

ANNUAL REPORT



Fiscal
Year
2020



Department of
Youth Services

Mike DeWine, Governor
Ryan Gies, Director

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The Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) is specifically tasked to confine felony offenders, age 10 to 21, who have been adjudicated and committed by one of Ohio's 88 county juvenile courts.

**A safer Ohio:
one youth,
one family,
and one
community
at a time.**

DYS provides a variety of services and treatment for youth, including a fully-accredited high school, behavioral health services, unit management, medical and dental care, recreation, religious services, community service opportunities, victim awareness, and reentry services.

The two DYS parole regions supervise youth on parole, working with them and their families to provide the guidance necessary for youth to become positive, contributing members of society. Beyond the task of supervision, staff help youth on parole to receive needed services including housing, public assistance, education, and treatment for medical, mental health, and substance use. Having access to these services reduces the likelihood of a youth committing a new offense.

Our Mission: Improve Ohio's future by habilitating youth and empowering families and communities.

Letter from the Director

I am proud to present the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) FY 2020 Annual Report, in which we have highlighted our efforts over the past 12 months to improve the lives of justice-involved youth.

As we all know, this fiscal year was punctuated by COVID-19, which necessitated the reassessment of daily operations and a re-imagining of how we carry out our mission while mitigating the spread of a virus. At the onset of the pandemic, we increased our sanitization schedules in the three juvenile correctional facilities and reinforced the importance of good hygiene for both youth and staff. Additionally, we began offering online video visits for youth to visit virtually with their families after we suspended in-person visitation. Even before the pandemic arrived, we were planning to install video kiosks inside the facilities as another means of offering visitation to families – this was completed in May. Both video visitation options have been well-received by family members. As we fine-tune our plan for the resumption of in-person visitation, we are pleased that video visitation will be here to stay.

We have continued to see the numbers of incarcerated youth drop significantly in the years since Ohio's RECLAIM initiative began in the mid-1990s. At the conclusion of FY20, we had the lowest facility population numbers on record – hovering around 400 youth. We are proud that RECLAIM, which Governor DeWine spearheaded when he served as Ohio's Lieutenant Governor, and our other local partnerships continue to support communities in helping at-risk youth improve their lives. This collaboration with county juvenile courts continues to serve as a national model for how states can develop and promote community-based alternatives to reduce the number of youth in juvenile correctional facilities.

Governor DeWine prioritizes children's issues and recognizes that education and employment are two major factors in reducing recidivism rates and building safer communities. We agree, and in FY20, we began a collaboration with Stark State Community College to teach our youth welding, which included two welding trucks at our facilities to provide hands-on instruction that can lead to industry-recognized credentials. This program was in addition to our other vocational offerings, including AutoCAD, auto mechanics, horticulture training, and others.

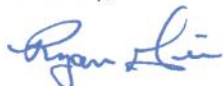
Community service is a continued focus at DHS to ensure that youth are giving back to their communities. At the beginning of the pandemic, a staff member at Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility taught some of our youth how to sew masks for Mercy Medical Center in Canton, a donation that was greatly appreciated by staff there. During FY 2020, youth in the three facilities provided a total of 29,906 hours of community service and youth on parole provided 1,923 hours of community service.

We take pride in the American Correctional Association's (ACA) reaccreditation of the Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility, in addition to our Central Office and Bureau of Parole. ACA accreditation verifies that we are in compliance with national standards and are properly positioned to help the youth in our facilities.

Habilitating youth and empowering communities are at the forefront of our work, and we are proud to showcase our efforts in this endeavor. COVID-19 may have shifted our operations, but we believe that the pandemic has demonstrated our ability to change course as situations change, while staying the course throughout.

To learn more about our work, read ahead or visit www.dys.ohio.gov.

