

DELAWARE JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER

The Juvenile Detention Center is a division of the Court Services Department, governed by the Board of Judges, under the direction of President Judge Joseph P. Cronin, Jr. The facility is licensed and regulated by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. Located on Route 352 in Lima, the Detention Center provides a secure setting protecting the community from young people, ages 10 through 18, whose behavior has endangered and/or appears likely to endanger the citizens and/or their property within the community.

The Detention Center provides secure custody, guaranteeing the court that youths will be available for court appearances when they have failed in the past and/or there is a lack of parental supervision or responsibility for the youth's appearance. It further ensures that youths will be available for psychological, psychiatric and/or educational diagnostic testing.

Presently there are 66 beds for Delaware County admissions. A total of 1,198 children were admitted in 2009, a 77% increase over 1998 admissions.

Revenue for the facility in 2009-2010 was obtained through State Revenues equal to 50% of the cost of operation and 50% from County Budget. Other sources of reimbursement include funding through Department of Education, National School Lunch Program in an amount equaling one-third of the actual food cost for the year.

The Center also provides many programs for the youths while detained including collaboration with Widener University and Cabrini College. Students conduct sessions on a weekly basis and interact in a positive manner as a role model and academic coach with the youths. Another program, Thresholds, provides an educational decision-making course taught by volunteer teachers with the goal of helping to reduce the risk of recidivism. The Chester Community Hospital Residency Program meets with all new admissions on a weekly basis and offers a comprehensive health education component. Resident doctors give presentations on a variety of topics including Alcohol/Danger of Drugs, Gun Violence, Hygiene and Nutrition.

Over the past six years Behavioral Health Services have been funded through a federal and state funding stream (Act 148). The Federal (TANF) reimbursement was cut in 2006 and 2007. State and County funding streams now fund the cost of three full-time Clinical Case Managers, a psychiatrist, and psychologist who assists the Court and Probation Department with evaluations of children identified with emotional disorders.

Through the efforts of the Common Pleas Court Judges and County Court Services/Probation, the average length of stay of residents has been reduced from 21 days to 14 days in 2009-10. This represents a considerable reduction in cost due to staffing mandates and overcrowding has not been an issue for the first time in many years.