



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

To our juvenile justice stakeholders:

As we all continue to deal with this unprecedented public health emergency, the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) remains vigilant in our efforts to monitor and protect the health and safety of the youth in our care and custody and the hardworking staff in our detention centers and residential programs.

In my last communication, I detailed the screening, medical, and environmental protocols DJJ has implemented in its facilities, juvenile assessment centers, and detention screening units. Where necessary, we are working closely with local health departments, and our staff continues to diligently ensure that our protocols and additional health department directives, if any, are followed. As further protection for youth and staff, and in keeping with CDC recommendations, DJJ is working to ensure that staff in our facilities have masks to wear as they perform their duties. In addition, we are regularly checking our inventories of personal protective equipment (PPE) across all facilities and have been receiving necessary supplies through Florida's Division of Emergency Management.

I also previously shared with you the various ways DJJ is working with our juvenile justice system partners to manage our detention population and reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection to youth currently in and coming into the system, while at the same time protecting public safety. I am personally grateful to you, our partners, for your support and cooperation in these efforts. Working together, we will continue to ensure that only those youth who need to be in secure detention are placed there, and that committed youth who have successfully completed their programs are released on time or early where appropriate and with court approval.

Even as the public health emergency continues, DJJ must fulfill its responsibility to place committed youth in residential programs so that they can begin receiving therapeutic care. After a short period of suspended placements, we are cautiously beginning to resume them this week, making sure that youth are medically cleared for transfer and that there are no health concerns in the receiving programs. Residential program providers follow the same strict protocols as those in place in our detention centers, and DJJ is in daily contact with each program to monitor the health status of youth and staff.

Thank you for your partnership and continued support as DJJ works to serve and protect our youth and communities in this decidedly challenging time. I pray that you and your families stay healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Simone Marsteller

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Ron DeSantis, Governor

Simone Marsteller, Secretary

The mission of the Department of Juvenile Justice is to increase public safety by reducing juvenile delinquency through effective prevention, intervention, and treatment services that strengthen families and turn around the lives of troubled youth.