Sincerely,



Ryan Gies

Fiscal Year 2020 Highlights

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

EDUCATION

The Buckeye United School District (BUSD) is operated by DYS and chartered by the State Board of Education; it offers an array of year-round academic courses to students in grades 6-12. BUSD meets all the Ohio Department of Education standards and all educators are licensed in their respective areas. The three schools within DYS facilities offer basic academics (Math, English/Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies), as well as special education, career technology education, electives, and even post-secondary options for students. At the end of the school year, the district added additional technology supports and learning resources, and is exploring additional offerings to help graduates obtain in-demand jobs (through college courses and career technology schools).

Accomplishments in Education for FY20 through 6/16/2020

- ◆ 517 Youth Served
- ◆ 887.7 Credits Earned
- ◆ 51 Students Earned a GED
- ◆ 21 Students Earned Diplomas

Career Technology 2019-2020 Highlights through 6/16/2020

Career technical certificates (specific competencies in each course) awarded in FY 2020 include the following:

- ◆ 58 Auto Tech
- ◆ 58 Introduction to Family and Consumer Science
- ◆ 34 Digital Print Design
- ◆ 120 Career-Based Interventions
- ◆ 166 Plant and Horticulture Science
- ◆ 56 Principles of Food
- ◆ 216 Transitional Skills I
- ◆ 20 Transitional Skills II
- ◆ 80 Construction Technical-Core and Sustainable Construction

ATLO

Prior to COVID-19, the Buckeye United School District had been exploring new ways to deliver 21st century on-line coursework and learning in a secure environment for the youth at our three DYS high schools. Our current system experiences periodic shut-downs, due to network security breaches. To solve this problem, we partnered with a company called ATLO, which provides a secure network for correctional institutions to deliver online educational content.

As a result of COVID-19, the Ohio Department of Education approved a Blended Learning Model, which allows students to earn credits by demonstrating proficiency of knowledge or skills through competency-based learning models, rather than a minimum number of days or hours in a classroom or on a digital learning device. Students advance from grade to grade based upon credits earned. The ATLO devices will meet these requirements, ensuring that each student has access to digital learning tools, while preventing access to

inappropriate websites. The ATLO devices allow direct instruction between the teacher and the youth remotely and in the classroom. They have recently created a distance learning integration model that supports live streaming of classes and the ability to record classes. These devices also allow us to expand Career Tech, ServSafe and IC3 industry-based certifications.

It is important to note that during COVID-19, our educational staff was on telework and had to email their lessons and student assignments to the three high schools. The principals sorted and distributed these packets to the youth, who completed their assignments via paper and pencil before the materials were sent back to the teachers for grading. After this challenging system, we look forward to the more streamlined and flexible options ATLO will help provide our students and educational staff.

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IN-DEMAND JOB TRAINING

To further increase training for a variety of in-demand jobs, BUSD added additional welding, HVAC, visual design and imaging, and robotics programs. Additionally, we added more skills certificates, expanded industry credentials, and developed additional training opportunities in existing programming. BUSD also helped youth with job searches, career exploration, and reentry connections. Through these expanded offerings, youth can create road maps to careers and higher education opportunities. Industry certificates and credentials awarded in FY 2020 include the following:

Industry Certificates Earned: (for youth who do not complete a full industry credential but have acquired skills to help them obtain jobs in a desired area)	Industry Credentials Earned: (industry-recognized credentials that meet Ohio Department of Education requirements that count toward credit for graduation)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 Binding and Finishing 10 Greenhouse Production 3 Offset Printing 13 Push Mower 17 Rototiller 24 Stand-On Mower 1 Turf Management 16 Vegetable Gardening 30 Zero Turn Mower 8 Career Technology Advisory Committee 3 Employee of the Month 6 I AM 4 Landscape Olympics Participant 23 Maintaining Consistent Employment 7 Mum Production 5 New Guinea Impatiens Production 5 Shop Foreman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 32 CPR Certification 19 Forklift Certification 1 Ohio Nursery & Landscape Certified Nursery 26 OSHA-10 40 ServSafe 6 FANUC Cert Handling Tool Operations and Programming 6 FANUC America’s Certified CNC Education Program for Basic Programming, Setup and Operation 5 Rockwell Automation Level 1-Introduction to Automation, AC & DC Drives, and Micro850 Configuration, Programming and Troubleshooting

