

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 5258

**FISCAL
NOTE**

By Delegates Pushkin and Garcia

[Introduced February 05, 2026; referred to the
Committee on the Judiciary then Finance]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §49-2-913 and §49-5-106 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as
2 amended; and to amend said code by adding a new section, designated §49-2-914;
3 relating to the juvenile justice reform oversight committee and averted costs reinvestment;
4 creating a juvenile justice account and providing its purpose, funding and disbursements;
5 requiring new data to be collected and compiled to allow calculation of juvenile recidivism
6 and the outcome of programs and making this information available to the public.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 2. STATE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CHILDREN.

§49-2-913. Juvenile Justice Reform Oversight Committee.

1 (a) The Juvenile Justice Reform Oversight Committee is hereby created to oversee the
2 implementation of reform measures intended to improve the state's juvenile justice system.

3 (b) The committee shall be comprised of 17 members, including the following individuals:

4 (1) The Governor, or his or her designee, who shall preside as chair of the committee;

5 (2) Two members from the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House of
6 Delegates, who shall serve as nonvoting, ex-officio members;

7 (3) Two members from the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate, who shall
8 serve as nonvoting, ex-officio members;

9 (4) The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Resources, or his or her
10 designee;

11 (5) The Director of the Division of Juvenile Services, or his or her designee;

12 (6) The Superintendent of the State Board of Education, or his or her designee;

13 (7) The Administrative Director of the Supreme Court of Appeals, or his or her designee,
14 who shall serve as nonvoting, ex-officio member;

15 (8) The Director of the Division of Probation Services, or his or her designee;

16 (9) Two circuit court judges, appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of
17 Appeals, who shall serve as nonvoting, ex-officio members;

(10) One community member juvenile justice stakeholder, appointed by the Governor;

(11) One juvenile crime victim advocate, appointed by the Governor;

(12) One member from the law-enforcement agency, appointed by the Governor;

(13) One member from a county prosecuting attorney's office, appointed by the Governor;

and

(14) The Director of the Juvenile Justice Commission.

(c) The committee shall perform the following duties:

(1) Guide and evaluate the implementation of the provisions adopted in the year 2015 relating to juvenile justice reform;

(2) Obtain and review the juvenile recidivism and program outcome data collected pursuant to §49-5-106 of this code;

(3) Calculate any state expenditures that have been avoided by reductions in the number of youths placed in out-of-home placements by the Division of Juvenile Services or the Department of Health and Human Resources as reported under §49-5-106 of this code; and

(4) Institute a uniform process for developing and reviewing performance measurement and outcome measures through data analysis. The uniform process shall include:

(A) The performance and outcome measures for the court, the Department of Health and Human Resources and the Division of Juvenile Services; and

(B) The deadlines and format for the submission of the performance and outcome measures; and

(5) Ensure system accountability and monitor the fidelity of implementation efforts or programs;

(6) Study any additional topics relating to the continued improvement of the juvenile justice system; and

(7) Issue an annual report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Delegates, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia on or

before November 30 of each year, starting in 2016, which shall include:

(A) An assessment of the progress made in implementation of juvenile justice reform efforts;

(B) A summary of the committee's efforts in fulfilling its duties as set forth in this section; and

(C) An analysis of the recidivism data obtained by the committee under this section;

~~(D) A summary of The averted costs to the state and federal government calculated by the committee under this section and summary of the methodology used by the committee; and a recommendation for any reinvestment of the averted costs to fund services or programs to expand West Virginia's continuum of alternatives for youth who would otherwise be placed in out-of-home placement~~

~~(E) A recommendation for any reinvestment of the averted costs to fund services or programs to expand the state's continuum of alternatives for youth who would otherwise be placed in out-of-home placement;~~

~~(E)~~ (F) Recommendations for continued improvements to the juvenile justice system.

(d) The Division of Justice and Community Services shall provide staff support for the committee. The committee ~~may~~ has subpoena power to request and receive copies of all data, reports, performance measures and other evaluative material regarding juvenile justice submitted from any agency, branch of government or political subdivision to carry out its duties.

(e) The committee shall meet within 90 days after appointment and shall thereafter meet at least quarterly, upon notice by the chair. Eight members shall be considered a quorum.

(f) After initial appointment, members appointed to the committee by the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Delegates, or the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals, pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, shall serve for a term of two years from his or her appointment and shall be eligible for reappointment to that position. All members appointed to the committee shall serve until his or her successor has been duly

appointed.

(g) The committee shall sunset on December 31, 2020, unless reauthorized by the Legislature.

§49-2-914. Creation of juvenile justice account; purpose; funding; disbursements.

(a) There is hereby created in the State Treasury a separate special revenue account, which shall be an interest-bearing account, to be known as the "Juvenile Justice Account". The special revenue account shall consist of appropriations made by the Legislature, income from the investment of moneys held in the special revenue account and all other sums available for deposit to the special revenue account from any source, public or private. No expenses incurred under this section may be a charge against the general funds of the state.

(b) The Governor shall submit the amount of the state savings described in §49-2-913(c)(7)(D) to be deposited into the Juvenile Justice Account described in this section as part of the annual budget submission or in an executive message to the Legislature.

