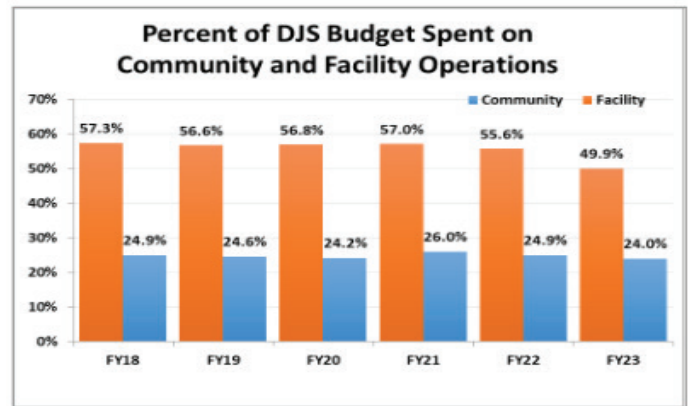
- The percentage of Pre-Disposition detention placements that are youth of color increased from 84.2% in FY 2014 to 90.2% in FY 2023.
- The percentage of commitments that are youth of color increased from 75.7% in FY 2014 to 87.1% in FY 2023.



The percent of referrals to DJS Intake for girls has been remarkably flat over the past decade, at just under 30%. However, girls have been decreasing as a proportion of Pre-Disposition admissions to detention, from 15.3% in FY 2014 to 9.0% in FY 2023, and of committed placements, which decreased from 16.6% in FY 2014 to 5.8% in FY 2023. Still, girls are generally committed for less serious offenses than boys, with 33.3% of girls placed into a committed treatment placement for misdemeanors in FY 2023, compared to 26.6% of boys.

Expenditures

The cost of operating and contracting out-of-home programs for youth detained or committed has made up at least half of the DJS budget in recent years. Although it has begun to decline somewhat in the past few years as a proportion of the budget, the absolute costs have remained flat, declining just 1.7% in five years, while the populations held have dropped 50.7%.



The daily cost to house a youth in facilities is vastly higher than the cost to supervise and provide services to youth in their home. In FY 2023, the in-home per-diem rate was under \$120. For detained and committed youth, it was more than ten times as much, well over a thousand dollars a day.