**The BUSD partnered with Stark State and began offering Welding, AutoCAD, Principles of Welding, and Blueprint reading courses during the 2020 school year. These courses have been suspended due to COVID-19 constraints.*

WELDING

During the school year, DYS partnered with Stark State College to offer a hands-on welding course to the youth at Indian River and Cuyahoga Hills JCFs. The course is taught in a 12- bay welding trailer that can be moved between the two facilities. Due to COVID-19, these courses, which cover all mainstream types of welding, were put on hold until the instructors can return to the facilities. Youth can receive certification preparation for American Welding Society (AWS) testing, through 3G and 6G certifications. Specialty welding, such as titanium, stainless steel, and aluminum may also be covered. Stark State also offers courses in blueprint reading, AutoCAD, and student success.

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DRIVER'S TRAINING

Additionally, DYS continued to utilize the Virtual Driver interactive driving simulator program in FY 2020, which provides youth with realistic driving experiences and education. Through 17 basic driving lessons, the driving simulator teaches youth how to use turn signals and obey traffic laws, while maintaining safe driving practices. In FY20, 63 youth received a certificate of completion.

INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMING SOLUTIONS

The COVID-19 pandemic called for the implementation of creative solutions to continue providing youth with necessary mental health and substance use treatment. Behavioral Health Services (BHS) teams in each of the three JCFs quickly identified new techniques to deliver these services, including the use of virtual alternatives for both group and individual sessions and psychiatry contacts. BHS staff also created smaller groups that met more frequently, used alternative spaces to promote social distancing, and increased the number of individual contacts with youth and staff in order to monitor morale and adjust to the new circumstances.

GIVING BACK THROUGH COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community service provides meaningful activities for youth to give back to society while learning valuable skills. During FY 2020, youth in the facilities completed a total of 31,333 hours of community service, and youth on parole completed 1,951 hours of community service. Examples include a project at Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility (JCF), whereby youth stuffed 6,500 envelopes with information to help publicize a domestic violence shelter's charity drive. In

March, at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, a staff member at Indian River JCF taught youth how to use a sewing machine, so they could construct 50 cloth masks for nearby Mercy Medical Center. Youth at IRJCF also assist Goodwill Industries of Greater Cleveland and East Central Ohio with sorting and cleaning books that have been donated to the organization, to prepare them for future redistribution.

INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

DYS provides funding and technical assistance for a continuum of programs and interventions that serve youth closer to their families and in the least restrictive, appropriate setting. This includes statewide support of juvenile courts and county partners through RECLAIM Ohio (Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors), Targeted RECLAIM, Competitive RECLAIM, Youth Services Grant, Behavioral Health/Juvenile Justice, and CCFs. These community investments provide youth with the intensity of treatment and community supervision that matches their risk to reoffend.

Indeed, DYS is known as a national leader in the use of funding to divert appropriate youth from incarceration to community-based programs and services. To provide some context, the number of DYS admissions dropped from 1,895 in FY 2007 to 267 in FY 2020. In FY 2020, Ohio courts admitted 76 fewer youth to DYS than were admitted in FY 2019, representing a decrease of 22.2 percent. Thus, our JCFs have decreased significantly in population over the years, but the youth who are now sent to those facilities have been adjudicated for some of the most serious offenses in Ohio. More information on these initiatives and their outcomes can be found at www.dys.ohio.gov, under "Courts & Community."

Fiscal Year 2020 Highlights

EXPANDING DETENTION ALTERNATIVES

The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) is a model for juvenile justice reform, funded by DHS and county-administered in Ohio for the last decade. JDAI has demonstrated that local jurisdictions can establish efficient and effective systems to protect the safety of the community without using detention unnecessarily or inappropriately, thus preventing youth from sliding deeper into the juvenile justice system.