(c) Monies in the special revenue account shall be appropriated to the Juvenile Justice Reform Oversight Committee and used exclusively, in accordance with appropriations by the Legislature, to pay costs, fees, and expenses incurred, or to be incurred for the following purposes:

(1) A per diem to members of the committee not to exceed the per diem rate paid to members of the West Virginia Legislature pursuant to §4-2A-7;

(2) Grants or funds to establish, staff, or otherwise fund new services or programs recommended in §49-2-913(c)(7)(E) that are evidence based;

(3) Grants or funds to establish, staff, or otherwise fund pilot programs or experimental community-based services recommended in §49-2-913(c)(7)(E) for which there is not substantial evidence regarding efficacy or outcomes;

(4) Grants or funds to improve, expand, support, or expand access to juvenile justice programs pursuant to §49-2-913(c)(7)(F): *Provided*, That expanding access means providing for

juveniles, parents, and guardians to receive services without a court referral; and

(5) All costs incurred in the administration of the special revenue account.

(d) Any balance remaining in the special revenue account at the end of any state fiscal year shall not revert to the General Revenue Fund but shall remain in the special revenue account and shall be used solely in a manner consistent with this section: *Provided*, That at the sunset of the Juvenile Justice Committee pursuant to §49-2-913(g), any moneys remaining in the special revenue account shall revert to the General Revenue Fund.

(e) Disbursements from the special revenue account shall be authorized by a simple majority vote of present voting members of the Juvenile Justice Reform Oversight Committee: *Provided*, That a quorum of at least eight voting members are present.

ARTICLE 5. RECORD KEEPING AND DATABASE.

§49-5-106. Data collection.

(a) The Division of Juvenile Services, the department and the Supreme Court of Appeals shall establish procedures to jointly collect and compile data necessary to calculate juvenile recidivism and the outcome of programs.

(b) For each juvenile who enters into a diversion agreement, is placed on an improvement period, is placed on probation, or is placed in an out-of-home placement as defined by §49-1-206 of this code, the data and procedures developed in subsection (a) shall include:

(1) New offense referrals to juvenile court or criminal court within three years of completion of the diversion agreement, release from court jurisdiction or release from agency custody;

(2) Adjudications for a delinquent or status offense by a juvenile or a conviction by a criminal court within three years of completion of the diversion agreement, release from court jurisdiction or release from agency custody;

(3) Commitments to the Division of Juvenile Services, the department, excluding out-of-home placements made for child welfare or abuse and neglect purposes, or incarceration with the Division of Corrections within three years of completion of the diversion agreement, release from

15 court jurisdiction or release from agency custody; and

16 (4) The number of out-of-home placements ordered where the judge found by clear and
17 convincing evidence the existence of a significant and likely risk of harm to the juvenile, a family
18 member, or the public.

19 (5) The average length of stay for out-of-home placements for any reason, broken down by
20 the agency with jurisdiction.

21 (6) The average daily population in out-of-home facilities, broken down by type of facility
22 and agency with jurisdiction.

23 (7) The costs of out-of-home placement are broken down by facility, placement level, and
24 agency.

25 (c) For youth placed in programs operated or funded by the Division of Juvenile Services,
26 the department or the Supreme Court of Appeals, including youth reporting centers, juvenile drug
27 courts, restorative justice programs and teen courts, the division, department and Supreme Court
28 shall develop procedures using, at a minimum, the measures in subsection (b) of this section to
29 track and record outcomes of each program, and to demonstrate that the program reduces the
30 likelihood of reoffending for the youth referred to the program.

31 (d) For youth referred to truancy diversion specialists or other truancy diversion programs
32 operated or funded by the Supreme Court of Appeals, the Division of Juvenile Services, the
33 Department of Health and Human Resources, the Department of Education or other political
34 subdivisions, that branch of government or agency shall develop procedures to track and record
35 outcomes of each program, and to evaluate the effectiveness in reducing unexcused absences for
36 the youth referred to the program. At a minimum, this outcome data shall include:

37 (1) The number of youths successfully completing the truancy diversion program;

38 (2) The number of youths who are referred to the court system after failing to complete a
39 truancy diversion program; and

40 (3) The number of youths who, after successfully completing a truancy diversion program,

41 accumulate five or more unexcused absences in the current or subsequent school year.

42 (e) The Supreme Court of Appeals, the Division of Juvenile Services, the Department of
43 Health and Human Resources and the department of education shall also establish procedures to
44 jointly collect and compile data relating to disproportionate minority contact, which is defined as
45 the proportion of minority youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system in relation to
46 the proportion of minority youth in the general population, and the compilation shall include data
47 indicating the prevalence of such disproportionality in each county. Data shall include, at a
48 minimum, the race and gender of youth arrested or referred to court, entered into a diversion
49 program, adjudicated and disposed.

50 (f) The data collected under this section is public information and shall be made available
51 for public review.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to require the Juvenile Justice Reform Oversight Committee to recommend averted costs reinvestment; create a juvenile justice account and provide its purpose, funding, and disbursements; require new data to be collected and compiled to allow calculation of juvenile recidivism and the outcome of programs and make this information available to the public.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.