Delinquency Disposition Improvement Project - Implementation Guide

WHAT IS THIS PROJECT?

This Project is focused on improving the quality of disposition hearings and outcomes in delinquency cases. To be successful, it requires a commitment by courts and local system partners to both individual change and the overall effort. The Project consists of three primary commitments:

- Implement risk assessments as early as possible
- Provide accurate risk assessment information to courts in a consistent and timely manner
- Use risk assessment scores and other information to inform disposition type, length, and other services *(probation conditions, interventions, etc.)*

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

A commitment by all system partners to improve the quality of disposition recommendations, hearings, & outcomes results in:

- Better advocacy and tailored interventions aligned with a youth's actual risk & needs
- Objective, data-driven information to support fair, individualized, and evidence-based decisions at disposition
- More effective use of community resources
- Improved accountability & public safety

WHO DOES IT IMPACT?

- System-Involved Youth
- Judicial Officers
- Juvenile Departments
- District Attorneys
- Juvenile Defense Attorneys

WHAT STAGE AM I AT?

STAGE 1: I'm Interested in the Project and Want to Learn More

- Review Delinquency Disposition Report FAQ
- Reach out to JDIP (caroline.e.meyer@ojd.state.or.us)

STAGE 2: I'm Ready to Improve our Court's Delinquency Dispositions

1. Reach out to JDIP (caroline.e.meyer@ojd.state.or.us)
2. Schedule initial meeting of partners:
   - Juvenile Judge
   - Juvenile Department Director
   - DDA handling juvenile cases
   - Juvenile defense attorneys
3. Watch Dr. Gina Vincent's risk assessment presentation before you meet *(JDIP can provide this if you do not have it)*
4. At the meeting, discuss who else is needed to be successful, current local processes, and any barriers to implementing the Project.
   Questions to consider:
   - Does your county already use a disposition report?
   - Are youth in your county currently being interviewed for JCP assessments pre-adjudication? If not, can that be done?
   - How far in advance of disposition hearings is the disposition report provided to court and parties?
5. When you are ready to begin the Project, JDIP can provide the following resources:
   - Recorded training for all parties on use of Disposition Report
   - Recorded training for court staff on business process changes
   - Virtual training sessions can be scheduled if needed

STAGE 3: We Have Implemented the Project; How do We Measure Success and Provide Feedback?

- Reach out to JDIP (caroline.e.meyer@ojd.state.or.us) to get help with:
  - Post Project Implementation Surveys
  - Access to OJD Delinquency Data

WHAT IS MY ROLE IN IMPLEMENTING THE DISPOSITION REPORT TO IMPROVE CASE OUTCOMES?

Juvenile Department Staff:

- Complete a JCP risk assessment prior to the disposition hearing and update if necessary to ensure it reflects the youth's current circumstances.
- Complete a Disposition Report that includes individualized tailored disposition recommendations aligned with the youth's current risk level, needs, and circumstances.
- File the Disposition Report with the court at least 7 days before the scheduled disposition hearing to allow parties adequate time for review and preparation.
- Develop a case plan that targets the youth's highest risk domains, using evidence-based interventions tailored to their needs and risk factors.

Attorneys:

- Understand the youth's risk score and its implication and use this information to guide all negotiations and conversations related to disposition prior to admission or the disposition hearing.
- Review the Disposition Report thoroughly to evaluate whether the recommendation appropriately addresses the youth's highest risk domains and individual needs.
- **Defense Attorneys**—advocate for an appropriate disposition, ensuring the client understands the proposed recommendations and how they relate to their case.
- **DDAs**—assess whether the recommended disposition aligns with the principles of least restrictive placement while also addressing public safety.

Judicial Officers:

- Review the Disposition Report in advance of the hearing to ensure familiarity with the youth's risk level, needs, and recommended interventions.
- Use the youth's risk score and identified risk domains to guide disposition type and length to be individualized and aligned with best practice.
- Acknowledge the youth's strengths and protective factors during the hearing and invite input from the youth and their parent or guardian during the hearing to ensure their voice and perspective are considered.
- Request clarification from the Juvenile Court Counselor when there are discrepancies or concerns regarding the report or recommendations.
- Include the length of disposition clearly in the court order.
- Use standardized Model Court Forms to ensure disposition data is accurately entered and easily tracked in Odyssey:
  - Judgment of Jurisdiction & Disposition
  - Probation Conditions *(General & Special)*
- When placing a youth in OYA or ODHS custody, include detailed written findings that explain why the placement is in the youth's best interest.

JDIP RESOURCES

Delinquency Disposition Report
- [Delinquency Disposition Report FAQ](#)
- [Delinquency Disposition Report](#) *(Example)*
- [Delinquency Disposition Report Bench Guide](#)

Disposition Court Forms
- [Judgement of Jurisdiction & Disposition](#)
- [Probation Conditions](#) *(General)*
- [Probation Conditions](#) *(Special)*

Other Documents
- [Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)](#) - *allowing for youth interviews*
- [Juvenile Crime Prevention (JCP) Tool](#)
- [JCP Risk Assessment Guidance](#)
- [Delinquency Bench Book](#)

NATIONAL RESOURCES

- [Risk Assessment in Juvenile Justice: A Guidebook](#)
- [NCJFCJ Resolution](#)