In FY 2020, JDAI expanded from 14 to 17 counties, to include Delaware, Hamilton, and Lorain. Additional progress includes transforming probation services for all counties receiving RECLAIM Ohio funding and creating a start-up collaboration with the Supreme Court of Ohio and the Office of the Ohio Public Defender. The group organized a day-long Race, Equity and Inclusion Institute specifically for JDAI county jurists, court administrators, and other key stakeholders to address structural racism, implicit biases, and inequities.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

DYS implemented a new visitation system over the past year to improve the experience for families, youth, and staff. All visitors must now complete an application, so staff may screen them and add them to the approved visitors' list. As a way to further expedite the entry process, we now ask visitors to present their photo IDs as verification, which has eliminated the need for paper sign-ins. Additionally, we are using the new system to collect data, such as the names of visitors, number of visitors per youth, number of times a visitor comes to the facility, and the start/end times of all visitations.

Once in-person visitation was suspended in the facilities due to COVID-19, DHS implemented video visitation options. By the conclusion of FY 2020, 338 Zoom visits had been held between our families and youth at no cost. In addition, GTL installed video capable phones at all three facilities, so families may now schedule GTL video visits. To date, 166 GTL video visits have taken place.

Before COVID-19 struck, we continued to provide free bus transportation for families to visit their youth in the facilities. In FY 2020, our CLOSE to Home project (Connecting Loved Ones Sooner than Expected) provided a total of 53 bus trips that served 373 family members. We plan to start the program up again once it is safe to do so.

The DHS Bureau of Parole continues to utilize video to ensure that youth stay connected to their families, facilities, courts, and others in the community. In total, parole has facilitated 3,884 such video contacts for FY 2020.

CELL PHONES

During the COVID-19 pandemic, DHS ensured that youth who tested positive for the virus could keep in constant contact with their support systems, by taking an unusual step for a corrections agency. We purchased 90 flip phones and distributed them to the youth on the units at Cuyahoga Hills JCF where youth were identified as having tested positive for COVID-19 and the use of the traditional wall phones was limited. We manually removed the cameras and did not enable the data. The cell phones were provided to the youth throughout the day and evenings and then collected by staff at night to be sanitized and stored.

At Indian River JCF, we use these phones when we are quarantining intake or pre-release youth who are undergoing testing upon arrival or prior to release.

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At Circleville JCF, we have not needed to use cell phones, as youth who are quarantined while they undergo testing are provided with a GTL tablet, which has phone capabilities on it. Circleville's new housing units are wired for this, whereas we are not currently wired for this in all areas of Indian River or Cuyahoga Hills.

YOUNG FATHERS

EVERY CHILD MATTERS

DYS is a recipient of the Second Chance Act grant, which addresses the needs of incarcerated parents and their minor children. With funding from this grant, DYS has offered the Every Child Matters parenting program to any young parent committed to DYS, on parole, or placed in contract facilities.

The program includes case management, reentry, parent/child visitation, and legal services. The curriculum focuses on character building, healthy relationships, co-parenting, substance abuse, human development, nurturing, and bonding. Special events, like family engagement days, program graduations, and Father's Day activities, are also part of the program. Virtual programming was implemented in response to COVID-19.

Sixty-five young parents were served through the Every Child Matters program in FY 2020.

BONDING WITH BOOKS

Bonding with Books is a program that provides a unique opportunity for youth who are also fathers to stay connected with their children while they are away from home. DYS staff video record young fathers reading stories to their children, and then they mail the video recording, a book, and an item for the child (such as a book bag) to the young children and caregivers.

54 book recordings occurred during FY 2020.

SITES REACCREDITED

Cuyahoga Hills JCF, DYS Central Office, DYS Bureau of Parole, and four Community Corrections Facilities (CCFs) received final approval on reaccreditation from the American Correctional Association in August 2019 and January 2020. The reaccredited CCFs include: Butler County Juvenile Rehabilitation Center, Juvenile Residential Center of Northwest Ohio, Montgomery County Juvenile Court Center for Adolescent Services, and West Central Juvenile Rehabilitation Center.

SUCCESSFUL PREA AUDITS & SAFETY UPDATES

All state-operated JCFs and county-operated CCFs have previously completed Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) audits, which are conducted at each site every three years. In FY 2020, the following sites passed their PREA audits: Circleville JCF, Miami Valley Residential Center, Oakview Residential Center, Stark Multi-County Community Correctional Facility, and Northern Ohio Juvenile Community Corrections.

