

COMMONWEAL
The Juvenile Justice Program
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**CALIFORNIA MAY BUDGET REVISION-
PROPOSED SPENDING ON JUVENILE JUSTICE
& RELATED YOUTH PROGRAMS**

The Governor's May Budget Revision was released on Friday May 14th. The May Revision generally covers changes from the Governor's budget as originally proposed in January—updating the state's revenue picture and proposing new or modified program expenditures.

The big news is that the state is awash in additional revenue, over and above the January Budget projections. State tax collections have raised the general fund surplus to an estimated \$76 billion, and another \$25 billion will be added in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. With a nearly \$100 billion surplus in hand, the Governor has announced major new spending initiatives for education, health and mental health, drought/fire/climate, workforce and housing development, small business supports and other new programs. The massive surplus has triggered Gann Act limits on state spending, requiring the state to return excess collections to taxpayers. Partly in response, the Governor now proposes to spend \$8 billion on a new round of stimulus checks sent to middle income earners (\$600 each) and to families including undocumented families with dependents (\$500 each).

JUVENILE JUSTICE PROGRAMS

On the juvenile justice front, there were few major changes. Here is a summary of key items that were addressed by the Governor in the May Revision.

- **DJJ realignment:** Senate Bill 823—the 2020 reform law will close the state Division of Juvenile Justice—creates a Realignment Block Grant fund to pay counties for the costs associated with shifting the state caseload to counties. The May Revision proposes \$46 million in DJJ realignment block grant funds to counties for FY 21/22, rising to \$ 211 million by FY 24/25 when DJJ finally closes forever. SB 823 also made a one-time appropriation of \$9.6 million (FY 20/21 funds) to the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) to award grants to counties for infrastructure and improvements needed to serve the realigned DJJ population; applications for this funding have been submitted by counties and the funds will be awarded by BSCC in June. These appropriations are reconfirmed in the May Revision along with new population estimates for DJJ pending final closure—with a projected ADP of 613 for FY 21/22, down from 732 in the prior year.
- **Office of Youth and Community Restoration (OYCR).** The OYCR was established within HHS by SB 823 to provide state oversight of DJJ realignment and to support an ombudsman operation to investigate and resolve complaints regarding the care of youth in local facilities. OYCR opens for business on July 1, 2021. The May Revision proposes \$7.6 million in FY 21/22 and \$7.2 million ongoing to support 33 positions at the new HHS office. This nearly doubles the amount proposed earlier by the Governor. Nevertheless, advocates continue to press for more positions and higher funding levels to support the full OYCR mission and workload established by SB 823.

- **Pine Grove Camp.** The Governor states in the May Revise that the DJJ Pine Grove Youth Conservation Camp will remain open as a rehabilitation and fire-fighting resource for youth. This plan is consistent with language in SB 823 stating intent to preserve the youth fire-fighting camp even as the rest of DJJ was scheduled to close. The Administration will now offer new statutory language allowing courts to assign youth directly to Pine Grove after the close of intake at DJJ on June 30th of this year.
- **CalVIP grants.** The California Violence Intervention and Prevention (CalVIP) grant program administered by BSCC is slated to get its usual \$9 million in state general funds to distribute to cities and CBOs for local youth violence prevention programs. In addition, the May Revise proposes a one-time appropriation to BSCC of \$100 million to expand the CalVIP grant program. Meanwhile, BSCC reports that the actual proposed one-time new funding into CalVIP is \$200 million rather than \$100 million and that the amount will soon be corrected by the Governor's Office.
- **Prop 47 savings** get an updated estimate for FY 21/22 of \$ 116 million, slightly more than last year's amount. These savings (from reduced prison commitments due to reclassification of felonies by Proposition 47) are deposited in a Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Fund for reallocation by state agencies in grants for education, substance abuse and victim support programs. 65% of annual savings are awarded in grants by BSCC for mental health and substance abuse services for juveniles and adults, while another 25% is distributed by the state Dept. of Education for youth truancy and dropout prevention programs.
- **Prop 64- Cannabis Fund.** BSCC administers a share of funds raised through the regulation and taxing of cannabis sales in California. The public safety share administered by BSCC includes a mandatory Youth Development/Youth Prevention component. The May Revise estimates that \$629 million will be available in FY 21/22 cannabis fund revenues of which BSCC is estimated to receive about \$86 million for allocation to public safety projects including the youth component.
- **JJCPA, YOBG and Juvenile Re-Entry Grants.** These state-local grant programs support a range of youth crime prevention, custody, treatment and re-entry services for youth in county juvenile justice systems. Funds pass to counties from local public safety realignment accounts that draw from Vehicle License Fees (VLF) and sales taxes. These payments are essentially locked in by 2011 realignment law and are renewed each year with baseline funding plus a growth factor depending on annual revenues. For FY 21/22, total statewide Youthful Offender Block Grant funding is estimated to reach \$191 million (including growth), and the Youth Re-Entry Fund is estimated to provide \$12 million statewide. The Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act moves approximately \$160 million per year to county youth crime prevention and probation programs; however, if Senate Bill 493 (Bradford) as currently drafted is enacted, JJCPA spending would be vastly overhauled to bypass probation departments and to reallocate 95 percent of funds to community-based and non-law-enforcement programs.

CHILD WELFARE/FOSTER CARE ITEMS IMPACTING PROBATION YOUTH

Based on the most recently available CWS data, there are approximately 2,000 youth under probation department supervision in foster care placements and programs in California (point-in-time count). The May Revision includes program expenditures impacting services for probation foster youth including:

- \$39.2 million to assist counties serving foster youth with complex needs and behavioral health conditions including youth returning to California from out-of-state placements

- \$122.4 million to be spent over three years to assist counties with services and program changes to conform California to the federal Family First Prevention Services Act, including support for nursing and aftercare programs in Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs serving probation youth.
- \$25 million in mixed state/federal funds to provide caregivers with emergency assistance payments pending resource family approvals.
- \$39 million to continue development of a new Child Welfare system technology upgrade.
- \$7 million to cover Continuum of Care costs related to Child and Family Teams and \$3 million to support CANS assessments for foster care placements.

NEW CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

The May Revision Summary chapter on Health and Human Services leads with the Governor's proposal to spend \$3 billion over two years in combined state and federal funds on a new Behavioral Health Initiative for Children and Youth. The goal is to "transform California's behavioral health system for children and youth into a world-class, innovative and prevention focused system where children and youth are routinely screened, supported and served for emerging and existing behavioral health needs". The funding will support a panoply of services to address substance abuse, trauma and anxiety and psychological disorders for those up to age 25 with a focus on services for children in low income, youth-of-color and LGBTQ+ communities. A coordinated approach linking state departments and grants to local health, education and other service programs is described in the May Revision. ■