



JB Pritzker
Governor

Heidi Mueller
Director

1112 South Wabash Avenue, 2nd Floor, Chicago, Illinois 60605
Telephone: (312) 814-3848 / TDD: (800) 526-0844

The Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice is incredibly grateful for the hard work and expertise that went into creating the Advancing Transformation Recommendations Report by the 21st Century Advancing Transformation Committee. The Committee—composed of 50 members including youth and families with lived experiences, system partners, staff, and advocates—convened 16 times over 8 months to compile the 27 recommendations detailed in the report. We extend a special and heartfelt thank you to the youth and parents who bravely shared their experiences and feedback with fellow committee members.

Several themes emerged in the report recommendations, including calls for increased transparency and intergovernmental collaboration; better communication and partnership with families; and valuing the humanity, individuality and development of our youth in all of our practices. Taken together, these recommendations set forward a reimagined juvenile justice model that centers youth, families and communities rather than IDJJ itself in our work. In totality, the recommendations are well aligned with the goal of the 21st Century Illinois Transformation Model to divest from harmful adult prison models and practices, invest in communities, and create closer to home facilities and programs that are developmentally appropriate for youth.

We are eager to begin implementing the recommendations in ways that are operationally viable and fiscally responsible. To date, with the support of the Pritzker Administration and Justice, Equity, and Opportunity Initiative, we have already completed extensive communication and feedback gathering to better understand the needs of justice-involved youth and families. We've also begun developing a continuum of care by expanding Aftercare into the Community Services Division. This expansion will allow us to better assess youth and the interventions they need whether they be in their community of origin, secured custody at an IYC, or in immersive programming that helps them build the necessary skills to avoid future involvement with the juvenile justice system. Finally, a new IYC is being designed in Lincoln, IL. The center will be developmentally appropriate for youth, restorative, and closer to home for youth committed from the Central Illinois region.

New changes have been and continue to be underway at IDJJ. The feedback we've received from our external stakeholders will help us to refine our plans for the future. The time and energy they invested will help to make the Department a better place for future youth committed to our care. The Advancing Transformation Committee Recommendations Report is a shining example of how we hope to co-create a new IDJJ that is more reflective of and appropriate for the youth that we serve.