The agency continues to make the sexual safety of the youth in its care a top priority. In addition to the successful PREA audits in FY20, the agency commenced its strategic planning around youth sexual safety. The plan encompasses upgrades to technology, facilities, and youth/staff engagement and development. In FY20, we created new information for youth in accessible formats, engaged with new community partners, and started making upgrades to technology and our facilities.

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TRAINING EXCELLENCE

The DYS Training Academy's Pre-Service training program for new employees was offered seven times in FY 2020, with class sizes ranging from 8 to 63. From July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020, 221 new staff members attended the Academy's basic training program, which averages 125 hours. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the last three training classes of FY 2020 were moved from the Academy to the individual sites and were reduced to 109 hours, due to the inability to offer scenario-based training. For FY 2020, a total of 21,180 hours of Pre-Service was awarded.

DYS and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) partnered with the John Maxwell Company to provide leadership training for employees. In FY 2020, the organization provided six workshops for a total of 18 DYS attendees.

SERVICES FOR VICTIMS

The Office of Victim Services (OVS) at DYS is responsible for ensuring that the rights of crime victims of DYS youth are recognized and honored. OVS provides written notification of potential or actual status changes of youth, information and support, participation in family victim/survivor conferences, opportunities for victim-offender dialogue, and referrals. The office offers a support hotline that victims can call for free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: (800) 872-3132, or they may email dysvictim@dys.state.gov.

In FY 2020, OVS provided 4,645 mailed notices, 575 emails, and 960 phone calls to victims to inform them of potential or actual status changes of youth. During the year, a total of 86 youth successfully completed the Victim Awareness education curriculum, and eight youth participated in a panel discussion as part of the curriculum redesign. This program helps youth acknowledge how victims and the community are affected by crime and offensive behavior.

Additionally, 11 people participated in the monthly victim/survivor family conference day. These are scheduled the first Wednesday of every month for victims/survivors of crime to meet with representatives from OVS and the Release Authority to share concerns and ask questions about youth in DYS custody.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, OVS made 430 phone calls, mailed 636 letters, and sent 130 emails to notify victims about a youth's upcoming release or discharge.

SUPPORTING STAFF

Our staff are our most important resource, and they must be healthy in order to properly support the youth. DYS uses Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) to support staff when they experience trauma, and the Peer Assistance Team (PAT) to help staff with other personal issues. During FY 2020, Peer Assistance supported staff on 1,454 occasions, totaling 1,887 contacts in all. In addition, two crisis management briefings were conducted.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the peer support team served as the central point of contact for facility staff, by providing information, resources, and support for employees when they were off work – a service that was much appreciated by staff. Additionally, the team worked with the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to develop a Contact Caring partnership that provided 10 training sessions to nearly 100 DYS staff members on self-care and trauma informed care.

In January 2020, the New Employee Support Team (N.E.S.T.) initiative was introduced to provide support and assistance to new employees during their first year of employment with DYS –when attrition can be particularly acute. The N.E.S.T. email is used to make frequent contact with new employees and is available for new

Fiscal Year 2020 Highlights

employees to ask questions, seek support and attain additional guidance. Staffed by the Training Academy team, the N.E.S.T. plans to make site visits and provide refresher trainings for new staff once normal operations resume. Since January, N.E.S.T. has been available to 88 new employees. During that time, it has made 319 contacts.

Due to COVID-19, we were forced to cancel our annual agency-wide employee recognition program in May, but we look forward to honoring employees next year with a formal ceremony.

ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENTS FOR YOUTH

DYS uses a continuum of residential facilities to meet the individualized treatment, education, and behavioral health needs of committed youth. In FY 2020, these included the following sites: Applewood Centers, Buckeye Ranch, Lighthouse Youth Center at Paint Creek, Oesterlen, and Pomegranate Health Systems, as well as several Community Corrections Facilities (CCFs) (see below). Alternative placements give DYS more options to provide the treatment and services youth need to become responsible young men and women. Alternative placements served a total of 132 youth during FY 2020.

