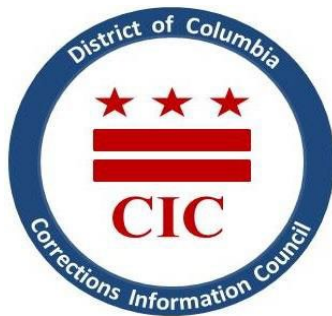


District of Columbia
Corrections Information Council



Update on the District of Columbia Youth Rehabilitation Act

September 30, 2020

About the District of Columbia Corrections Information Council

The District of Columbia Corrections Information Council (CIC) is an independent oversight body mandated by the United States Congress and the Council of the District of Columbia to inspect, monitor, and report on the conditions of confinement in correctional facilities where residents from the District of Columbia are incarcerated. This includes facilities operated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), the District of Columbia Department of Corrections (DOC), and private contractors.

The CIC reports its observations and recommendations to the District of Columbia Representative in the United States Congress, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the Council of the District of Columbia, the District of Columbia Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice, the Director of the BOP, the Director of the DOC, and the community.

Additionally, in accordance with § 24-101.01 (f)(1)(C), the CIC is responsible for publishing an annual report on the conditions of confinement and programming provided to District of Columbia youth offenders, as that term is defined in § 24-901(6), in the custody of the Bureau of Prisons.

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Summary

In fiscal year 2020, the CIC published its annual report concerning the facilities, treatment, and services for Youth Rehabilitation Act (YRA) offenders in the care and custody of the Department of Corrections (DOC) and Bureau of Prisons (BOP)¹.

As part of the 2018 amendment to the YRA, the Mayor was required to develop and submit a strategic plan for providing the facilities, treatment, and services for youth offenders [in the care and custody of the DOC]" by September 30, 2019. The legislation also specified that the BOP is authorized to provide these services for youth offenders.

At the conclusion of fiscal year 2020, the development of a strategic plan for YRA offenders has not yet been implemented.

Overview

In accordance with DC Code § 24-902, the following sections are applicable to DC Youth Rehabilitation Act offenders:

Facilities, treatment, and services for youth offenders.

(a) The Mayor shall provide facilities, treatment and services for the developmentally appropriate care, custody, subsistence, education, workforce training, and protection of the following offenders...

(a-1)(1) By September 30, 2019, the Mayor shall develop and submit to the Council a strategic plan for providing the facilities, treatment, and services for youth offenders required by subsection (a) of this section...

"(A) The educational, workforce development, behavioral and physical health care, housing, family, and reentry needs of youth offenders before commitment, while in District or federal care or custody, and upon reentry...

(a-1)(2)(B) The availability of a continuum of developmentally appropriate, community- based services for youth offenders before commitment, while in District care or custody, and upon reentry...

(a-1)(2)(E) Outreach by the District to committed youth offenders in District or federal care or custody to identify needs for services and plan for reentry...

(c) The federal Bureau of Prisons is authorized to provide facilities, treatment, and services for the developmentally appropriate care, custody, subsistence, education, workforce training, segregation, and protection of youth offenders convicted of felony offenses under District law and in federal care or custody.

¹ CIC, "Youth Rehabilitation Act Report", September 26, 2019, available at https://cic.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/cic/page_content/attachments/YRA%20report_PUBLISHED.pdf.

In 2019, the Mayor awarded a contract to the Justice Policy Institute (JPI) to develop the District of Columbia's strategic plan as dictated by the statute.

The CIC consulted with JPI in reference to the status of the strategic plan for YRA offenders. An initial plan had been drafted, but is still a work in progress. In the interim, JPI has published articles related to youthful offenders (ages 18-24)².

There is progress in the District of Columbia concerning youth offenders, specifically those in the custody of the DOC and its Young Men Emerging (YME) housing units at the CTF and CDF; however, the YRA legislation seeks to assure that progressions also address the entire population of DC youthful offenders.

The CIC will continue to monitor the progress and implementation of plans dictated by the legislation.

² Justice Policy Institute (JPI), Policy Brief: "Emerging Adults in Washington DC's Justice System," September 2020, available at http://www.justicepolicy.org/uploads/justicepolicy/documents/DC_Emerging_Adult_Brief_2020.pdf; Justice Policy Institute (JPI), Policy Brief: DC's Young Men Emerging Unit: A Story of Reform and Lessons Learned from the Front Lines", September 2020, available at <http://www.justicepolicy.org/research/12983>.