

**NYS OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH
YOUTH ADMISSIONS AND DISCHARGES FROM OCFS CUSTODY OVERVIEW**

General Description

The Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) within the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is responsible for supervision and treatment of court-placed youth, from intake to facility programming and community service provision. DJJOY supports and monitors facility-based operations and programs, as well as detention, community services and a range of community-based programs. DJJOY is directly responsible for the operation, supervision and management of 13 residential facilities, including two reception centers, as well as treatment program services provided within the facilities and Community Multi Service Office programs. In addition, DJJOY is responsible for oversight of case management services for court-placed youth in privately-run voluntary agencies. Youth admitted to OCFS custody have been either adjudicated as juvenile offenders (JO) in adult criminal court or juvenile delinquents (JD) in family court (more details below).

Since 2003, the number of admissions and discharges has been on a pronounced downward trend. Counties across New York State have taken increasing responsibility for their system-involved youth and are working to rely less on OCFS for providing effective residential services to low- and moderate-risk delinquent youth. When possible, there is a preference to place adjudicated JDs into Local Districts of Social Services (LDSS) custody, in programs closer to their homes and communities. Most notably, Governor Cuomo's "Close to Home" initiative went into effect on September 1, 2012. At this time, OCFS began discharging New York City youth into the care and custody of the NYC Administration for Children's Services and ceased admitting newly placed non-secure JDs into the care and custody of OCFS. Over time, as fewer youth are placed into OCFS custody, the number of individuals admitted to and discharged from custody has decreased. DJJOY continues in its effort to reform its juvenile justice system to serve a more complex and difficult youth population that has not experienced success in placements prior to coming to its residential facilities.

Data File Overview

This data file contains basic information about unique youth admitted to or discharged from the care and custody of OCFS in a given calendar year. If a youth had multiple admissions and/or discharges in a calendar year, only data relating to the FIRST admission and/or FIRST discharge are presented here. If a youth had admissions and/or discharges over MULTIPLE calendar years, data for his/her FIRST admission and/or FIRST discharge in EACH calendar year are included. For example, if Youth Joe had two admissions in 2010, one discharge in 2010, one discharge in 2011, and one admission in 2013, he would be in this dataset four times: first 2010 admission, 2010 discharge, 2011 discharge, and 2013 discharge. However, the number of youth with multiple admissions and/or discharges in a year to OCFS custody is very small; between 2003 and 2013 there were 19 total youth with multiple admissions in a given year and 68 total youth with multiple discharges in a year.

Data are aggregated to responsible (court) county for admissions and county of residence (home county) for discharges. For each year, data are available on youth gender, adjudication, age, race/ethnicity, and service setting, at the time of either admission or discharge. Information about these variable categories is available in the definition section below.

Definitions

Admission: Initial permanent entry into OCFS custody resulting from one or more placement orders or Interstate Compact; a youth's first admission per calendar year is counted and included.

Discharge: Exit from OCFS custody; a youth's first discharge per calendar year is counted and included.

County: For admitted youth, the "Responsible County" is provided because this is both the county where the youth was adjudicated and the county that assumes part of the financial responsibility while the youth is with OCFS. For discharged youth, the "County of Residence" (i.e., Home County) is provided, since it is important for discharge planning purposes; this is where the youth is most likely to live following a discharge from custody. The county can include the five boroughs of New York City or the 57 counties in the Rest of State; Interstate youth are excluded.

- **Interstate:** A reciprocal agreement (Interstate Compact) between New York (NY) and other states allows for youth adjudicated outside NY whose families reside in NY to be supervised by OCFS following any incarceration outside NY. At the same time, out-of-state youth adjudicated in NY can receive supervision in their home state under this agreement.

Gender: Male or Female. Adding the number of males and females admitted/discharged will equal the total number of unique individuals admitted/discharged.

Adjudication: Legal category applied by the court which regulates the types of settings in which a youth may be served. Adding the number of JOs and JDs admitted/discharged will equal the total number of unique individuals admitted/discharged.