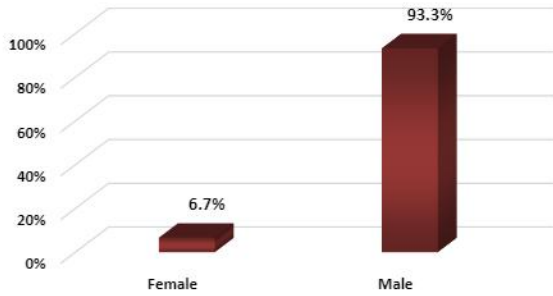
COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS FACILITIES

There are 12 CCFs which are used by juvenile court judges in lieu of committing to DYS boys and girls who have been adjudicated for a felony offense. CCFs served a total of 508 youth during FY 2020. The average length of stay in CCFs was 6.8 months. DYS girls are served by a CCF (Montgomery County Center for Adolescent Services).

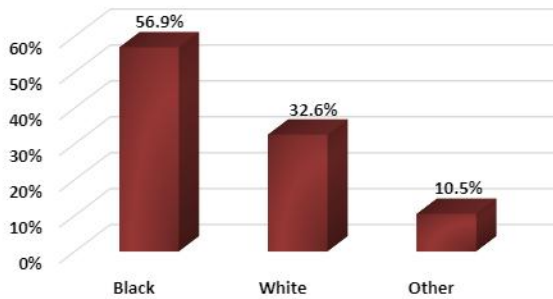
In addition, CCFs play an important role in expanding our alternative placement options. DYS implemented a step-down program in FY19, which allows youth to move from a JCF to a CCF in order to receive an array of additional programming, potentially reside closer to home, and generally allow for a smoother reentry into their communities. In FY 2020, six youth took advantage of this opportunity.

Fiscal Year 2020 Statistics

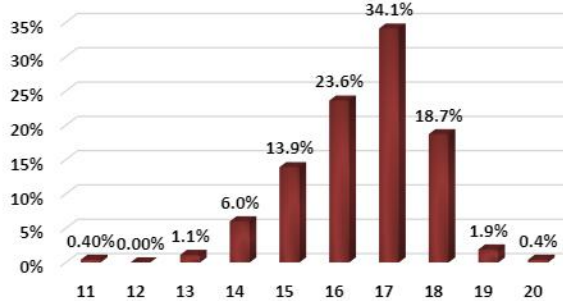
Admissions By Gender



Admissions By Race

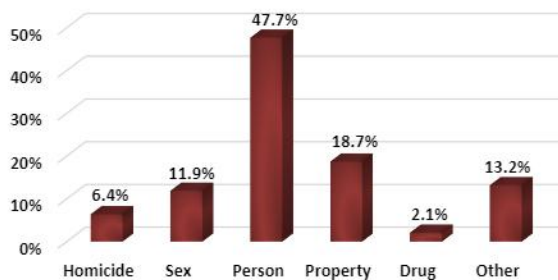


Admissions By Age



Admissions By Offense

(Does not include revoked youth)



Average Daily Facility Population By Site

Applewood Centers	2
Montgomery County Center for Adolescent Services	11
Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility	137
Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility	106
Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility	152
Lighthouse Youth Center - Paint Creek	46
Pomegranate	6
Other Facilities	4

Average Daily Population— All DYS

463

Average Daily Population for the 3 Juvenile Correctional Facilities

394

Average Daily Parole Population for the Northern and Southern Regional Offices

250

Admissions By County

Cuyahoga	Hamilton	Franklin	Licking	Lucas
20.2%	11.6%	9.4%	6%	5.2%

Top five counties only

FY 2019 Expenditures

Administrative Support	Final expenditures to be determined and will be added December 2020.
Community Corrections Facilities	
Debt Service	
Facilities	
Juvenile Court Subsidies and Grants	
Parole	
Alternative Placements	
Capital-Physical Plant Improvements	



Department of
Youth Services

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