

THE OFFICE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION (OJJDP)

FACT SHEET

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) was established in 1974, with the passage of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA). Envisioned as the principal vehicle for stewardship of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention matters at the federal level, OJJDP administers the JJDPA, at the Office of Justice Programs, within the U.S. Department of Justice, under the U.S. Attorney General.

The pertinent JJDPA language authorizing OJJDP follows:

(a) Placement within Department of Justice under general authority of Attorney General

There is hereby established an Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (hereinafter in this division referred to as the "Office") within the Department of Justice under the general authority of the Attorney General.

(b) Administrator; head, appointment, authorities, etc.

The Office shall be headed by an Administrator (hereinafter in this subchapter referred to as the "Administrator") appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, from among individuals who have had experience in juvenile justice programs. The Administrator is authorized to prescribe regulations consistent with this chapter to award, administer, modify, extend, terminate, monitor, evaluate, reject, or deny all grants and contracts from, and applications for, funds made available under this subchapter. The Administrator shall have the same reporting relationship with the Attorney General as the directors of other offices and bureaus within the Office of Justice Programs have.ⁱ

What is OJJDP's status today?

J. Robert Flores has been the Administrator of OJJDP since April 2002. The OJJDP mission statement reads:

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) provides national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to juvenile delinquency and victimization. OJJDP supports states and communities in their efforts to develop and implement effective and coordinated prevention and intervention programs and to improve the juvenile justice system so that it

*protects public safety, holds offenders accountable, and provides treatment and rehabilitative services tailored to the needs of juveniles and their families.*ⁱⁱ

OJJDP is organized into five divisions: the Office of the Administrator, the Office of Policy Development, the Child Protection Division, the Demonstration Programs Division, and the State Relations and Assistance Division.

Who at OJJDP is responsible for effective implementation of the JJDPA?

The Administrator, along with his/her Deputies and designees, is responsible for successful implementation of the JJDPA, in partnership with the states. In specific, OJJDP's State Relations and Assistance Division interfaces closely with the State Advisory Groups and JJDPA-designated staff in the U.S. states, territories and District of Columbia, including state Juvenile Justice Specialists, DMC (disproportionate minority contact) Coordinators, and Compliance Monitors.

Over the years, OJJDP has also played a significant role in promoting and funding advances in the juvenile justice field. Among these advances are the OJJDP Model Programs Guide, a compilation of scientifically tested and proven programs in juvenile justice; "Blueprints for Violence Prevention," an initiative to provide communities with a set of violence reduction/intervention programs that have been scientifically tested for effectiveness; the Tribal Youth Program, helping tribal communities prevent juvenile delinquency, reduce violent crime and improve tribal juvenile justice systems; and leadership in a number of key areas of research, such as American Indian and Alaska Native juveniles, girls in the juvenile justice system and very young offenders.

While initially created to advance core purposes and core requirements of the JJDPA, OJJDP has expanded its purview since the late 1990s. Recent OJJDP initiatives include the "Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force," in response to the FY1998 Justice Appropriations Act which directed OJJDP to create a "national network of state and local law enforcement cyber units to investigate cases of child sexual exploitation," and "Safe Start: Promising Approaches to for Children Exposed to Violence," part of an initiative that focuses on developing a systemic response to preventing and reducing the impact of family and community violence on children and their families.ⁱⁱⁱ In addition, OJJDP administers additional non-JJDPA grant programs with the State Advisory Groups, including "Enforcing Under-Age Drinking Laws (EUDL)" and the "Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Program (JABG)."

How has funding for OJJDP changed in recent years?

While OJJDP's programs have expanded beyond the central scope of the JJDPA, its federal funding support has fallen by nearly 90% between 2002 and 2007. This has led to a divvying up of OJJDP staff time across federal agencies and purposes, as well as redirecting the Administrator's attention. As a result, current operations dilute, rather

than strengthen, OJJDP’s core mission and ability to assist states with JJDPA implementation.

The following chart shows specific funding decreases over the years.

FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007CR
\$6.8 million	\$6.8 million	\$3.6 million	\$3.0 million	\$0.7 million	\$0.7 million

What issues were debated at the time OJJDP was established?

One of the few disputes during the initial passage of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) involved oversight of OJJDP and where it was to be housed. The House of Representatives’ proposal, supported by Senator Birch Bayh, a primary sponsor of the JJDPA in the Senate, was to place OJJDP under the jurisdiction of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (now Health and Human Services), while the majority of the Senate Judiciary Committee favored its placement within the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), at the Department of Justice.

The Senate view prevailed and OJJDP was initially organized under the auspices of LEAA, although a limited number of LEAA staffers possessed relevant experience in juvenile justice and/or delinquency prevention.^{iv} LEAA was abolished in the early 1980s and OJJDP was put under the Office of Justice Programs.

How has OJJDP changed since 1974?

In 1977, revisions to the JJDPA upgraded the head of OJJDP from an “Assistant Administrator” to an “Associate Administrator” under LEAA, in an effort to recognize the greater importance of juvenile justice at the federal level.

In 1980, the significance of OJJDP was further affirmed when revisions to the JJDPA separated OJJDP from LEAA and placed it under the general authority of the U.S. Attorney General, signaling again a greater emphasis on federal juvenile justice programs and increased accountability to Congress. The head of OJJDP became an agency “Administrator.”

Amendments in 1980 also declared OJJDP’s specific role in providing training and technical assistance to all states, territories and the District of Columbia, under the JJDPA. Amendments in 1988 required OJJDP to develop and publish an annual program plan and to submit an annual report to the President and the Congress. The Administrator of OJJDP was also directed to provide more technical assistance to the states, local governments and local private agencies in order to facilitate compliance with the JJDPA.

At that time, OJJDP's duties were also expanded to include more support for an eligible organization representing member of the State Advisory Groups on Juvenile Justice, who craft and administer the JJDPA State Plans. The amendments read:

(1) The Administrator shall provide technical and financial assistance to an eligible organization composed of member representatives of the State advisory groups appointed under section 223(a)(3) to assist such organization to carry out the functions specified in paragraph (2).

(2) To be eligible to receive such assistance such organization shall agree to carry out activities that include—

- (A) conducting an annual conference of such member representatives for the purposes related to the activities of such State advisory groups;*
- (B) disseminating information, data, standards, advanced techniques, and program models;*
- (C) reviewing Federal policies regarding juvenile justice and delinquency prevention;*
- (D) advising the Administrator with respect to particular functions or aspects of the work of the Office (OJJDP); and*
- (E) advising the President and Congress with regard to state perspectives on the operation of the Office and Federal legislation pertaining to juvenile justice and delinquency prevention.^v*

In 2003, through administrative (non-statutory) action, the OJJDP Administrator altered the form and function of the “eligible organization,” cutting grant money to the nonprofit organization of State Advisory Groups. In its place, a new “Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice” was chartered under the dictates of the Administrator and a designated federal official. The Federal Advisory Committee is composed of a governor-appointed representative from each of the 56 State Advisory Groups participating in the OJJDP Formula Grants Program under Title II, Part B, of the JJDPA.^{vi} In addition, the Coalition for Juvenile Justice—a national nonprofit organization established in 1984—continues to serve as the “eligible organization,” without federal support, and is now a 1500+ member organization and governed by State Advisory Group members for the purposes of advancing the goals of the JJDPA.

ⁱ 42 U.S.C. § 5611 (a-b)(2002).

ⁱⁱ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/about/missionstatement.html>, Washington, DC.

ⁱⁱⁱ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/programs/index.html>, Washington, DC.

^{iv} The National Coalition of State Juvenile Justice Advisory Groups, “The First Report to the President, the Congress and the Administrator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention,” April 1986.

^v 42 U.S.C. § 5633 (f)(A-E)(2002).

^{vi} Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, <http://www.facjj.org/charter.html>, Washington, DC.