

Youth Justice Services

Our objective

- Reduce recidivism and improve social, economic and civic participation for children and young people through holding children and young people to account for their offending behaviour.

Our strategy

- We support young people to be accountable for their role and behaviour, and link them and their families to wellbeing, health and education services.
- We focus on underlying issues that lead to offending behaviour and deliver evidence-based interventions and programs for young people who are repeat offenders.

Our performance indicators

- Reduce the rate of offending and re-offending.
- Reduce the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young peoples in the youth justice system.

Our achievements

- Continued to implement The *Working Together Changing the Story: Youth Justice Strategy 2019-2023*, completing all actions of the associated *Changing the Story Action Plan 2019-2021*.
- Implemented strategies to target serious repeat offenders and to continue delivering programs showing promise in reducing offending.
- Implemented a trial of electronic monitoring with increased supervision and resources to manage serious repeat young offenders on bail in Logan, Townsville, Moreton, North Brisbane and the Gold Coast.
- Expanded the Youth Justice Five Point Plan, including the Queensland Police Service and Youth Justice Co-responder Model.
- Continued to increase the capacity of our frontline workers with additional frontline and frontline support positions in youth detention centres, to increase community safety and the safety and well-being of detention centre staff and young people.
- Rolled out additional youth workers for the Conditional Bail program, which aims to reduce the risk of young people offending or breaching conditions while on bail.
- Continued to deliver the Legal Advocacy and Bail Support programs to provide legal and practical support to young people to assist them to meet bail conditions and individual case plan goals.
- Continued the Integrated Case Management program to reduce offending and re-offending among high-risk recidivist offenders.

- Continued the transitional hub in Mount Isa to deliver after hours diversionary services to high-risk young people, providing a safe therapeutic environment for police to refer young people who do not have appropriate accommodation or safe home environments.
- Trialled Family Led Decision Making to give families of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the youth justice system a stronger voice in decisions about their children.
- Undertook scoping and planning to develop a detailed business case to investigate additional long-term detention centre capacity options.
- Implemented legislation changes, including a presumption against bail for serious repeat offenders who commit a crime while on bail, and the ability for a court to seek assurances from parents, guardians or others before an offender is released on bail.
- Engaged former Police Commissioner Mr Bob Atkinson to review the new reforms targeting serious repeat offenders, including electronic monitoring and the changes to the legislation in respect to bail.
- Re-formed the Youth Justice Reference Group, including key community stakeholders, to inform the development of the second action plan associated with the *Working Together Changing the Story: Youth Justice Strategy 2019-2023*.
- Established the department's COVID-19 response to continue to hold the health and wellbeing of vulnerable children, young people, families and staff as the top priority. During the pandemic, this has included:
 - undertaking appropriate measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all young people. In particular, the safety and security of staff, young people and visitors was paramount within youth detention facilities through key stakeholder engagement, both with government and non-government agencies.
 - offering the Pfizer vaccine to young people in detention in July 2021 in line with Federal Department of Health guidelines relating to priority groups.
 - introduction of legislation to:
 - reduce administrative burden and provide greater flexibility to youth justice conference participants, including victims.
 - enable temporary detention centre employees to be appointed, which allowed Brisbane Youth Detention Centre to continue to operate safely when staff members were placed on quarantine orders in August 2020 due to COVID-19.
 - offering alternative service delivery and therapeutic programs to young people to ensure continuity of service to support compliance of court orders.

Performance statement

Service Area: Youth Justice Services	Notes	2020-21 Target / estimate	2020-21 Actual
Percentage of orders supervised in the community that are successfully completed	1		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young offenders 		85%	81%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other young offenders 		86%	86%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All young offenders 		85%	83%
Proportion of young offenders who have another charged offence within 12 months of an initial finalisation for proven offence	2	70%	75%
Youth detention centre utilisation rate	3	85%	85%
Notes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This measure is based on the number of community-based orders that ended in the period that were successfully completed, regardless of when the order commenced. As part of the department's Youth Justice Strategy, substantial resources were directed towards diversionary responses such as Restorative Justice Conferencing, Cautions, and the Transition to Success program. The success of these initiatives has sustained the long-term downward trend in the number of distinct young offenders in Queensland. One consequence of this decrease in the number of young people entering the Youth Justice Court process is an increase in the concentration of serious and repeat offenders remaining in the Youth Justice System. With a greater concentration of serious and repeat offenders in the Youth Justice System, the proportion of those young people who do reoffend or do not successfully complete a community-based order will tend to be higher than the previous years. 2. This measure reflects the percentage of young people who reoffended within 12 months following their earliest finalised proven offence when aged 10-15 years in the previous 12-month period. Only new charged offences presented at court in the 12-month follow-up period are included in the re-offending measure (excludes charges referred to a restorative justice conference by police). Youth Justice does not receive data for offence dates until there is a court appearance for that offence. Therefore, offences for the most recent period may be undercounted where there is a delay between the offence date and the court appearance. A charged offence may be subsequently proven, unproven, or dismissed. In addition, court processes were delayed in the fourth quarter (April-June) of 2019-20 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This meant fewer than normal young people had their matter dealt with in court in this fourth quarter, prioritising more serious cases to be finalised. This again increased the concentration of serious and repeat offenders in the Youth Justice System, leading to an increase in the proportion of young people who would likely go on to subsequently reoffend. These court restrictions lifted at the start of the first quarter (July-September) of 2020-21, consequently proven offences in 2020-21 appear higher than expected. 3. Centre utilisation rate is based on the Report on Government Services formula, which is the average nightly population in youth detention centres divided by the average number of permanently funded beds. Centre utilisation excludes young people held in Queensland Police Service watch houses. 			