



**CAMPAIGN OF THE NATIONAL JUVENILE JUSTICE & DELINQUENCY
PREVENTION COALITION**

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Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) Fact Sheet Series

OJJDP Research & Technical Assistance

BACKGROUND: The week of December 10, 2018, Congress passed [H.R. 6964](#), the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018 (the Act) with overwhelming bipartisan support. The President signed the bill into law on December 21, 2018, amending the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) after years of collaborative efforts among juvenile justice organizations and advocates across the United States.

Below, please find a summary and impact of the provisions related to the new research and technical assistance requirements for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in the bill.

WHAT'S NEW¹:

Research

H.R. 6964 significantly expands the scope of research OJJDP is required to conduct, analyze, and publish.² Compared to prior [iterations](#) of the JJDP, the new law removes much of the Administrator's discretion in setting OJJDP's research agenda. For example, the previous research provisions authorized OJJDP to research and evaluate various juvenile justice issues, such as recidivism prevention, juvenile violence, and reducing the proportion of minority youth in out-of-home placements, but this research was not mandatory. Now, OJJDP is required to research these topics, in addition to new topics, including the impact of prosecuting and sentencing juveniles as adults, efforts to reduce recidivism via alternatives to incarceration, and better personnel recruitment and training.

H.R. 6964 also mandates statistical analysis of data related to a variety of juvenile justice issues, including serious crimes committed by juveniles, juvenile violence, and the juvenile justice system as a whole. This statistical analysis was discretionary prior to the reauthorization.

Finally, H.R. 6964 directs OJJDP to develop a national recidivism measurement system in consultation with experts in juvenile justice research. OJJDP must also establish a uniform data collection method that states can use to evaluate juvenile recidivism annually. Any data that OJJDP collects in complying with this provision will then be available to the public.

Prior to the passage of the reauthorization bill, OJJDP [announced](#) that its research arm, the Innovation and

¹ The amendments made to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act by this law will not apply until the beginning of Fiscal Year 2020.

² See H.R. 6964, 115th Cong. § 207 (2018).

Research Division, would be transferred to the National Institute of Justice, and its statistics functions would be transferred to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. The changes made by the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018 will require the research arm to be moved back to OJJDP, ensuring juvenile justice research remains a priority.

Technical Assistance

H.R. 6964 adds several new training and technical assistance requirements to ensure states and relevant personnel take a holistic approach to juvenile justice reform.³ For example, developing programs for training and providing technical assistance to various juvenile justice personnel and practitioners was discretionary prior to reauthorization, but H.R. 6964 requires the development of those programs. The new law also emphasizes compliance with JJDP core protections by mandating training and technical assistance to states implementing core protections in their jurisdictions. OJJDP must also support partnerships between states, universities and research centers to encourage research into recruitment, training, and retention of juvenile justice professionals.⁴

Under the new law, OJJDP is now required to disseminate best practices and guidance, and to provide technical assistance in implementing those best practices, in a number of areas. For example, state and local governments are eligible for training and technical assistance in complying with the JJDP core protections, forming research partnerships with universities and research centers, and addressing status offenses. Prosecutors and defense attorneys who practice in the juvenile system can receive training in juvenile mental health and substance abuse issues and treatment,⁵ as well as best practices for representing juveniles. Training on conditions of juvenile confinement, minimizing the use of dangerous practices and unreasonable restraints, and alternative behavior management techniques in lieu of more punitive measures are available for state and local detention and corrections staff.

Finally, H.R. 6964 directs the Attorney General and Secretary of Agriculture to provide guidance to states about how to extend free or reduced price lunches to juveniles who are incarcerated and eligible for free or reduced lunches under the National School Lunch Program.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: For more information about OJJDP's recent restructure, click [here](#). For more information about compliance with the four core protections, click [here](#).

This fact sheet was prepared by:



³ See H.R. 6964, 115th Cong. § 208 (2018).

⁴ H.R. 6964 includes “personnel in the fields of medicine, law enforcement, the judiciary, juvenile justice, social work and child protection, education, and other relevant fields who are engaged in, or intent to work in the field of prevention, identification, and treatment of delinquency.” *Id.* § 208(2)(D).

⁵ Other juvenile justice system personnel are also eligible for training on mental health and substance abuse best practices, including intake personnel, probation officers, judges and court services staff, and family advocates.