- **Juvenile Offender (JO)** – This includes three types of youth who must go to Secure service settings:
 - 1) JO: youth committed to the custody of OCFS who have been convicted by an adult court and who have committed their crime while under the age of 16.
 - 2) JO/YO: JOs who have been awarded YO status by the court, which provides for shorter sentences and vacated convictions. A JO/YO is not considered to have been convicted of his/her criminal act.
 - 3) Parole Violator: JO or JO/YO youth previously released to the community on Parole supervision under the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision and who then return to OCFS due to a parole violation.
- **Juvenile Delinquent (JD)** - a person adjudicated by the family court and who was 7-15 years of age at the time s/he committed an act that would constitute a crime if committed by an adult. JD youth may never have a first admission into a Secure setting.

Age: Youth age at admission to or discharge from either residential or non-residential program. These are classified as under 15 years, 15 years, or over 15 years of age. Adding the number of youth under 15, 15, and over 15 admitted/discharged will equal the total number of unique individuals admitted/discharged.

Race/Ethnicity: A combined measure that captures a youth's race and ethnicity. Adding the number of White, Black, Hispanic, and Other youth admitted/discharged will equal the total number of unique individuals admitted/discharged.

- White is White race and Non-Hispanic ethnicity.
- Black is Black race, and Non-Hispanic ethnicity.
- Hispanic is any race and Hispanic ethnicity.
- Other includes youth of Asian, Native American, Mixed, or Unknown race and Non- or Unknown Hispanic ethnicity.

Service Setting: These represent residential and non-residential administrative and programmatic environments in which youth in OCFS custody are served. Residential programs are divided into OCFS-operated centers and homes, Voluntary Agency-operated programs and Foster Care. OCFS centers and homes are organized into three categories of facilities: Secure, Limited Secure, and Non-Secure. The Non-Secure facilities are subdivided into two service settings -- Non-Secure Centers and Non-Secure Homes. Non-residential (Day or Aftercare) programs provide Community based services to youth, typically following their release from a residential setting. Adding the number of Secure, Limited Secure, Non-Secure Center, Non-Secure Home, Voluntary Agency, Foster Care, and Community youth admitted/discharged will equal the total number of unique individuals admitted/discharged.

- **Secure:** Provide is the most controlled and restrictive of the residential programs operated by OCFS while providing intensive programming for youth requiring this type of environment.
- **Limited Secure:** Provide the most restrictive service setting for most youth adjudicated as juvenile delinquents. Limited secure facilities may also be used for youth previously placed in secure facilities as a first step in their transition back to the community.
- **Non-Secure:** Provide a non-secure level of placement for youth adjudicated as juvenile delinquents who require removal from the community but do not require the more restrictive setting or restraining hardware of a limited secure facility. There are two types: **Centers and Homes.** As of 2013, Non-Secure Homes are no longer in operation.
- **Voluntary Agency:** Privately run residential program over which OCFS has oversight responsibility but does not operate directly. Youth may be cooperatively placed by OCFS or placed by the courts with OCFS specifically for replacement with a particular Voluntary Agency.
- **Foster Care:** Denotes a residential service provided by a relative or other individual for a youth supervised by OCFS, and this youth receives Community services. This specialized family-based foster care should be distinguished from family foster boarding home care overseen by OCFS and operated by county Social Services Departments. Youth CANNOT be admitted to this setting, but can be transferred to this setting (initially admitted to a different setting). Consequently, they CAN be discharged from it. (The Foster Care Admission field is included for consistency, but all data will be 0). As of 2014, there are no youth remaining in the Foster Care service setting as this setting is no longer utilized (even as transfers).
- **Community:** Youth reside in the community and receive either day program or aftercare services through OCFS.

Data Collection Methods

Data come from the OCFS Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS), the case management and tracking system for youth in OCFS custody. OCFS is responsible for entering youth-level admission and discharge data into this database.

Limitations

This data file only includes youth admitted to and discharged from the care and custody of OCFS (in either residential or non-residential programs). It does not include data on youth admitted to or discharged from the care and custody of Local Districts of Social Service (LDSS).

Use of this Data

Summing columns about admitted or discharged youth may result in tallies greater than the number of total youth admitted/discharged. Although a youth will only be counted once as an admission and/or

once as a discharge, s/he will be included in several different categories (gender, adjudication, age, race/ethnicity, and service setting) within the dataset.